

Global media, local metaphor: Television shopping and marketing-as-relationship in America, Japan, and Taiwan

Clyde A. Warden^{a,*}, Stephen Chi-Tsun Huang^b, Tsung-Chi Liu^c, Wann-Yih Wu^c

^a Marketing Management Department, National Chung Hsing University, 250 Kuo Kuang Road, Taichung 402, Taiwan, ROC

^b Marketing and Distribution Management Department, National Kaohsiung First University of Science and Technology, 2 Juoyue Road, Kaohsiung 811, Taiwan, ROC

^c Business Administration Department, National Cheng Kung University, 1 Ta-Hsueh Road, Tainan 701, Taiwan, ROC

Abstract

Rapid acceptance of the relationship paradigm, within marketing, is in no small part due to the powerful metaphor of marketing-as-relationship. Through observation of localized television home shopping (THS), with its intensive use of communication between salesperson and customer, we examine how local meanings of relationship marketing are abstracted to their constituent values for broadcast over television, extending the metaphor of marketing-as-relationship to more accurately reflect differing values among American, Japanese, and Chinese retailing cultures. Combining observations with historical records, and ethnographic data, we propose culturally specific shopping relationship metaphors that help managers quickly understanding core local values of retailing.

© 2007 New York University. Published by Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Keywords: American culture; Chinese culture; Fraternity; Grounded theory; Japanese culture; Marketing relationship; Metaphor; Renao; Sabisu; Television home shopping

As you can see, we thrive on a lot of the traditions of small-town America . . .

Sam, Walton, John Huey (1992)

サービスとはお客さまの立場に立ちなから、
豊かな感性で心を伝えることであり、
心を伝えなければサービスにはならないのである。

窪山哲雄《サービスの哲学》(東京：OS社、2003)

Tetsuo Kuboyama (2003)

热闹就是商业成功 (Renao IS business success)

北京青年报2003年04月01日17

Beijing Today (April 1, 2003)

The first home shopping program, *Let's Go Teleshopping*, was broadcast in 1946. Viewers at home followed a shopper (an actor) around a department store, imagining they

too were in the store (McCarthy 2001, p. 85). Teleshopping failed to catch on until a non-narrative paradigm of interaction with a salesperson was developed in the 1980s. Television home shopping's (THS) emphasis on salespeople and their localized, even personalized, relationships affords insight into retailing differences at the collective level of cultural frameworks (Holt 1997). Through observation of localized television home shopping, we examine how local meanings of relationship marketing are abstracted to their constituent values for broadcast over television. These values exhibit differences fundamental to successful retailing in the respective cultures, differences that technology has empowered rather than standardized (Mooij and Hofstede 2002). Our goal is to extend the widely used metaphor of marketing-as-relationship, to more accurately reflect differing values among American, Japanese, and Chinese retailing cultures. Such an approach follows Hirschman's (1988) suggestion to examine the metaphors within the media (in our case, THS) that mediate the meaning of consumption.

This article is organized as follows. Existing observations of what constitutes American THS relationships are first reviewed. Secondly, integrating existing television shopping literature, direct observation in three cultural settings, and cultural histori-

* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: cwarden@libra.seed.net.tw (C.A. Warden), yoshi@ccms.nkfust.edu.tw (S.C.-T. Huang), tcliu@mail.ncku.edu.tw (T.-C. Liu), wanyi@mail.ncku.edu.tw (W.-Y. Wu).

cal data, we consider the underlying shopping analogy employed within each of the three cultures. Special attention is paid to tangible service evidence, such as people, processes, and physical cues, which Bitner (1992) has collectively labeled servicescape and to which Tombs and McColl-Kennedy (2003) have added social interactions. Thirdly, content analysis is employed to confirm the fit of the analogies with the servicescapes presented on the television screen. Lastly, results are combined with ethnographic data to uncover culturally specific metaphors that act as explanatory theory (Strauss and Corbin 1998) and supply not only insight to THS, but also reveal core values that are instrumental to the consumption ideologies of each local culture.

Theoretical foundations

A form of direct marketing, THS employs a continuous live broadcast format, emphasizing relationship building as an alternative to interpersonal interaction (Stephens et al. 1996). Viewers build a connection with a broadcast that mimics social interaction. This parasocial relationship (Rubin and Perse 1987) is accomplished through regularly scheduled programs with hosts or characters who appear as familiar sources of advice within a desirable social setting (O'Sullivan 1999). Audience members' enjoy and appreciate call-in guests (testimonials), resulting in feelings of friendship with hosts and shared shopping experiences with co-viewers (Skumanich and Kintsfather 1998). To create the parasocial relationship, THS salespeople utilize a profound understanding of viewers' values and aspirations.

Stephens et al. (1996, p. 196) described American THS as emphasizing, "... a sense of friendship and intimacy with the host." Tapping into core cultural values can be a very successful sales strategy. The same strategy placed in a different culture, however, can have radically different results. For example, Schneider (1998) points out Wal-Mart's difficulty in reconciling globalization forces with its mythic values of Americana (Arnold et al. 2001). Successful servicescapes wrap the service/product, signaling what is inside (Baker 1987), while also meeting localized expectations (Chin 1998). Simultaneously intimate and elaborate, THS requires a high level of attention to the servicescape, as television production is composed of minutiae pregnant with culturally specific code (Fiske 1987). The current research employs a grounded theory approach to create a predictive framework, through metaphor, that describes consumption relationships across three cultures.

Methodology

Television shopping channels were chosen across three cultures for their similar orientation, popularity, and cultural distance from each other. The Quality, Value, and Convenience (QVC) channel in America (<http://qvc.com>) was the most popular shopping channel (majority owned by Liberty Media) with 2004 revenues of US\$ 4.1 billion. Japan QVC (<http://qvc.jp>) was the most successful Japanese shopping channel. Launched in 2001, with QVC America holding 60% ownership and Mitsui Company the remainder, all production, merchandising, distribution, and service were handled locally within Japan, with

2003 revenue topping US\$ 245 million. The People's Republic of China's media did not, at the time of this study, offer a viable television shopping channel. In contrast, Taiwan offered a fully developed, independent, and active media including home shopping channels, (a total of five by 2005). Eastern Home Shopping Network (EHSN) was Taiwan's largest and longest running THS channel, established in 1999 (<http://etmall.com.tw>). Wholly owned by the media conglomerate Eastern Multimedia Company; EHSN reported revenue of US\$ 875 million in 2004. Investigation of these three channels confirmed their adherence to the general THS format and similarity in product placement and representative appearances, facilitating inclusion in a grounded theory research approach, described next.

Grounded theory

Grounded theory is an inductive research approach that deconstructs and re-arranges text, from subjects under study, identifying categories and concepts in order to form substantive theory (Strauss and Corbin 1998). The three stages of grounded theory (not necessarily sequential) are open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. Open coding examines text for low-level categories, through a process described as the constant comparative method. This stage was implemented in the current research by assigning three researchers to each view one THS channel, depending on language expertise. A fourth researcher, familiar with all three languages, viewed programming on all three channels. During a 4-month period (September 2002–January 2003), each researcher noted, on index cards, details of programming as well as personal feelings toward the programs. The sample included both non-holiday and holidays (Lunar New Year, Christmas, and Seibo) supplying both gift-giving events and normal occasions. Approximately 320 cards were completed by each researcher. Simultaneously, each researcher visited the country of his/her language expertise, observing local shopping environments and noting any similarities to THS. This ethnographic thrust helped to ground any developing theory in actual local behavior.

Axial coding combines categories in a paradigm that contextualizes phenomena and tests new data against the developing paradigm (Strauss and Corbin 1998). In the current project, researchers met on a weekly basis, comparing categories and combining observations. Commonalities and differences were sought out in the independent viewing, followed up by discussion. Early in this stage, analogous local retail channels were obvious, leading to category development in the form of analogies. Similarities and differences between THS and local physical shopping settings in each country were presented through field notes, photographs, personal observations and experiences, and existing historical and research literature. After 2 months of meetings, categories were completed, represented in the form of shopping analogies.

Selective coding builds a theoretical framework from a small number of core categories and then uses it deductively for testing and elaboration (Priest et al. 2002). At this stage, the analogies for THS were clarified with input from structure-mapping and content analysis. Armed with the shopping analogies, the

researchers next visited specific physical retail environments in each country to seek similarities in meaning. The shopping analogies were then linked with larger abstract cultural values to create shopping metaphors that could be applied in a wider context. Thus, the three stages resulted in analogies, described next, followed by marketing metaphors.

Analysis

Deconstructing relationships: open coding

In America, QVC call-in customers are initially asked by a host, “What is your first name and where are you from?” Testimonials are customarily framed by informal conversation starters, “How is the weather out there?” and gestures of commonality, “My nephew lives out there. I’m so glad you could be here with us today.” often sharing personal information, “That’s my Mom’s name. She is quite a gal, and I’m sure you are too.” Call-in guests (customer testimonials) regularly spend more time talking about the hosts than the products, “I really like your personality! You are my favorite host on QVC.” It is not uncommon for female call-in guests to express affection toward male hosts, “I love you Dave.” Banter between program host and product representative is often highly personalized and occasionally (when genders are mixed) includes flirting and sexual overtones that can also be directed at call-in guests, “Oh, you know with these binoculars I am looking at you right now Lisa, and you are looking so good tonight.” This banter can accidentally touch on sensitive topics as the hosts and guests are open to nearly any line of inquiry.

Host: I don’t want to ask about your sleeping arrangements, but have you experienced the motion transfer of this mattress, Shirley?

Guest: Well I don’t have that problem, because I lost my husband two years ago.

Host: Ah, I’m sorry to hear that, Shirley.

Stepping into personal topics is a measure of just how open on-air conversations are in American THS. A personal emphasis creates an artificial environment of buying from a friend (Auter and Moore 1993), allowing essentially passive viewers to participate vicariously in these publicly personal conversations. Cook (2000) argues that QVC carries on a discourse that is very aware of the viewing segment’s anxieties concerning social class, offering solutions, and simultaneously reinforcing those anxieties. The direct and confident communication style exhibited by hosts and guests at QVC in America, along with references to commonality in both location of viewer and similar tastes, is analogous to the American concept of neighborliness in the economic exchange context of the yard sale. Herrmann (1996, p. 714) found U.S. yard sales to engender the spirit of community where “Sellers often take pleasure in the enjoyment shoppers derive from their things and frequently develop something of a personal relationship in their brief encounters with customers.” Inviting people into the yard or the garage encourages feelings of hospitality, and economic maximizing

behaviors, such as bargaining, can violate any sense of neighborliness (Herrmann 2003). This neighborly yard sale analogy is present throughout QVC programming, with hosts often talking about their own families and addressing guests as friends of the family, “Make sure you stop by some time, my husband and I would love to have you over for dinner.” Hosts frequently emphasize what the product for sale means to them, “When I wear this to church, I sit in the front row.” This potent analogy may not hold the same meaning in distant cultures, which we examine next.

Commercial artifacts can appear identical around the globe, yet embedded meaning can be interpreted in a very different way or even outright transformed by local cultures (Miller 1995; Tobin 1992). For example, it is difficult to envision sleeping arrangements being publicly discussed by a salesperson in most Asian cultural settings. Similarly, well-established traditions surrounding public baths make bathing topics normal fare on Japanese television (Clark 1994), but uncommon in its American counterpart.

Consumers in Japan look to salespeople to explain not only a product’s attributes, but to take time making the sale through a soft-sell approach (Johansson 1994). Salespeople are expected to be humble, carrying on a long-term personal relationship (Nishiyama 2000), including customer dependence linked to the concept of *Amae* (Doi 1973). In Japan, QVC guests are addressed formally and never by first name. Initial screening of QVC Japan was most notable for its dearth of direct and intimate messages. Little emphasis was placed on any personal details, with nearly all attention centered on the product offered. Hosts uniformly employed cue cards with large graphics to elaborate what product representatives said, echoing the Japanese emphasis on graphics in publications (Fukuoka et al. 1999). Previews of upcoming shows regularly featured foreign product representatives who were accompanied by one of the Japanese hosts offering to introduce the viewer to a new and excellent product from overseas, “Bonjour France! This week is France Week and we will introduce new offerings from France.” During regular programming, these products were often accompanied with extended and detailed examples.

Call-ins were rare and often involved prize drawings, quickly ending with little conversation beyond formal expressions of greetings and thanks. When conversations between host and call-in guest did take place, they always stayed close to the product:

Host: Have you ever heard of this product?

Guest: Yes. I once ate pretty good rice at a friend’s home, and then found out the rice was cooked with this rice cooker. So, I stayed home today to watch this program and learn more about this product. I waited at home on purpose, because I cannot find this product at many stores.

Host: Yes, the material of which the product is made is different from other rice cookers. All you have to do is put the rice in, cook on a low heat, and then you can have delicious rice. This cooker cannot be found at any department stores.

Initial analysis led us to believe Japanese THS is analogous to the department store shopping experience in Japan. The importance of the Japanese department store as cultural mediator (Creighton 1991) cannot be overstated, importing not only foreign products, but also the context of those products through edutainment (Creighton 1992). Department stores in Japan are popular places to shop, integrating supermarkets, restaurants, coffee shops, and cultural exhibitions (Nishiyama 2000). Department stores also supply full service for the all-important gift-giving occasions in Japan, mainly Ochugen and Oseibo, as well as birthdays, graduations, weddings, and more recently, Western holidays, especially Christmas (Clammer 1997). A full service emphasis transfers well to the television medium, where the viewer/shopper is passive and taken care of by the salesperson, as in a department store. Finally, at the time of our study, QVC Japan itself was running an hourly thirty-second spot with two uniformed department store-like young ladies bowing and welcoming viewers to the network (an obvious reference to the department store experience). The historical development of department stores and their social role is unique to Japan, totally absent from the Chinese cultural setting, as described in the next section.

Direct marketing in China has been studied by Luk et al. (1999), who attributed its growing success to Chinese cultural reliance on *renqing* and *guanxi* (often, and not very accurately, translated as sensibility and relationship, respectively). Although these social characteristics are essential to Chinese relationships, attributing direct marketing success to these Confucian values may be misguided, as Confucianism centers more on what is common among people, and sharing it, than on exchange behavior. As DeGlopper (1995, p. 18) states, “Confucianism thus lacks a model of any sort of limited, functionally specific, contractual social relation.” Increasingly close relationships call for increases in reciprocity. For this very reason, shoppers may avoid family and other *renqing* and *guanxi* entanglements by shopping where they are anonymous (Hwang 1987). Notwithstanding the role of such behaviors in direct marketing, it is improbable that *renqing* or *guanxi* could be transferred to the television medium, where the consumer and host have no real contact and the viewer can easily escape social entanglements by pressing a button.

Preliminary screening of THS in Taiwan confirmed this rationale. No references were observed to any personal relationships or favors, rather, hosts single-mindedly emphasized the value of offerings in a method consistent with Hwang’s equity rule (1987): “This karaoke television machine has more features than any other and is priced much lower than any of the competing machines.” A strong emphasis on public face was often observed: “When you take this camera on vacation and tell everyone in your tour group the price you paid, they won’t even want to take any pictures, they’ll be so upset they spent too much [for their cameras].” Here, face is being judged along the dimension of performance, emphasizing that the purchase is a sign of ability and fits socially accepted norms, positively affecting *mianzi* (the social/positional aspect of face, Wong and Ahuvia 1998). Hedonistic consumption is traditionally discouraged among Chinese and practiced mostly in private or within a small group of close

friends. Thus, when splurging, Chinese prefer to visit a market with anonymity, attracting little community and extended family attention and avoiding the inevitable resulting gossip. Television supplies a completely anonymous shopping medium, while offering products bought by busy middle class Taiwanese.

Call-in guests were totally absent from the Taiwan THS broadcast, which always emphasized price savings. Most noticeable was a very fast pace, accompanied by the host’s loud voice. In many ways, Taiwan THS adopts what Americans and Japanese would label a hard-sell approach. Nevertheless, this high-energy sales tone is exactly what one finds in Taiwan night markets. Night markets have been central to Chinese shopping and social activity at least since the Sung Dynasty (960–1279 A.D.) remaining animated until the early morning hours, illuminated by Chinese lanterns. Yau (2004) found visiting night markets in Taiwan to be a preferred social activity, combining shopping, eating, and socializing. Most night markets in Taiwan cycle to different locations throughout the week, while the stationary markets tend to be very large, with such high density one can often find it difficult to walk. These factors make it easy to buy from an unknown vendor, allowing bargaining behavior not possible when relationships are involved. We assert Chinese THS is like visiting a night market.

Shopping analogy: axial coding

Each of the proposed analogies exhibited emic constructs reflecting unique local values of the buyer–seller relationship. Thus, an individual analogy formed a category that we tested for differences (discriminability) with the other two THS samples by employing content analysis, described in the next section. Within each category, similarities (systematicity) between the respective local shopping analogy and THS observations were examined through structure-mapping (Gentner 1982). Resulting structure maps for the respective base (THS) to target analogies (see Appendix A) exhibited high levels of richness and clarity, supporting validity of the analogies and the inferences they sanction. All three THS channels were recorded in the summer of 2002. Five hours of programming from each country were randomly selected and viewed by three judges (each judge with language ability and extensive experience in at least two of the source countries). All activity within the servicescape was classified and combined to create a content analysis form, with the single unit of analysis based on a unique product offering. Analysis attempted to capture as much of the servicescape as possible, as described by Bitner (1992), including ambient conditions, space/function, and signs/symbols and artifacts, and social factors (Baker 1987), all of which are potentially culturally relevant.

Copies of VCD disks were sent to groups of judges solicited for expertise in source language. Three separate copies were sent to different judges within a language group. A total of 332 unique products were categorized. A unique product was judged acceptable for analysis when for the same product two judges agreed on 80% of corresponding servicescape components, leaving a total of 282 distinct product offerings for analysis. Applying Perreault and Leigh’s (1989) approach to measuring reliability of nominal data based on qualitative judgments resulted in category inter-

Table 1
Content analysis results

Variables	Statistical test	Interpretation
Counting down time or inventory	$\chi^2 = 216.47, P < .005$	Appeared only once in Japan, but made up two thirds of both the Taiwan and American programs, reflecting an effort to avoid pressuring Japanese viewers.
Music	$\chi^2 = 47.92, P < .005$	Most frequent in Taiwan, music in local THS included lyrics 54.5% of the time and over 60% of the lyrics were in English, all contributing to an exciting and charged atmosphere for Chinese viewers.
Number of people appearing in support of a single product	$F = 60.52, d.f. = 2, N = 281$	Japanese THS never showed more than four people (including any call-in guests) during a single product offering, while the Taiwan program exhibited five or more people (with no call-ins) 45% of the time, adding to the exciting and crowded night market atmosphere. American THS exhibited four or more people less than 10% of the time, mostly call-in guests, contributing to the congenial and friendly atmosphere.
Set design	$\chi^2 = 121.57, P < .005$	Taiwan THS displayed a majority of its products within a basic television studio set without any furniture, walls, or simulation of a products' natural use environment. America THS employed a plain studio often augmented with simple props, including windows, tables, and flowers. These examples contrast with Japan, where products were displayed within highly detailed sets.
Pressure to buy	$\chi^2 = 101.33, P < .005$	Japanese hosts never pressured buyers with statements related to a last chance. A pressure tactic was observed in 73% of the Taiwan offers and in only 17% of the American offers.
Expert explanation and detailed technical data	$\chi^2 = 18.91, P < .005$	Most often offered in Japan (81.1%), closely followed by America (76%) and least often in Taiwan (13.6%).

judge reliabilities (I_r) from .82 to 1. Since most measures were categorical, Chi-Squared Interaction Detection (CHAID) analysis was undertaken, except where the data permitted ANOVA analysis. CHAID classifies categorical data by splitting a group into segments that differ significantly in respect to a dependent variable based on interaction effects. Findings aligned well with the suggested analogies (see Table 1).

Selective coding: marketing metaphor

Although the analogies are helpful in understanding local shopping paradigms, they, like all analogies, are limited in heuristic utility. Analogies build on direct comparisons, dependent on the adjective *like*, and are bound to specific examples. Metaphors are figures of speech, not mediated by explicit comparisons, which acquire their connotations through analogical structures of relationships and have meaning in everyday life (Lakoff and Johnson 2003). In developing metaphors, we seek to describe a template to interpret each culture's shopping relationship between buyer and seller with implications in other marketing contexts (Cornelissen 2003). We remain relevant within each specific culture (emic) by developing respective metaphors through language incorporating substantive local meaning. Combining content analysis results with local observations and interviews, we next developed a grounded theory expressed through marketing relationship metaphors, described in the following sections.

Putnam's (2000) observation that Americans' have a strong desire for community and fraternity is reminiscent of Tocqueville's (1850/1969, p. 516) claim that Americans easily form associations. Although this proclivity has fluctuated throughout American history (Gamm and Putnam 1999), Americans view it with nostalgia, related to living in small communities where everyone knew and associated with each other. Yard sales recall these times, bringing people together in a personalized space without contemporary corporate retail

trappings. Craigslist (<http://www.craigslist.org>) transfers those values to the Internet, emphasizing community and commonality, while actively avoiding the impersonal space of online auctions.

Modern associations are often based on consumption patterns and common interests involving mass-produced consumer goods. Kozinets (2001), for example, found that Star Trek subculture provided boundaries that legitimized consumption through fraternity of fandom. In the U.S., a cosmetics saleswoman commented to us that her best customers had become close friends, "They call me for orders even after they've moved far away because they trust me and we know each other; we're friends." This type of friendship was cited as an enabler of American hairstylist-client marketing relationships by Price and Arnould (1999). While these friendships include personal disclosure, they tend not to comprise meetings outside of an economic exchange context and are often based on associated commonality in professionalism and work interests, much like fraternities. Hosts on QVC often emphasize commonality, as when one host responded to a call-in customer, "We must be like kindred sisters." Consequentially, the text of mass sales through mass media is mutated to a friendly and personal text of window shopping with friends, friendly advice (word of mouth), and shared fraternal values. Thus, our first metaphor: Marketing-as-Fraternity¹ (American marketing relationship).

When imported into Japan in the early 20th century, department stores became distinctly Japanese, co-opting the Japanese tradition of gift-giving and educating consumers about appropriate consumption (Clammer 1997). As Creighton (1991, p.

¹ Fraternity is defined in the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* (Springfield: Merriam-Webster, 11th Edition) as (1) a group of people associated or formally organized for a common purpose, interest, or pleasure (2) the quality or state of being brothers (3) persons of the same class, profession, character, or tastes.

677) points out, “If department stores are successful at creating meaning, their offerings will sell, and the stores may elude the appearance of being ‘hard-sell’ artists.” The pre-twentieth century Japanese word for service (奉仕, ho-shi) was used in the context of service to one’s country or superiors (loyalty), and more salient to the current use, had extended and elaborate overtones of sacrifice with no commercial implications. Since department stores and consumerism, for that matter, were imported, it was natural to also import the commercial context of the English word *service*: *sabisu* (サービス). The new word was assimilated and wrapped in layers of commercial meaning, entailing bundling something for free, exceptional treatment for special customers, and extended (long-term) relationships with customers (Kuboyama 2003), while always referencing the sacrifice of ho-shi, such as when giving something for free, or volunteering. Wrapping of meaning is common both metaphorically and literally in Japan. Hendry (1995) has pointed out the power of unwrapping as a tool in understanding the multiplicity of Japanese meanings. *Sabisu*, rather than meaning one thing in all cases, is highly context specific and can be examined in terms of its wrapping.

Sabisu wraps all Japanese marketing relationships, but in a relative way. Consumers daily seek the convenience of vending machines (one vending machine for every 20 people) and of 7-Elevens (11,069 stores in 2005), the later, Japan’s top food retailer and consistently high revenue generator, making its parent company, Ito-Yokado, one of the largest retailers in Japan, (Melville 1999). Like discount retailers and medium level department stores, these channels depend on economies of scale, efficient logistics, and low pricing to draw customers and make a profit. *Sabisu* cannot be ignored, but is often only referenced, as when part-time convenience store attendants offer service, vending machines sell pre-wrapped gifts, electronic audio loops replace salesgirls in reciting product benefits, and low prices replace high fashion. *Sabisu* is executed to perfection at the top department stores when ho-shi’s traditional implied sacrifice elegantly combines with modern consumption.

In our visits to Japanese department stores in Japan, we often found gift departments with customers sitting at computer terminals being guided through the complexities of gift selection and delivery (gift-giving plays a central role in Japanese social relations, Rupp 2003). As one shopper pointed out, “They can take care of everything for you here. They have good *sabisu*.” Large numbers of employees are assigned to the all-important, intricate, and meaningful gift-wrapping area (Matsunaga 2000, p. 62). As Barthes (1982, p. 46) states, “Thus the box acts the sign: as envelope, screen, mask, it is *worth* what it conceals, protects, and yet designates.” This wrapping is signaled throughout the department store’s servicescape, from elevator girls (in their smart uniforms and mechanistic precision) to small two meter square sales bays so immersed in detail that one must look carefully to find the specific product for sale. Wrapping signals shoppers the product is not simply a physical good, but is part of a larger meaning, thus giving a feeling of good *sabisu*. *Sabisu*’s emotional proximity to personal sacrifice, relationships, and commitments in Japanese culture can be capitalized on by small business vendors as well. Attention to

detail is commonly observed in compact noodle shops where one customer told us, “We enjoy not only the owner’s noodles, but also his reception, the ambience of the shop and the hospitality from his heart. That feeling is hard to tell you very exactly, but I am sure it is there.” It is this *emic* relationship feeling, outside of any specific business exchange construct, and quite distinct from Japanese concepts of friendship, that the *sabisu* metaphor references.

Sabisu is brought to the television screen by taking time to show each product in detail with extreme close-ups. As in top department stores, every detail of the servicescape brings meaning to the shopping relationship. This detailed approach extends to the wooden paneling and floorboards for a living room set or the porcelain tiles of a kitchen, with a modern (Western) emphasis. Tatami, straw floor mats used in most living spaces, are not used and shoes, not slippers, are worn even in household settings, referencing the shopping (not living) space. This subtle characteristic is important, because narrowing social distance between individuals decreases behaviors emphasizing humility, apologies, and gratitude. It is the traditionally large distance between seller and buyer that culturally dictates an emphasis on formality. Creating a feeling of *sabisu*, however, allows a shortcut to a relationship that is both commercial and full of sacrifice, commitment, and context. Thus, our second metaphor: Marketing-as-*Sabisu*² (Japanese marketing relationship).

Yu (2004) notes *renao* (熱鬧) is a requirement for successful Chinese night markets. *Renao* is a Chinese word often translated as lively, bustling, or exciting, but none of these translations capture the meaning well. Any place with lots of activity is positively described as *renao*, and highly sought out (DeGlopper 1995). There are more than 10 large and famous night markets within the vicinity of the world’s tallest skyscraper—Taipei 101. We found night markets in Taiwan to be noisy and packed with lines of customers crammed together pushing down narrow walkways between stalls and owners hawking products with booming voices and occasionally bullhorns. A din of music can always be heard from the ever present CD sales stalls (often selling pirated CDs, VCDs, and DVDs).

We observed large numbers of people, including teenagers, visiting in groups. One such teen commented, “It’s exciting and fun to come to the night market . . . Bargaining for a lower price can get a great deal.” Bargaining behavior is important to Chinese shopping culture (Ackerman and Tellis 2001) and is vital to the *renao* atmosphere of night markets: it is replaced in THS by a parallel night market behavior of bundling products with free add-ons. In a number of interviews, the presence of *renao* was specifically cited as an important motivator of shopping on THS: “I often call my girlfriend and we talk on the phone while watching ETMall—it is just like going to the night market, very *renao*.” The quality of *renao* is commonly associated with successful economic activity and many retailers in Taiwan leverage this to their advantage.

² *Sabisu* is defined in the *Daijirin Dictionary* (Tokyo: Sanseido Books, 2nd edition) as (1) take care and devote yourself to the partner in service mind and spirit (2) provide guest with convenience when selling something.

Chinese retailers, such as supermarkets, commonly contain independent stalls with sellers hawking their goods over bullhorns, drawing crowds (Ramaseshan et al. 2006). Wu (1997, p. 129) observes how McDonalds in Taiwan capitalizes on renao by creating a renao atmosphere that resembles temple bazaars (historically and currently centers of renao activity); not surprisingly, “the Golden Arches has more symbolic meaning for many youngsters than does the local temple.” This slipping of a modern consumer relationship into the shoe of traditional interpersonal relationships works especially well for renao. Appearing in the earliest of Chinese novels, renao is rarely associated directly with commerce. In *The Dream of the Red Chamber* (considered the pinnacle of classical Chinese fiction), renao appears at least 70 times, being used at different times to indicate crowds, loud sounds, and social activities, aligning well with Pan’s (1993) three psychological categories required for successful renao (crowds, noise, & events). Additionally, in *The Dream of the Red Chamber*, renao is used to indicate a scene, general content, or composition of a pleasing nature, showing renao’s relationship to a generally pleasing aesthetic. Temples, religious ceremonies, marriages, and even funerals, in Taiwan, are all judged on their level of renao. For Chinese, renao reaches perfection during the most important holiday of the Lunar New Year, when families are reunited, including the dead, in an ideal fantasy of non-separation. Stafford (2000, p. 51) observes of renao, during the 15-day festival, “While the intense togetherness of the Lunar New Year festival is perhaps not very desirable as a mode of everyday life, it is precisely what is imagined during the festival to be the ideal form of existence.” Thus, renao links to deep feelings of security and contentment and when used to wrap consumption can be very successful in quickly establishing a relationship, simulated or real.

De Mente (2000, p. 328) notes that renao is related to the way crowds easily form in China, “In large cities, even minor incidents can draw huge numbers of people in a matter of minutes.” At the personal level, renao reflects a preferred psychological state that stands in stark contrast to the very negative state of being alone or isolated (within the highly collective values of Chinese culture). Recent literary analysis by Santangelo (2003, p. 227), specifically mentions how renao represents one end of a happiness spectrum, with the positive renao related to belonging to the group, and the negative opposite being alone, or more individualistic and as a consequence, lonely.

Many Taiwanese note the chain reaction nature of crowds, as one respondent told us, “People will line up whenever they see a line, even when they don’t know what for.” Long lines at bread stores in Taiwan for Dan Ta (egg tarts) in the late 1990s have recently been replaced by lines for doughnuts. At a Mister Donut shop, in the Tianmu district (a very renao locality) of Taipei, we talked to people waiting in a long line, during the winter of 2005, and found that most were unfamiliar with the product, but drawn by the lines. As one queuing customer told us, “There must be something good; so many people are spending a long time in line to buy it.” Similar stores in different locations mysteriously lack any lines at all. Without existing renao, a location is said to be *cold* and is generally avoided. Supermarkets and hypermarkets dot every cityscape in the Taiwan, including

Wellcome, Auchan, Tesco, Costco, Makro, and Carrefour, with total reported sales of US\$ 2.2 billion in 2002 (Hsueh 2003), yet wet markets and street stalls alone, in the same year, generated over six times more revenue. Shoppers, every morning and afternoon, crowd open air markets to buy food, shoes, clothes, and many daily supplies. Renao is not universally applied, nor when attempted always successful, but when it does take hold, retailing success follows as shoppers feel comfortable in crowded shopping situations, and are even drawn to them. Therefore, our third metaphor: Marketing-as-Renao³ (Chinese marketing relationship). Differences and similarities of the metaphors, as well as their relevance, are discussed in the next section.

Discussion

A standardized production format for THS has diffused globally, from its West Chester, Pennsylvania, QVC origins, based on a non-narrative structure, with live hosts accompanied by product representatives creating a relationship with television viewers. Cultural assumptions of what constitutes a marketing relationship, however, have not diffused along with THS technology. Through local observation of THS and shopping behavior, we found salient differences in approaches in Japan, Taiwan, and the US to simulating a retail relationship between THS hosts and viewers. In each case, the servicescape, including behaviors, corresponds closely to locally popular retail settings that have cultural relevance.

In the American sample, THS is analogous to a yard sale, with informal and relaxed hosts who often interact with friendly call-in customers, personalizing conversations, and making intimate disclosures. Neighborliness is emulated through common values, experiences, and consumption—never wandering far from the product at hand. Our Japanese sample is analogous to a Japanese department store, with THS viewers treated to formal product contextualization framed in an educational dialog with no sales pressure. Viewers are passive, while served by hosts. Taiwan THS is bursting out of the screen, analogous to Chinese night markets, including crowds, loud music, and colorful animated graphics. Hosts pressure viewers with last chance offers and special low prices, for bundles of products, not to be found anywhere else. Completely abstract sets are often crowded with young models moving about to Western syncopated music, holding samples, striking poses, and generally adding excitement and movement to the scene.

Local THS has not only imitated analogous retail channels, but adopted core local values that signal a culturally specific marketing relationship in order to jump-start a commercial relationship sans physical presence. Through grounded theory, we have drawn out a culturally local metaphor for each relationship that can be used in marketing activities outside of THS, assisting in understanding local values and assumptions of marketing relationships between buyers and sellers.

³ Renao is defined in *Lanbridge Concise Chinese-English Dictionary* (Taipei: Lanbridge) as (1) lively; bustling with noise and excitement (2) liven up; have a jolly time (3) a scene of bustle and excitement; a thrilling sight.

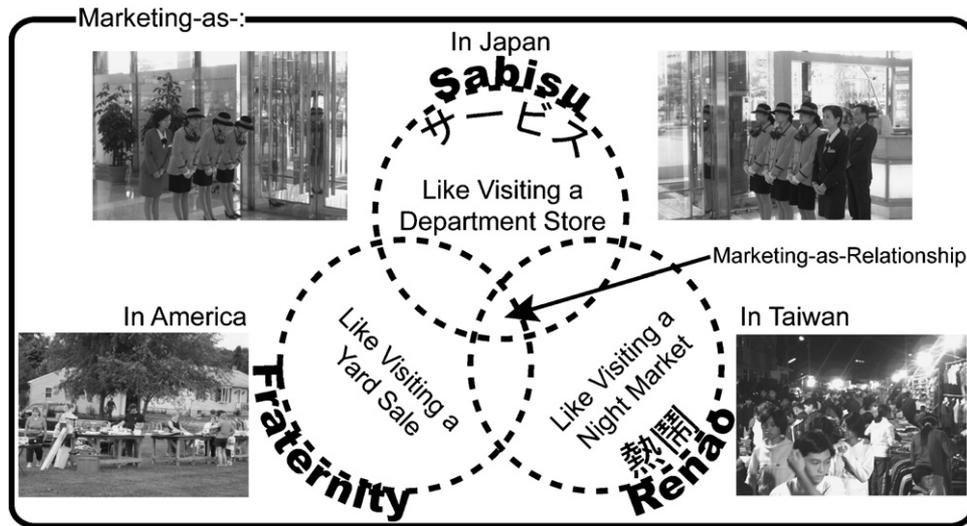


Fig. 1. Resulting marketing metaphors (photos by C. Warden & M. Turton).

The general structural metaphor of marketing-as-relationship is elaborated in the American cultural setting to reflect an emphasis on association through informality, friendship, personal disclosure, and commonality, yet always within the context of a common exchange goal, resulting in the metaphor of marketing-as-fraternity. Within the Japanese setting, the marketing relationship is specified through an emphasis on service that includes free service (not directly charged), special treatment, and complete assistance (from product choice to delivery and follow-up). Contextualized service avoids direct sales pressure and keeps product design and packaging details congruent with Japanese customs. This results in the metaphor of marketing-as-sabisu. The Chinese cultural setting, in Taiwan, presents another unique emphasis, with relationships positively associated with large crowds, confined spaces, loud voices and music, lines, and bargains through low prices as well as haggling. Such conditions are associated with exciting and bustling markets, supporting the metaphor of marketing-as-renao.

The three shopping metaphors are summarized in Fig. 1 where each metaphor is represented by a circle with its corresponding core analogy in the center. Numerous analogous relations are possible even with some overlapping. Where all three circles overlap, analogous constructs among all three cultures can be described by the general global metaphor of marketing-as-relationship. Apart from this commonality, any one of the metaphors fails to elicit its intended associations when applied outside of its own cultural setting, discussed next.

Discriminant validity of metaphors

Fraternal activity has played little importance in Chinese social structures, displaced by a strong family emphasis. In Japan, social structures are more often linked to employers and colleagues. In both Japan and Taiwan, crime syndicates tend to be perceived as fraternal organizations, implying strong negative perceptions of fraternity. Confucian traditions emphasize actual family relationships over community, and even within the family, relationships are highly structured. Close friendship lowers

formality in both cultures and opens the door to undesirable pressures when issues of economic exchange are involved. As one of our Chinese informants told us, “Even though my cousin is a beautician, I don’t go to her because she always feels she needs to give me a discount; How can she make any money that way!” Many Chinese would be concerned with what favors may be asked in return, since friendship, especially family ties, makes refusal of requests virtually impossible.

Sabisu’s overarching emphasis on detail cannot be shortcut. As in our THS sample, products in Japan are often de-emphasized while their context is hyper-detailed. In contrast, the American THS set displays objects behind hosts in an abstract minimalist fashion to signal the setting, as when eight foot tall plaster Ionic columns reference an outdoor garden area (for a garden show). The contrast is even starker in the Taiwan setting where no attempt to contextualize products is made, like night market settings where stalls appear to be out of place (any location can be renao) and out of time (a bare light bulb refutes the time of night). Such abstraction for Japanese consumers is a clear sign of the lack of sabisu.

American shoppers feel discomfort when as few as three people are present in the same shopping aisle (Argo et al. 2005), in contrast, a crowded renao atmosphere is not something to be avoided, but purposely sought out in Taiwan. Crowded conditions are common in Japan, such as the Tokyo train station, yet the crowds are organized, guided, and taken care of by service providers. Attempts in Taiwan to organize and structure night markets have resulted in accusations of renao being replaced by a sterilized and cold shopping environment. The three metaphors are thus exclusive, yet there are limitations to their application, which we examine next.

Limitations

While a metaphor represents underlying values of a culture across numerous situations, increasing generalizability decreases relevance to any specific individual; excessively general metaphors become stereotypes. Any specific seller-

buyer context, and differences among cultures, can be the result of habituation rather than what we have labeled culture (Griffin et al. 2000). No single product is sold on the basis of its fraternity-ness, sabisu-ness, or reano-ness. These metaphors express large, and porous, boundaries between the three cultures while describing a template local consumers employ to contextualize the local seller–buyer relationship.

Each metaphor is reinterpreted in any specific local consumption setting by individual consumers. Not all residents of Taiwan will jump into a queue for doughnuts, as one person passing the doughnut line commented to us, “I don’t want to wait in line that long.” A Japanese informant told us, “Going to the department store is so much trouble, I can just buy what I need in the neighborhood store,” while the American informant working in cosmetics told us, “Some customers don’t want to be friendly at all, but just go through a shopping list.” The advantage of all metaphors lies not in their detailed description of reality, but in their capability to quickly express complex structures in easy to understand human terms, while leaving room for divergent circumstances.

Managerial implications

This research confirms the marketing metaphor of marketing-as-relationship plays an important role in jumpstarting a commercial connection between firms and customers within three distant cultures, yet the meaning of relationship was found to differ radically in its localized context. The very power of the relationship metaphor presents dangers in assumptions of a universal meaning—assumptions about what patrons expect in a relationship and what specific relationship behaviors mean. For example, a show of friendship, assumed normal for Americans, could be insulting for Japanese, such as when Doi (1973) found the American tendency to offer choices and options to actually be inconsiderate. Small-talk for Americans can be perceived as artificial or even intrusive in Japanese or Chinese cultural settings, while American’s can find the Japanese emphasis on formality and hierarchy (with the retailer clearly on a lower footing) cold and even insulting. Americans see nothing positive about having to wait in line (Grewal et al. 2003), yet this very phenomenon is central to drawing enthusiastic customers in a Chinese reno setting. Drawing on our findings, we offer the following suggestions to managers developing a retailing relationship in a culture distant from the home culture.

Assume the local values of a commercial relationship differ significantly from your own

There is a dual risk in transporting the relationship metaphor from one culture to another. Firstly, a retailer may incur costs attempting to meet expectations that do not exist, such as increasing floor space to lower the crowd levels in a Chinese cultural setting. Secondly, efforts may actually have negative effects, as in training frontline employees to offer more options to customers and treat customers like friends in a Japanese cultural setting. Assuming values differ, begins the search for the localized relationship metaphor.

Seek local managers in tune with the local retail environment, not the parent firm’s environment

Hiring local managers is one strategy often employed to avoid the risks inherent in retailing in distant cultures, yet such managers are often sought for their fit with the foreign parent firm (such as language ability, or overseas education). Such biased selection may act to reinforce the relationship values of the parent firm. For example, during our field work, a manager of a large Western discount hypermart in Taiwan told us how the company surpassed local operators in store design, with open isles, and cleanliness. This informant then linked these achievements with the retailer attracting a *higher class* customer in Taiwan, even though the discount retailer’s target market segment was anything but higher class. A group of local customers had indeed responded to the imported assumptions of the relationship—including numerous expatriates and locals who had lived overseas. They, in turn, responded with behaviors normal for the relationship. From the manager’s perspective, all was as it should be, with the exception of market penetration being too low and the target market segment not aligning with actual customers. Such myopia results in firms obtaining local customers who are similar to home market customers, yet constitute only a fraction of the potential local market, and who may differ from the target market segment.

Assume class structures will differ widely among cultures

Assumptions of class structure are easy to apply in a foreign setting, such as the previous example where a higher class customer is thought to appreciate larger spaces and a certain kinds of design and service. In other words, customers who hold values that align closer to the parent firm’s culture are assumed to be normal, when in fact, such values may constitute a very different class of consumer at the local level.

Seek information and experiences about local consumers’ underlying values rather than simple demographics and casual observation

Target market segments may have similar demographics as those from the home culture, from which it is assumed similar values and behaviors follow. Youth culture, for example, easily appears highly convergent among teens in America, Japan, and Taiwan, with disposable income, clothing fashions, popular brands, movies, music, and Internet usage highly similar. As one Western manager in Taiwan told us, “MTV here looks exactly the same as MTV at home.” Music television is indeed highly similar in form and format around the world, but its local content and meaning differs radically (Kumar and Welz 2003). Taiwan MTV reflects local values, which contrast sharply with those of its American counterpart; “what has been internationalized is not American cultural values, but the core product of youth-oriented rock-and-roll videos, now adopted, transformed, and translated through the local culture” (Warden et al. 2002, p. 81). Any assumptions that values follow formats or demographics are apt to be wrong.

Conclusion

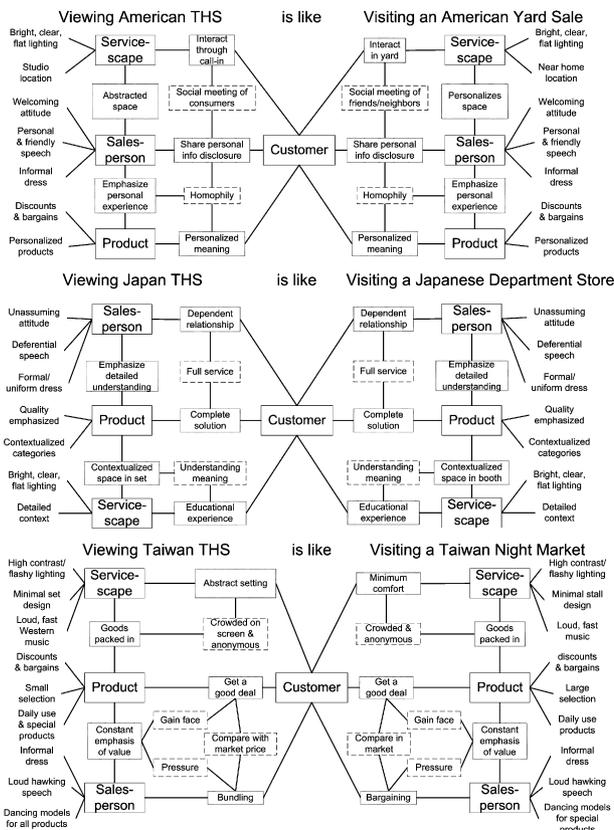
Assumptions of modernity and global trends toward common values are widespread, reinforced by local managers who speak English and the availability of English media. All these assumptions are likely to be increasingly inaccurate as cultural distance grows. Tweaking one’s existing value system may not be sufficient in adapting to the radically different localized concepts of marketing-as-relationship. Technological communication channels, such as THS, increase the importance of adopting local relationship values as customers seek common ground to develop a meaningful connection. Our resulting metaphors quickly summarize a thick description within three cultures, extending the general metaphor of marketing-as-relationship. Localized marketing metaphors can help marketers and researchers avoid the pitfalls of cross-cultural retailing and assist in quickly aligning with important local values of exchange.

Acknowledgements

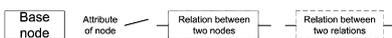
We would like to thank the three anonymous JR reviewers, who supplied so much help in deepening our cultural understanding, as well as all the respondents in the USA, Japan, and Taiwan, who graciously gave us their time.

Financial support for the current research was supplied by the National Science Council, Taiwan.

Appendix A



Notes



References

Ackerman, David and Gerard Tellis (2001). "Can Culture Affect Prices? A Cross-Cultural Study of Shopping and Retail Prices," *Journal of Retailing*, 77 (1) 57–82.

Argo, Jennifer J., Darren W. Dahl and Rajesh V. Manchanda (2005). "The Influence of a Mere Social Presence in a Retail Context," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 32 207–212.

Arnold, Stephen J., Robert V. Kozinets and Jay M. Handelman (2001). "Home-town Ideology and Retailer Legitimation: The Institutional Semiotics of Wal-Mart Flyers," *Journal of Retailing*, 77 (2) 243.

Auter, Philip J. and Roy L. Moore (1993). "Buying from a Friend: A Content Analysis of Two Teleshopping Programs," *Journalism Quarterly*, 425–436.

Baker, Julie (1987). "The Role of Environment in Marketing Services: The Consumer Perspective," in *The Services Challenge: Integrating for Competitive Advantage*, J. A. Czepeil, C. A. Congram and J. Shanahan eds. Chicago, IL: American Marketing Association., 79–84.

Barthes, Roland. (1982). "Empire of Signs" (T. Richard Howard, Trans.). New York, NY: Hill and Wang.

Bitner, Mary Jo. (1992). "Servicescapes: The Impact of Physical Surroundings on Customers and Employees," *Journal of Marketing*, 56 (2) 57–71.

Chin, Elizabeth (1998). "Social Inequality and the Context of Consumption," in *Servicescapes*, J. F. Sherry Jr. ed. Chicago, IL: NTC Business Books, 591–617.

Clammer, John. (1997). *Contemporary Urban Japan: A Sociology of Consumption*, Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Clark, Scott (1994). *Japan, a View from the Bath*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Cook, Judi Puritz (2000). "Consumer Culture and Television Home Shopping Programming: An Examination of the Sales Discourse," *Communication & Society*, 3 (4) 373–391.

Cornelissen, Joep P. (2003). "Metaphor as a Method in the Domain of Marketing," *Psychology & Marketing*, 20 (3) 209–225.

Creighton, Miller R. (1991). "Maintaining Cultural Boundaries in Retailing: How Japanese Department Stores Domesticate Things Foreign," *Modern Asian Studies*, 25 (4) 675–709.

Creighton, Miller R. (1992). "The Depato: Merchandising the West While Selling Japaneseness," in *Re-Made in Japan*, J. J. Tobin ed. New York, NY: Yale University., 42–57.

De Mente, B.L. (2000). *The Chinese Have a Word for It: The Complete Guide to Chinese Thought and Culture*. Chicago, IL: Passport Books.

DeGlopper, Donald R. (1995). *Lukang: Commerce and Community in a Chinese City*, Albany, NY: New York Press.

Doi, Takeo (1973). *The Anatomy of Dependence*, New York: Kodansha International.

Fiske, John (1987). *Television Culture: Popular Pleasures and Politics*, New York, NY: Methuen & Co.

Fukuoka, Waka, Yukiko Kojima and Jan H. Spyridakis (1999). "Illustrations in User Manuals: Preference and Effectiveness with Japanese and American Readers," *Technical Communication*, 46 (2) 167–176.

Gamm, Gerald and Robert D. Putnam (1999). "The Growth of Voluntary Associations in America, 1840–1940," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 24 (4) 511–557.

Gentner, Dedre (1982). Are Scientific Analogies Metaphors? in *Metaphor: Problems and Perspectives*, D. S. Miall ed. Brighton, MA: Harvester., 106–132.

Grewal, Dhruv, Julie Baker, Michael Levy and Glenn B. Voss (2003). "The Effects of Wait Expectations and Store Atmosphere Evaluations on Patronage Intentions in Service-Intensive Retail Stores," *Journal of Retailing*, 79 (4) 259–268.

Griffin, Mitch, Barry J. Babin and Doan Modianos (2000). "Shopping Values of Russian Consumers: The Impact of Habituation in a Developing Economy," *Journal of Retailing*, 76 (1) 33–52.

Hendry, Joy (1995). *Wrapping Culture: Politeness, Presentation, and Power in Japan and Other Societies*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Herrmann, Gretchen M. (1996). "Women’s Exchange in the U.S. Garage Sale: Giving Gifts and Creating Community," *Gender & Society*, 10 (6) 703–728.

- Herrmann, Gretchen M. (2003). "Negotiating Culture: Conflict and Consensus in U.S. Garage-Sale Bargaining," *Ethnology*, 42 (3) 237–252.
- Hirschman, Elizabeth C. (1988). "The Ideology of Consumption: A Structural Syntactical Analysis of 'Dallas' and 'Dynasty'," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 15 (3) 344–359.
- Holt, Douglas B. (1997). "Poststructuralist Lifestyle Analysis: Conceptualizing the Social Patterning of Consumption in Postmodernity," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 23 (4) 326–350.
- Hwang, Kwang Kuo (1987). "Face and Favor: The Chinese Power Game," *American Journal of Sociology*, 92 (4) 944–974.
- Johansson, Johnny K. (1994). "The Sense of 'Nonsense': Japanese TV Advertising," *Journal of Advertising*, 23 (1) 17.
- Kozinets, Robert V. (2001). "Utopian Enterprise: Articulating the Meanings of Star Trek's Culture of Consumption," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 28 (1) 67–88.
- Kuboyama, Tetsuo (2003). *Service: The Key to Creating Quality Service Is to Have a Philosophical Mind*, Tokyo: OS.
- Kumar, Anand and Frank Welz (2003). "Approaching Cultural Change in the Era of Globalization: An Interview with T. K. Oommen," *Social Identities*, 9 (1) 93–115.
- Lakoff, George and Mark Johnson (2003). *Metaphors We Live By*, 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Luk, Sherriff T.K., Lorna Fullgrave and Stephen C.Y. Li (1999). "Managing Direct Selling Activities in China: A Cultural Explanation," *Journal of Business Research*, 45 (3) 257–266.
- Matsunaga, Louella (2000). *The Changing Face of Japanese Retail: Working in a Chain Store*, London: Routledge.
- McCarthy, Anna (2001). *Ambient Television*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Melville, Ian (1999). *Marketing in Japan*, Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Daniel Miller ed. (1995). London: Routledge Press.
- de Mooij, Marieke and Geert Hofstede (2002). "Convergence and Divergence in Consumer Behavior: Implications for International Retailing," *Journal of Retailing*, 78 (1) 61–69.
- Nishiyama, Kazuo (2000). *Doing Business with Japan: Successful Strategies for Intercultural Communication*, Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press.
- O'Sullivan, Patrick B. (1999). "Bridging the Mass-Interpersonal Divide Synthesis Scholarship in HCR," *Human Communication Research*, 25 (4) 569.
- Pan, Ing-hai (1993). "Renao: A Socio-Psychological Phenomenon of Chinese," *Indigenous Psychological Research (In Chinese)*, 1 330–337.
- Perreault, William D. Jr. and Laurence E. Leigh (1989). "Reliability of Nominal Data Based on Qualitative Judgements," *JMR, Journal of Marketing Research*, 26 (2) 135.
- Price, Linda L. and Eric J. Arnould (1999). "Commercial Friendships: Service Provider-Client Relationships in Context," *Journal of Marketing*, 63 (4) 38–56.
- Priest, Helena, Paula Roberts and Leslie Woods (2002). "An Overview of Three Different Approaches to the Interpretation of Qualitative Data. Part 1: Theoretical Issues," *Nurse Researcher*, 10 (1) 30–42.
- Putnam, Robert D. (2000). *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.
- Ramaseshan, B., Leslie S.C. Yip and Jae H. Pae (2006). "Power, Satisfaction, and Relationship Commitment in Chinese Store-Tenant Relationship and Their Impact on Performance," *Journal of Retailing*, 82 (1) 63–70.
- Rubin, A.M. and E.M. Perse (1987). "Audience Activity and Soap Opera Involvement: A Uses and Effects Investigation," *Human Communication Research*, 14 (2) 246–268.
- Rupp, Catherine (2003). *Gift-Giving in Japan: Cash, Connections, Cosmologies*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Santangelo, Paolo (2003). *Sentimental Education in Chinese History: An Interdisciplinary Textual Research on Ming and Qing Sources*, Leiden, Netherlands: Brill.
- Schneider, Mary Jo (1998). "The Wal-Mart Annual Meeting: From Small-Town America to a Global Corporate Culture," *Human Organization*, 57 (3) 292–299.
- Skumanich, Stephanie A. and David P. Kintsfather (1998). "Individual Media Dependency Relations within Television Shopping Programming: A Causal Model Reviewed and Revised," *Communication Research*, 25 (2) 200–219.
- Stafford, Charles (2000). *Separation and Reunion in Modern China*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Stephens, Debra Lynn, Ronald Paul Hill and Karyn Bergman (1996). "Enhancing the Consumer-Product Relationship: Lessons from the QVC Home Shopping Channel," *Journal of Business Research*, 37 (3) 193–200.
- Strauss, Anselm and Juliet Corbin (1998). *Basics of Qualitative Research. Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*, Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Joseph J. Tobin ed. (1992). New York, NY: Yale University.
- Tocqueville, Alexis De. (1969). "Democracy in America" (G. Lawrence, Trans.). New York, NY: Doubleday & Company (Original work published 1850).
- Tombs, Alastair. and Janet R. McColl-Kennedy (2003). "Social-Servicescape Conceptual Model," *Marketing Theory*, 3 (4) 447–475.
- Walton, Sam and John Huey (1992). *Sam Walton: Made in America*, New York, NY: Doubleday.
- Warden, Clyde, Mengkuan Lai and Wann-Yih Wu (2002). "How World-Wide Is Marketing Communication on the World Wide Web?," *Journal of Advertising Research*, 42 (5) 72–84.
- Wong, Nancy Y. and Aaron C. Ahuvia (1998). "Personal Taste and Family Face: Luxury Consumption in Confucian and Western Societies," *Psychology & Marketing*, 15 (5) 423–441.
- Wu, D.Y.H. (1997). "McDonald's in Taipei: Hamburgers, Betel Nuts, and National Identity," in *Golden Arches East*, J. L. Watson ed. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press., 110–135.
- Yu, Shuenn-Der (2004). "Hot and Noisy: Taiwan's Night Market Culture," in *Popular Culture in Modern Taiwan*, D. K. Jordan, A. D. Morris and M. L. Moskowitz eds. Honolulu, HI: Hawaii University Press., 129–149.