



Color Preferences and Consumer Identity

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Introduction

- Color is one of the most important product attributes to consider when looking at sensory consumption and it is inherently gendered with darker and bolder colors signifying masculinity and lighter pastel colors signifying femininity (Auster, 2012).
- An individual's consumption practices are so tightly linked to their sensory perception that changing even just the tint of a color allows marketers to target a specific group of consumers (Pink, 2016).
- This brings to question *the importance of color in gendered markets and the extent to which it enhances a consumer's identity*
- One company, in particular, that utilized color to target specific groups of consumers was The Stanley Company. They started offering their infamous 40oz Tumbler in a variety of tints/pastels which allowed them to tailor their product directly toward women and consequently revolutionize their brand.
- Thus, this project argues that by linking consumption practices to sensory perception, a gendered filter is directly placed on consumption. Consequently, this allows consumption practices to depict the social relations of consumers while offering them a creative outlet to express their personal differences which includes their gendered identity.

Methods

- This project began with the scanning of historical pictures taken from around the world that were then donated to FSU's college of entrepreneurship

Content analysis of the pictures was conducted specifically noting color differences between gendered and androgynous merchandise

- After reaching a collection pictures dedicated to male and female accessories (hats, gloves, and ties) color was seen as a vital marketing tool

its importance was then applied to common household items, specifically water bottles

- The Stanley Company's entrance into the feminine market was analyzed via the examination of interviews with the company's president, Terrence Reilly, and consumer reviews

The Stanley Company was focused on because color was isolated as the primary marketing tool used to target women



"you pick the Stanley for the day"

References

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Results

- Visually, there exists a major contrast in the color of male and female products, including clothing, accessories, and household items.

MEN → products consisted of bolder and darker shades following an analogous or complementary color scheme

WOMEN → Products consisted of lighter tints or pastels and typically followed a monochromatic color scheme

- Regarding the Stanley Company, the company's president Terrence Reilly, decided to start offering their 40oz Stanley Cup in a variety of colors and finishes to give the water bottle less of a utilitarian purpose and more of a decorative/aesthetic purpose

The Stanley Cup did not sell well with male consumers, but skyrocketed among female consumers

Changing the color scheme of the Stanley Cup to target the feminine market increased their annual revenue from \$73 million in 2019 to \$750 million in 2023 (Linebaugh, et al., 2024).

- The Stanley Cup gave female consumers a sense of belonging and enhanced their personality (Vega, 2023)

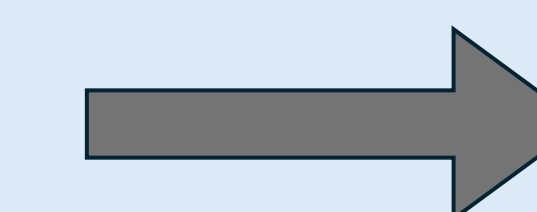
The aesthetic appeal of the cup allowed consumers to match their Stanley cup with their outfit, nails, and even mood

Discussion

- It appears that color plays an important role in sensory consumption
- Sensory consumption provides a repertoire of tangible information for consumers to visually express and articulate their identities.

The marketing strategy used by The Stanley Company to target women suggests that marketers, themselves, contribute to the creation of gendered identities

Marketers infuse products with their personal interpretation of gender stereotypes which are then confirmed when consumers buy such products.



- However, this project was limited by its methodological design and the number of slides scanned

The research was limited to the articles and information found online

- The results of this project show that color is an important marketing tool and offers a starting point for future research in color preferences

More research could be done on color preferences in different cultures and how this relates to different perceptions of gender stereotypes