

Friction in the sneakerhead consumer culture:

The morality of resellers versus collectors

A sneaker thesis by Seranque Litjes

Master Thesis

Business Administration: specialization Marketing

June, 2022

Supervisor: Dr. Paolo Franco

Second examiner: Dr. Nina Belei

Seranque Litjes, s1065366

PREFACE

In front of you lies my master's thesis: 'Friction in the sneakerhead consumer culture: The morality of resellers versus collectors.' This thesis is written to end the Master's study Business Administration, specialization Marketing, at Radboud University Nijmegen.

Before the beginning of this master's period, I have always had a passion for sneakers, and got involved as my friends started reselling. I saw that even though I bought sneakers for a decent price, they were worth three times as much in the meantime I had been wearing them. I wondered, why would people pay such a ridiculous amount of money for the same sneakers that I wear, but paid less for? And then I met Dr. Paolo Franco. A *sneakerhead* just like me. Gladly enough, he could help me supervise my thesis. This allowed me to indulge in my curiosity, about how this sneaker culture manifests around me. Not only for myself but even for educational purposes. I was determined to get involved in the culture and learn about the sneaker manifestations, and the ridiculous investing, hoarding, and trading.

When talking to sneakerheads during these five months, I read and learned about consumer culture, communities, and subcultures being involved. During this reading, it made me question why consumers themselves would resell, and how that is accepted within the community. Indeed, not everyone in the community likes that. But somehow these communities survive. I wanted to learn why, and I did.

During this period, I had the pleasure to meet new people, inside and outside the sneakerhead consumer culture. Therefore, I want to thank Dr. Paolo Franco for sharing his knowledge and advanced experiences during this thesis period. I appreciate the interviewees for sharing their experiences, and I want to thank my fellow students, friends, and family for their help and support.

Now the only thing that remains me, is wishing you joy reading this master's thesis.

ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to explore how different subculture groups in the sneakerhead consumer culture perceive each others' roles, and how this shapes interactions within their community. This study adopts a morality lens to the practices of consumers, which lead to friction within the sneakerhead consumer culture.

To explore frictions between different consumer groups within this subculture, (i.e., collectors versus resellers) a conceptual framework is developed from in-depth interviews among eight respondents. Also, a social media analysis is done to explore which and how friction among consumer groups manifests. Subsequently, it was possible to extend the theories enabled by the conceptual framework. This has been done according to a consumer culture approach, value in dispositioning theory, and consumer community theories. Frictions manifest in the valuation of sneakers, secondary selling, and through different social media practices of two consumer groups within the community: resellers and collectors.

According to earlier theories, diverse groups in a community depending on each other cause that a community sustains. However, this study has shown that for communities to sustain in the sneakerhead consumer culture, these consumer groups do not have to be equally or mutually dependent on each other. Collectors do not need the resellers, but resellers do need the collectors to conduct their practices.

In practice, most platforms focus on only one group in this culture: the resellers. Focus is missing on the other consumer community group: the collectors, by not fulfilling their wants and needs within the community. This research led the foundation to understand consumer community frictions between sneaker resellers and collectors, which sustains the sneakerhead consumer culture community. Also, managerial implications and future research directions are given, that follow from insights made possible by this study.

Keywords: Collectors, Community, Resellers, Sneakerhead Consumer Culture, Value.

CONTENTS

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| Introduction | ..1 |
| <i>Frictions Between Collectors and Resellers in the Sneakerhead Consumer Culture context</i> | ..2 |
| <i>A Critique of Current Consumer Research Approaches to Understand community frictions</i> | ..3 |
| Theoretical background | ..6 |
| <i>Secondary Selling; value in disposition in the sneakerhead consumer culture</i> | |
| <i>Consumption communities</i> | ..9 |
| <i>How the concept of consumption communities is useful</i> | ..9 |
| <i>Customer interaction in communities</i> | ..10 |
| <i>Meanings of consciousness</i> | ..11 |
| <i>Rituals and traditions within communities</i> | ..12 |
| <i>What the sneakerhead consumer culture differs from other communities</i> | ..12 |
| <i>Practices for the sneakerhead consumer culture</i> | ..12 |
| <i>Different understandings in and of the sneaker marketplace</i> | ..13 |
| <i>Different interests of the community</i> | ..13 |
| <i>Different dependency structures in the sneakerhead consumer culture</i> | ..14 |
| <i>The consumer culture theory</i> | ..15 |
| <i>The morality lens</i> | ..16 |
| Methodology | ..17 |
| <i>Research context</i> | ..17 |
| <i>Data collection</i> | ..20 |
| <i>Data analysis</i> | ..22 |
| <i>Research ethics</i> | ..23 |
| <i>Participant table</i> | ..23 |
| Findings | ..24 |
| <i>The friction of valuation</i> | ..25 |
| <i>Monetary value</i> | ..25 |
| <i>Appreciation for the sneakers</i> | ..26 |
| <i>Friction in secondary selling</i> | ..27 |
| <i>Friction in social media usage</i> | ..29 |
| Discussion | ..31 |
| <i>Value in dispositioning theory in the sneakerhead consumer culture</i> | ..31 |
| <i>Community frictions in the sneakerhead consumer culture</i> | ..34 |
| <i>Managerial implications</i> | ..36 |
| <i>Future research directions</i> | ..39 |
| <i>Limitations</i> | ..40 |
| Conclusion | ..42 |
| References | ..43 |
| Appendix | ..46 |
| <i>Interview guide</i> | |

INTRODUCTION

Sneaker collecting has become a popular phenomenon, evident through the sneaker market growth and its expanding cultural reach. Nowadays, sneakers became a \$79 billion market globally, predicted to reach \$126 billion by 2026 (Braithwaite, 2021). Sneakers were once the symbol of athleticism and hip-hop culture but have transcended to become fashionable objects. In today's society, from being a functional product, sneakers now have made their mark as cultural icons.

The sneakers' cultural relevance in pop culture has grown since the 19th century (Turner, 2019). Thousands of Kanye West's Yeezy models (Adidas), have been sold since sneakers turned into an object of fashionable desire (Brink, 2020).

The sneaker commercialization is defined by three waves, according to sociologist Yuniya Kawamura (2017). The first wave was defined by hip-hop music. Songs were made about the Adidas samba shoe, leading the sneakers' roots in the culture. An example is "My Adidas" by RUN DMC. The second wave started in 1984, when Nike launched the Air Jordan line, making famous basketballer Michael Jordan a brand. This nudged sneakers as a status item. In Nike's fiscal year 2018, the Nike Jordan brand line hit a revenue of \$2,9 billion globally (White, 2019). The sneaker market is currently in its third wave. Marked by the digital era, which has come out as growth in sneaker marketing as well as the reselling culture. The sneaker resells market is valued at \$6 billion in 2021, with an estimated growth of \$24 billion by 2030 (White, 2019).

The growing culture of sneakerheads maintains the cultural status, ensured by their sneaker collecting and trading activities. 'Sneakerheads' are given their name in terms of being someone wearing and collecting sneakers, with a vast amount of effort and resources (Semmelhack, Garcia, Lepri, Willis, & Hatfield, 2015).

Frictions Between Collectors and Resellers in the Sneakerhead Consumer Culture Context

Nowadays, Nike and Adidas release exclusive models and limited editions, endorsed by celebrities, athletes, and collaborations with other brands (Nike, n.d.). For the sneakerheads to get their hands on these models, they are willing to go far to collect these models paying over eight times the amount of the original retail price (Steinberg, 2018). This caused the growth of the sneaker resale market. Creating a new subculture of sneaker enthusiasts: resellers, with an entrepreneurial spirit, to hype up the cultural sneaker hype creating an income out of it (Braithwaite, 2020).

Nowadays, people are reselling sneakers they ‘won’ from releases, raffles, or lotteries for unreasonable prices. A sneaker raffle also referred to as a lottery, is when a retailer provides customers the opportunity to win the right to purchase one pair of sneakers. This is a fruitful event for consumers, gaining the advantage of the high demand in the market, to resell shoes for a higher price. These ways of facilitating purchases mean that collectors, another consumer group, are less able to afford shoes, due to soaring prices, scarcity of limited editions, and exclusive models. This phenomenon makes it less accessible for collectors to participate in collecting, and practice their hobbies.

For reselling consumers, the COVID pandemic offered an opportunity. The growth of the reselling market emerged when the Covid-19 crisis emerged. Retailers panicked and gave high discounts on their sneakers. This gave reselling consumers profit, so they bought up those pairs. Sneaker consumers avoided the shops and bought from e-commerce platforms such as StockX. Before the pandemic, people would stand in line for hours or days at a store. Now, they buy the shoes online. Covid-19 protocols prevented consumers from standing in line for new shoes. So, many retailers resorted to the lottery system since the demand for sneakers has not been diminished during the pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic changed the sneakers landscape and caused the view of sneakers as assets and mass purchasing.

The shift to digital selling spaces made the sneakers' scarcity model a game of digital roulette. Sneaker collectors report on social media that they win a pair or miss a release. This fuels the sneaker hype. Online platforms handle as the ultimate middleman in the sneaker world, making sneakerheads heavily dependent on such platforms (Hunt, 2021).

In the current society, models are sold out in a few minutes. The true sneakerheads feel this as the unfairness of being 'forced' to pay ridiculous prices, due to resellers cleaning out the entire stock (Saunders, 2021).

Passionate individuals have extensive knowledge about the history of sneakers and are referred to as sneakerheads as they consume, trade, and collect sneakers (Choi & Kim, 2019). Earl West (2021) stated that it is big business, collectors pay more than what they initially would pay, or what somebody else would pay for a pair of sneakers. Resellers exist because they know there is an audience paying top prices for sneakers they want (Bunn, 2021). This audience is formed by the sneakerheads who want to fill their collection. It is a scarce market of supply and demand.

Curtis Bunn, a news journalist, stated: "just as brokers snatch up concert tickets and resell them for exorbitant prices, sneaker resellers have created a niche for the sneaker industry." He mentions that retailers and collectors cannot be mad at resellers, due to understanding the demand (Bunn, 2021).

Mark Souphanh, (2021) argues that the hype around the sneaker made an end to the collector. Most collectors are not prepared to buy the latest drops, due to exorbitant prices from resellers. He stated: "the reselling is killing the sneaker culture."

A Critique of Current Consumer Research Approaches to Understand community frictions

First, current literature would understand these frictions in the following way, looking at in particular the secondary reselling theory of Ture, (2014) this friction or problem can be described in the value in disposition. Ture, (2014) clarifies that disposition practices turn

sneaker possessions into assets. Gaining value by the possessors' new relations, maintaining, and strengthening social connections. Also, in the steps of the disposition process the resellers follow, value can be added (Ture, 2014).

Secondly, literature on consumption communities briefly theorizes frictions within these consumer groups. Ture, (2014) states that different community subgroups have an intrinsic passion in common. They get along, by having the same purposes and practicing the same activities pursuing their passion. Resellers and collectors have similarities in their desire for the sneakers, however, both groups have other purposes for the sneakers after getting their hands on the sneakers.

Third, there is also work that acknowledges potential friction within or between heterogeneous groups, which do practice the same consumption activities but come from different consumption communities. A community can preserve because these groups are interdependent, even when there are different consumption groups (Thomas, 2013).

Nevertheless, the different motivations in, and between groups, are not framed like a problem in cultures, because groups are dependent on each other, and need each other (Chalmers, 2013). This does not seem to be the case in the sneaker culture, where the resellers need the collectors, but the collectors do not want or need the resellers. Also, Chalmers, (2013) does not acknowledge true heterogeneity within or between groups, on a group level. They only enlighten individual-level heterogeneity differences, but differences can also be complementary.

In summary, current consumer research is not able to adequately explain the characteristics of valuation in the sneakerhead community. Literature does not adequately show relations in dependency between collectors and resellers and their activities. For a marketer, it is important to know that literature falls short to explain this phenomenon.

Earlier made implications in the theory may not be valid in the current sneakerhead consumer culture.

In light of these weaknesses in the literature, this thesis investigates this context posed by the following two research questions:

1. *In what ways do collectors and resellers perceive each other's roles and effects within sneakerhead consumer culture?*
2. *How do collectors' and resellers' perceptions of each other shape their interactions within sneakerhead consumer culture?*

The research questions are posed a little bit more broadly to not pre-configure the outcome. These questions are open due to the potential finding that the perceptions of roles and interactions may not be causing friction for all resellers and collectors. To answer these questions the consumer culture theory (CCT) approach is used. Naturally, these studies are attentive to social relations and what things mean in culture concerning consumption. In this case, in the light of sneaker consumption.

The unique lens to make sense of this context and contribute back to the literature on consumption communities is *morality*. This lens is chosen due to the potential frictions between roles and perceptions of actions of resellers and collectors and how the sneakerhead consumer culture copes with this, affecting the sneakerhead consumer culture and the communities' continuance.

This thesis is outlined in the following chapters. First, the theoretical background about secondary selling, consumption communities, critique, and an explanation of CCT, this chapter ends with the chosen morality lens to do research in this sneaker context. In the second chapter, the methodology of how this study is conducted is explained, including the research context, data collection, and data analysis method. The third chapter will elaborate on the findings from the social media analysis and the interviews, followed by a discussion chapter and a conclusion.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This chapter explains the value in disposition in the secondary selling theory and its application and shortcomings to the sneakerhead consumer culture. In the next section, the theoretical concept of consumer communities is introduced, to explain consumer interactions in these communities. Next, interactions in the sneakerhead culture manifesting differently from other consumer cultures are explained. Thereafter, the consumer culture theory is introduced and explained in a little detail. In the last section, the morality lens used in the sneaker market of supply and demand gives insight into how roles and interactions of practices are perceived.

Secondary Selling; value in disposition in the sneakerhead consumer culture

The secondary selling theory of value in disposition plays a crucial role in today's sneakerhead consumer culture (Graeber, 2001). The value in dispositioning in the sneakerhead consumer culture is created by reselling sneakers. The reselling trade-offs can take place through different channels. The consumers select these specific channels, which are the reselling channels.

Value in disposition is not just a simple moral value. The focus here is on the value of the object, in this context the sneaker, the social order created in the community, and what is done within the community, rather than being or handling ethical towards others (Ture, 2014). The focus of the reseller is on finding a suitable platform to resell, where collectors are willing to pay a considerable sum of money for their sneakers, enhancing the sneakers' value.

Value arises when consumers interact via these platforms. Here, the functionality of the shoes, their symbolic meaning, and object placement in the market are important value sources (Gregson and Crewe, 2003). Consumers derive value from an object, brand, or place when it helps them to connect to other people as part of a community (Ture, 2014).

Appadurai (1986, p. 54) suggests that the main source of value is when "objects circulate in different regimes of value in space and time". Ture, (2014, p. 55) states that: "In Appadurai's

theory, every exchange is open to individuals' own value claims and manipulations to enhance their personal interest." In the sneakerhead consumer culture, all exchanges are open to people outside the community. Even shoes brought into the market years ago can suddenly gain more value as the demand increases. In the consumer culture, individuals manipulate the retail price, by adding the monetary value up to how much others are willing to pay for the sneaker.

The value regimes that are created concerning space, allow the sneaker to move across cultural boundaries, across and within these boundaries, the culture may have different interests and standards of valuation (Ture, 2014). In the sneakerhead consumer culture, the value of the sneakers is temporarily constructed in their culture through diverse paths, social relations, and value regimes associated with them (Ture, 2014). Findings from the study of Ture, (2014) suggest that the process of dispositioning can reevaluate sneakers and make them cool again, to, in turn, enhance monetary value.

Skills for consumers engaging in the sneaker community are knowing and being able to predict the right price for the shoes, to being able to win raffles and lotteries. Selling the sneaker for more than the retail price, and finding a suitable platform, where people are willing to pay, enhances the chance of reselling (Bardhi et al., 2012). Consumers use their sneakers for functionality. They can easily distance themselves from their sneakers and ask for higher prices and enhance the value regimes set in the sneakerhead consumer culture.

The research of Ture, (2014) focuses on the reseller knowing their consumer and the value of an object. In the sneakerhead consumer culture, it is unlike stated in the theory, not always the case that consumers know exactly what the value of the object is. Online intermediating platforms where collectors are willing to buy the pairs, can change the context of this value. Online and intermediating platforms are not covered by Ture, (2014) since the focus is more on in-person contexts.

Intermediating platforms deciding on who the buyer is from a certain reseller also does

not have to be the case and may contradict Ture, (2014) and previous literature in describing the negotiation in how the consumers distance themselves from the sneaker.

A main conclusion about the theory on dispositioning is, that disposing of can enhance the value of the sneakers. For example, when resellers leave the sneakers unworn and stocked up somewhere, the pairs have less value than when a collector pays for them. During disposition, the reseller will gain monetary value, not having to practice a profession for it, as the collector simply wants the sneakers (Cherrier, 2009; Kozinets, 2002).

Another main conclusion still holding following this perspective is, that the objects' value is dynamically shaped by regimes with friction. Meaning, the frictions and the resellers' power of getting the shoes and being able to ask for a higher price from the collectors who highly value the pairs for their collection. There is a dynamic value relationship between the resellers and the sneakers, and the collectors and the sneakers. This comes from the resellers who include collectors as valuable partners and their value estimates for the sneakers (Ture, 2014).

Despite this disposition theory being remarkably close to what happens in the sneakerhead consumer culture, there are several shortcomings in the theory. There is much to learn about the growing body of research in dispositioning, and how value is exactly derived. There currently is no exact exhaustive typology of disposition (Ture, 2014). Therefore, there is no picture of the object's movement in value creation that is clear in any consumer culture. Also, not much is known about how dispositioning of the sneaker reflects on and relates to an object's dynamic exchange and consumption in constructing the value. This must be found out and can change or contribute to the theory of value in disposition.

Consumption communities

Consumption communities from a customer's central perspective are, according to McAlexander et al., (2002. P. 38) "a fabric of relationships in which the customer is situated."

Through dynamic communities, people share essential resources either cognitive, emotional, or material in nature. Even though in different communities resources will be different, communities always negotiate the meaning of these resources (McAlexander, 2002). In the sneakerhead consumer culture, the shared source is sneakers, and like the theory, community members share the cognitive values, for example, the history of the sneaker culture and emotional values concerning respect throughout the sneaker culture.

The sneakerhead community is marked by its iconic value-creating practices. These practices consist of procedural understandings, skills, and abilities. Culturally appropriate consumption projects and emotional commitment to the community, are expressed in the actions. The diverse representations of members mark this community (Schau et al, 2009).

The Sneakerhead community evolves around brands like Nike, Adidas, New Balance, Off-White, etc. The sneakerhead community is stated as a brand community. This community is an extended customer-customer-brand triad, as a social aggregation of brand users and their relationships to the brand itself (McAlexander, 2002; Muniz and O'guinn, 2001). In the perspective of this theory, as well as in the perspective of this thesis, the brand community is dynamic and customer-centric. The existence and meaningfulness of the community take the customer experience into account.

How the concept of consumption communities is useful

McAlexander et al., (2002), states that brand communities are conscious and have a sense of moral responsibility. One of the most important contributions to the sneakerhead consumer culture focuses on the marketers' role in the emergence of a brand community. Stating that marketers contribute to the process of community building. They create the context of customer interaction, establishing traditions, and meanings of consciousness. However, in today's consumer cultures, this is even out of the marketers' hands, since consumer subgroups

create or extend this on their own, without the influence of the intermediating role of a marketer.

Customer interaction in communities

The study of McAlexander et al., (2002), focuses on the integration of the community as a function of the customers' perceived relationship of their possessions, and the brand. the report states (p. 46): "Although the individual relationships are depicted as dyadic, our ethnographic data reveal that they do not function entirely independently of each other. Rather, they develop interdependently in ways that are mutually reinforcing." This theory applies to the sneaker culture as resellers and collectors in the community develop interdependently.

Over the past thirty years, differences have increased within communities, which is stated as heterogeneity. Distinct roles are played, different resources are used, and the exchange of possessions started to happen. The findings from the study of Ture, (2014) show communities can preserve continuity, even when different practices are conducted and operate as a destabilizing force in the community. This happens in the sneakerhead consumer culture. the continuity preserves as members depend on each other for social and economic resources, the dependence promotes user frame alignment practices and in turn, these practices enable the community to (re)stabilize, reproduce, and reform over time (Ture, 2014).

The study of Ture, (2014) focuses on exchanges between consumers and producers not being mutually exclusive. As single individuals and single organizations take on both consumer and producer roles. They also do not exhibit a hierarchical relationship but function as equal dependent members of the community. In a community, the consumers come together with a shared sense of belonging, but they may come from distinct groups of people, resources, and institutions that all exhibit heterogeneity (Ture, 2014).

Meanings of consciousness

Consumer culture theory of activities in consumer collectives is organized around the market-mediated product, the sneaker. The sneaker market manifestations go beyond the control of marketers. The knowledge transfer from insiders to initiates in the community, not only in knowledge exchange but also in value creation through customer engagement (Shau, 2009).

The study of Ture, (2014) enhanced understanding of how complex heterogeneous communities manifest and interact with the marketplace, and how heterogeneous actors assess the impact on community continuity. The resellers and collectors behave differently towards the community. They interact with distinct roles and meanings constructed to the community. With a focus on investors and reselling in the sneakerhead community and the several roles, the collectors and resellers engage in. They do share certain beliefs but have differences too. Heterogeneous communities often have multiple views on the authenticity, membership, and consumption in a community (Beverland, Farrelly, and Quester 2010).

Practices in consumer cultures focus on creating favourable impressions of the brand and the community in the social universe. The members that engage in the community justify and manage their ideas of the community. Also, community engagement practices safeguard the community's heterogeneity for example distinction among collectors and resellers (Schau, 2009). Consumer communities acknowledge diverse groups and their identities, this is accepted in the communities but can threaten community belonging. However, these tensions thrive in communities; as different values and access to different resources come into play.

Rituals and traditions within communities

Different value-creating practices offer implications for building and nurturing the community and enhancing collaborative values among consumers. Brands should manage brand-centred communities in a way that their practices are fostered. The practices and traditions within the community go beyond just buying and wearing sneakers. Marketers should encourage the

traditions within the sneakerhead consumer culture by nurturing the community and enhancing the collaborative values of the community (Schau, 2009).

The processes of value creation and the sneakerhead consumer culture practices are implicit ways of saying and doing things. Schau et al., (2009), Value creation is brand use: customizing the brand, grooming, and commoditizing, by creating hypes around the brand. These practices enhance value for opportunities for marketers and consumers (Schau, 2009).

What the sneakerhead consumer culture differs from other communities

Practices for the sneakerhead consumer culture

First of all, the practices that usually manifest in community culture, are slightly different from the sneakerhead consumer culture. The literature falls short in highlighting the exact detail of in-community practices in the sneaker cultures. The literature does not describe how value is created, and how potential friction of different perceptions of practices from resellers and collectors, leads to the emotional discharge of resellers' practices in the consumer culture.

The study of McAlexander et al., (2002), focuses on multiple community memberships. Despite today's upcoming social media, they did not take the influence of social media into account or a qualitative method that goes deeper into how people feel like they do or do not belong to the community. This perspective should be extended with the view of today's social media influence.

Not all the practices that communities usually participate in, must be shaped the same way, adding value to a community as in the example of the bicycle racing world in the study of Schau et al., (2009), where all cyclers might love to cycle only on a different level. Meaning that the implications must be altered to the sneakerhead consumption culture.

The study of (Ture, 2014) states that, individual and collective belonging as central features of community continuity. However, to actually be involved in it, the individual might not 'feel' like being part of the community. Despite this, they still do form the community,

although they do not actively contribute to and endorse the community's values. All studies in the domain of communities are centred on consumption, having unclear distinctions between how community types feel and relate to each other (Canniford, 2011).

Also, theories describe that community members depend on each other for status and experience (Ture, 2014). A particularly important notion in the sneakerhead consumer culture is that dependence does not have to be equal to acceptance or solidarity between and within different community subcultures, as described in the literature.

Different understandings in and of the sneaker marketplace

McAlexander et al., (2002) use the perspective of Boorstin (1974), to describe different subcultures, this perspective only takes the creation of new communities into account, not the community change over years, due to new entrants from younger generations or other interest fields (McAlexander, 2002). Nowadays, the geographical concentration is not the dimension of the social context anymore, consumers have information about one another that moves further on the internet. This means that more groups can be involved. A running example is given slow runners are blocking fast runners and threaten to belong to the running community for multiple members, fast runners cannot access identity-related recourses while slow runners feel unwelcome (Ture, 2014). This phenomenon could take place in the sneaker community as well.

Different interests within the community

Moreover, the study of McAlexander et al., (2002) focuses on the customer's individual relationships with other community members being dependent on each other. However, this phenomenon of interdependence, about relationships individually, is leaving other possible subgroup-subgroup relationships of the community out of the picture.

The sneakerhead consumer culture itself is slightly different as described in the work of (Ture, 2014). Not all resellers may necessarily define themselves as (truly) being part of the community. So, the ecosystem in the sneakerhead consumer culture might have changed. What

needs to be pointed out is that this study limits the role of the heterogeneity's impact, whereas other studies focus on within-community similarities. A key theoretical implication of consumer culture studies is that communities are viewed as shared social relationships, with actions that make them meaningful to members. It avoids convergence in the minds of the individuals (Hardy, Lawrence, & Grant 2005). This highlights that the literature focuses on the individual views, not on group views in a community.

Goals from resellers and collectors do not necessarily have to be complementary, but can also contradict, which is not considered in the perspective of Ture, (2014). Similarly, community members do not necessarily need to depend on each other (Nelson, Oxley, & Clawson, 1997). But despite this, collectors are connected through their passion for shoes, only how this connection is perceived must be found out.

The study of Ture (2014), elucidates the welcoming behaviour of community members to new entrants, this must be taken into consideration in the modern sneaker community. This does not have to manifest in the current sneakerhead consumer culture, there are various perspectives applicable to the sneakerhead community, which must be taken into consideration.

Different dependency structure in the sneakerhead consumer culture

Lastly, in the sneaker culture, the only group dependent on the other is the resellers on the collectors. This causes the community to not really 'flow' since collectors may stop their practices when feeling hijacked, due to not being able to get access to the sneakers (anymore). Groups in the sneakerhead consumer culture are not equally important in how the community manifests itself. However, this process, in general, is still unknown (Ture, 2014). When zooming in on the sneakerhead culture this could be brought into the light of monetary value. Most research on the heterogeneity impacts the consumption communities collectively managed against the brands. The knowledge gap persists due to a focus on what communities

share instead of how they differ, or how they perceive their differences from each other (Ture, 2014).

The consumer culture theory

CCT concerns cultural meanings and socio-historical influences that shape consumer experiences and identities in everyday life. It also highlights that the real world for the consumers is shaped by different realities where consumption is used (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). CCT consists of theoretical perspectives that address relationships between consumer actions, the marketplace, and cultural meanings. CCT studies consumer culture in how consumption and markets interplay with and shape consumer experiences and social relationships. CCT attends to the individuals' and social groups' acquisition, possession, use, and the dispositioning of products, services, and brands (Arnould et al. 2019; Arnould & Thompson, 2005).

CCT emerged in the 1980s, investigates how consumers came to reasoned decisions for their purchases. Earlier on, CCT studies aimed to focus on the consumer being clueless, instead of being well-informed, self-directive, creative and emotional individuals that seek out meaning and self-actualization through their choices and being involved in the markets (e.g., Belk et al. 1989; Hirschman 1980; McCracken, 1986). Researchers then turned to investigate the complex cultural contexts of not only purchasing but also possessing and consuming.

Franco, (2022 p. 3) stated in his introduction to CCT: "Returning to sneakers, purchases may also involve intuitive feelings of being connected to a subculture (e.g., 'sneakerhead' culture), desires to collect dozens of pairs, to the excitement of successfully displaying cultural competence and taste through the pairs worn when out and about (Denny, 2020)."

CCT offers various lenses to think about consumers' consumption activities and market involvement departed from the historically dominating decision-making view (Franco, 2022). CCT offers different insights in digital marketing about the experiences of consumers and

markets and social relationships mediated by digital devices. CCT illustrates that consumers are navigators in the sociocultural world in market involvement online and offline providing a view on consumer decision-making.

To end this explanation, CCT creates different situations in which people must deal with other peoples' opinions, which at times can be ignored. However, these opinions need a response when more people comment and are stimulated by that opinion. This situation may not be comfortable but can be exciting as well. For marketers to provoke and inspire, this is an intellectual ground for theoretical innovations and advantages (Arnould & Thompson, 2005).

The morality lens

The lens chosen within CCT is morality, the reason is that there is a knowledge gap, about the perspective on each others' roles and what is ethical in the resellers' practices. Also, this lens can bring light to how both parties stand against the fairness of their practices e.g., asking extra money over the actual retail price of the sneakers for reselling profit purposes and collecting purposes. The study of Saatcioglu (2013), describes in an ethnographic study how moral dispositions shape consumption practices and status negotiations. This study shapes moral habitus and how morally oriented worldviews are enacted through both consumption practices and social evaluations in everyday communities (Saatcioglu, 2013).

Within a community, different moral groups exist. Moral dispositions are field-dependent and guided by embodied emotions (Saatcioglu, 2013). The moral habitus is shaped by consumption practices around the community. The construction is done through moral identities through social comparisons within, but also outside the community. This lens is therefore used on the sneaker group and the collector groups within the community and their external social relationships. "The concept of habitus to include moral dimensions will help researchers better understand how a particular social class is lived and enacted, particularly among resource-constrained consumers" (Saatcioglu, 2013, p. 708).

METHODOLOGY

Since CCT is rather a broad context, more of the background of the sneakerhead consumer culture and secondary selling explains what the cultural meanings around a collector versus reseller are within this context. Further on in this chapter, the importance of social media used to study the culture is explained along with the platforms used. This is followed by an explanation of how data is collected and analysed from social media and interviews. Subsequently, research ethics applied in this study and the suitable methods are highlighted. Lastly, a participant table considering the research ethics is shown.

Research context

The role of the *resellers* in this thesis is exploited by consumers who participate in (online) sneaker raffles and lotteries intending to buy and not to store or use but resell (exclusive) pairs they ‘win.’ Resellers state not to be bound to the sneaker community but resell to buy a more expensive sneaker pair. Similarly, resellers can use the profit gained in their reselling practices for other individual purposes. For example, resellers put the profit they make into their savings. Resellers have background knowledge about the sneaker consumer culture, which is necessary to exploit the practice of actively participating in the raffles.

The knowledge sneaker resellers have, enables them to participate in raffles and make a profit on the pair they won (Bunn, 2021). Resellers see shoes as assets, selling them based on street sentiment. The upcoming trend of sneaker reselling shapes the context in which resellers are active. Brands launch pairs via several platforms. Resellers participate in the sneaker releases, hijacking the sneaker collectors and their collecting purposes.

Although both collectors and resellers may buy the shoes without the aim of wearing them, collectors who add these shoes to their collection as their hobby, miss these sneakers. This is, due to resellers who buy up all the pairs. The resellers are the people, who may also participate in collecting, and vice versa.

Even though collectors can take the identity of a true reseller and collector, the collectors feel antagonism against the resellers' practices and the perceived fairness of their reselling practices in the sneakerhead consumer culture. The *collectors* are consumers in the sneakerhead consumer community who buy the sneakers to add them to/ in their collection. They see it as a hobby and call themselves (almost) all-time sneakerheads as they describe themselves truly being 'diehard' sneaker fans. They devote a considerable amount of time to their sneaker hobby. The collectors have significant knowledge about the culture and actively engage in the sneakerhead culture by having social ties in the community, sharing their collections, and having an affinity with the background culture of music and hip-hop.

The collectors see sneakers as a cultural symbol. As resellers might not have all these characteristics, collectors share these beliefs (with other collectors) in their community. One of the most distinct points between both groups is, that collectors do see themselves as part of the sneakerhead consumer culture, whereas resellers (mostly) will not.

To see how collectors and resellers are distinct from each other, and how they overlap in their beliefs and practices, interviews are held to explore the field and gain an in-depth, verified understanding of both groups' perspectives to answer the research question.

The role of social media in the secondary selling market

In addition, to explore this context, social media also plays a significant role in the sneakerhead consumer culture. The secondary selling market has risen to incredible heights fuelled by social media, coupled with the limited availability of sneakers. These factors have generated great consumer demand and interest surrounding this market (Slaton, 2021).

Although the resale market has expanded online, this has not drawn the attention of many researchers (Choi, 2017). A huge part of the sneakerhead community revolves around being online and involves being connected online (Matthews, 2021). Resellers and collectors express themselves online, therefore, a social media analysis is done. This analysis gives

insights into how the sneakerhead consumer culture community behaves online in the digital world, and how the resale market is shaped. Social media expressions may influence the sneakerhead consumer community and the way how resellers and collectors operate and behave in this context.

A study by Choi (2017) suggests that online channels are not only there to maintain relationships but also to trade, buy and sell (Choi, 2017). Sneakerheads express themselves on social media by creating sneaker collecting and sneaker reselling related content in different online communities e.g., Facebook community groups. Sneakerheads engage in these communities to share thoughts, for example, they state 'wtb' (wanting to buy) and 'wts' (wanting to sell) content, this indicates that the resale market is actively exploited online as a consumer to the consumer market (Choi, 2017).

On TikTok, many short clips about sneaker collecting are made and sneakerheads express their opinions and react to other sneakerheads. Social media gives insights into how the community behaves online. Matthews, (2021) states: "These apps are their connection to the pulse of what's up and coming within the sneaker community and is a must." Collectors and resellers use these platforms to keep up with each other on releases, what is coming out, and when and where it is released. This has to do with certain sneakers coming out in certain places (Matthews, 2021). The social media analysis shows how young sneakerheads e.g., Gen Y, millennials, gen Z, and even generation Alpha, perceive the sneakerhead consumer culture and what their values are since young consumers are one of the most influential groups in the digital era. (Kotler, 2016).

This is also in line with the respondents of the interviews who represent these generations and the sneakerhead consumer culture. Even though research concerning the impact of social media on the secondary market has recently been done, for example, in the study of Kelcie Slaton, (2021). The study of Slaton, (2021) investigates social media's influence on

consumers interested in the secondary selling retailers in the sneaker market. Researchers did not have an attempt to how social media could affect frictions between collectors and resellers in the sneakerhead consumer culture, although knowing that social media has highly affected sneakerheads (Choi, 2017). Findings from the study by Choi, (2017) indicate that when images on social media are worn by people of higher status, sneakerheads activate emotional and monetary value, which creates the hype. This points out that social media is a rich source to assess and investigate the frictions between collectors and resellers.

Data Collection

The data for this thesis is collected through interviews and social media content. The interviews are conducted online over Zoom by a team of student researchers. Each student researcher conducted five to eight interviews, with the team totalling twenty-four interviews, to gain insight and shape the context of resellers and collectors in the sneaker consumer culture. The interviews are conducted online due to the covid restrictions during the period in which the data is collected. The interviews are conducted iteratively in the period from February 2022 until May 2022. In this way, the data could be adjusted to new circumstances and events that did take place during the writing of this thesis from January 2022 until June 2022. The interactivity and flexibility of the interviews make the data trustworthy and effective (Arsel, 2017).

To gain the most up-to-date results and to create a deeper understanding of the sneakerhead consumer culture, the interviewees' experiences are primarily understood through their subjective narratives. In this way, the perspectives of both collectors and resellers are given voice and unravel experiences they find important (Arsel, 2017). The interviews are exploratory and semi-structured. While the consumer research journal refers to the commonality of consumer interviews as unstructured and unstandardized (Arsel, 2017).

During the interviews, there is aimed for one hour of conversation, in an informal setting to create as much comfort and conversation. The interviewees signed a consent form to make sure ethical consequences will not disrupt the research.

Because not all questions, for example about how these frictions manifest in the digital world can be answered, an additional investigation in social media posts is done. Social media posts are analysed to observe how the perspectives of resellers and collectors are expressed. The social media analysis is a rich source to study the online perspective(s) on the sneaker resale market.

Community members engage in these communities to connect and communicate with other individuals (Slaton, 2021; Richter & Koch, 2007). These platforms include Facebook and TikTok. The platforms will be used to observe how the sneakerhead culture behaves in the online context. Various collectors and resellers are members of Facebook communities and use TikTok, they make short clips and post about their collections or their sneaker addiction. In these clips and comments, several emotions are expressed. Amongst these are happiness, humour and hatred, and confusion. Individuals use these platforms as means to obtain information, make purchase decisions, and engage in word-of-mouth, this is shown in a study of DEI worldwide (2008).

The choice of Facebook and TikTok depends on the accessibility of the content. Search terms such as #creasingshoes and #sneakerhead give many results on several kinds of platforms (Instagram 24,6 million hits, TikTok 14,7 billion times viewed) (Instagram, 2022; TikTok 2022). However, on other platforms such as Instagram, the posts do not create that much engagement as comments are lower (on Instagram only up to 6) as via TikTok (several hundred) in 2022. TikTok has grown exponentially and is therefore an important source (Habibi, 2021).

Also, in Facebook communities, people open topics to talk about the sneaker reselling subject and other sneaker-related subjects, which shows a lot of response, around one hundred

comments per opened topic (Facebook 2022). So, the platforms to draw rich data are TikTok and Facebook groups, which are easy to access from the Netherlands. Facebook and TikTok are the platforms mainly used by the young people who engage in and interact with the sneakerhead consumer culture (Slaton, 2017).

Data analysis

Data is collected in a multi-domain setting (Myers, 2020), (e.g., collection of different data sources, interviews, and social media). Since emotions can not be truly read online, the interview questions reveal emotional involvement behind the perspectives and the data found online. The respondent needs to be psychologically comfortable and at ease, to make meaningful statements about the consumers in the sneakerhead consumer culture.

The data analysis of the social media posts is a mixture of a top-down and bottom-up approach. In the first trimester of the study, a bottom-up approach is used, meaning: that concepts emerge from detailed analysis. The theories that are found are assessed according to a top-down approach, meaning; the social media project takes the form of a design where the found theory is assessed. Eventually, this led to an iterative approach between top-down and bottom-up. For this study, emotions and perspectives are needed to find the answer to the research questions, therefore the detail must be analysed (Myers, 2020). The aim is to find a deep understanding of the perspectives of friction between resellers and collectors.

Since the data on social media is rich, it is analysed at specific points in time, restricted to the end of 2021 (November and December) and the beginning of 2022 (January until March). To be able to see changes between the two points in time. To analyse the qualitative data from the interviews, an iterative approach is used. The interviews took place between January 2022 and April 2022 and are recorded if given consent of the respondent. The interviews are coded and analysed during April and May 2022 to cover the most recent developments along with the social media analysis. Open and axial coding are used in the software Atlas.ti to analyse the

interviews. These codes represent different concepts of the values assigned to the codes. These ‘values’ represent what is said during these interviews. The codes are divided according to distinct groups that are the base for conducting the analysis, for a clear picture of the findings.

Research ethics

In the context of this thesis, privacy protection is unstable, since quotes may be traced back to people it may create situations where vulnerability and harm of online content creators and posters are not easily determined. The authors of online content deserve anonymity, although the content that they create is public, individuals perceive the online space to be private (Markham, 2012). The method of fabrication: anonymizing the quotes published by social media users of Markham (2012), makes it ethically acceptable to capture and analyse online interactions in public space without consent, not violating any persons’ privacy laws. Therefore, names are anonymized, and quotes are slightly altered, to protect the anonymity of the posters while keeping the spirit of what they stand for. Also, for privacy reasons names of the interviewees are anonymized throughout this thesis to protect their privacy.

Participant table

In this participant table, pseudonyms of the interviewees’ real names are given, due to privacy protection. This table consists of the key demographic details which are relevant to this study.

Table 1. Participant table

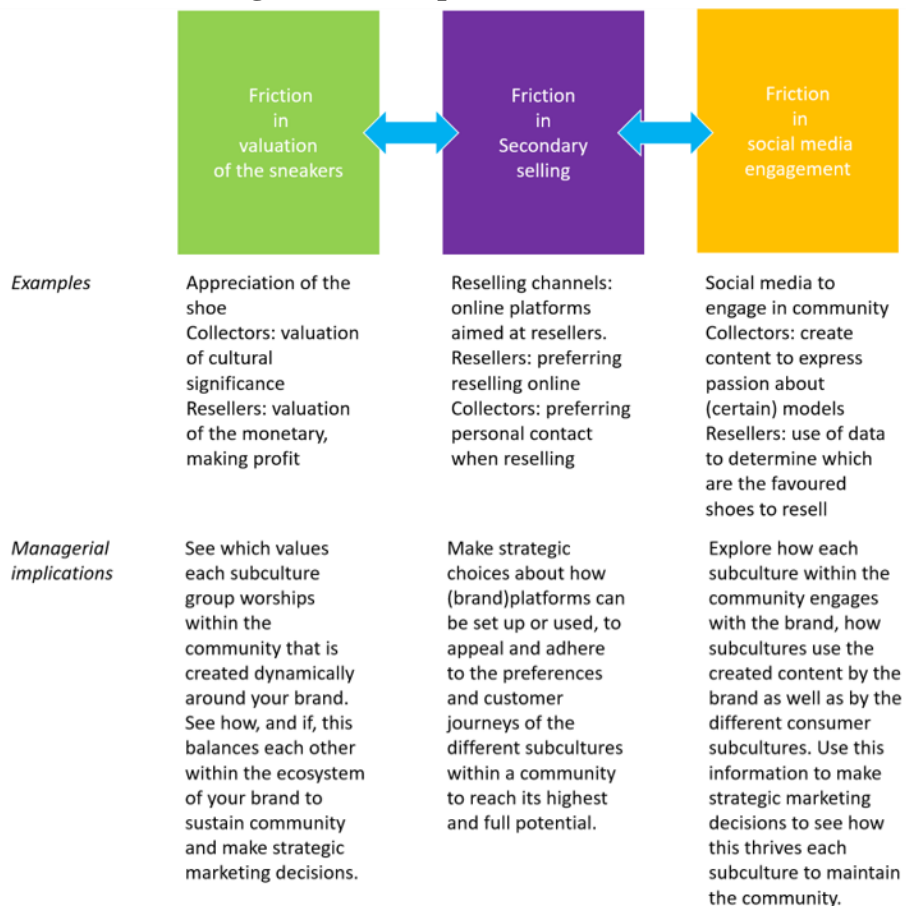
| | PSEUDONYM | GENDER | AGE | OCCUPATION | PROVINCE | DATA COLLECTION METHOD |
|----------|-----------|--------|-----|--------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | Sten | Male | 24 | Junior Project leader | Gelderland, NL | Zoom in depth interview |
| 2 | Felice | Female | 23 | Student Business Studies | Gelderland, NL | Zoom in depth interview |
| 3 | Noël | Male | 19 | Sales employee | Gelderland, NL | Zoom in depth interview |
| 4 | Paul | Male | 31 | Assistant Professor | Gelderland, NL | In-person depth interview |
| 5 | Tijn | Male | 23 | Military Service | Utrecht, NL | Zoom in depth interview |
| 6 | Luke | Male | 23 | Technician | Gelderland, NL | Zoom in depth interview |

FINDINGS

This chapter introduces the main three frictions in the conceptual framework. The first friction illustrates the valuation of sneakers, which differs among resellers and collectors. The second friction is in secondary selling; each consumer subculture prefers their own methods in their journey of disposing of their sneakers, meanwhile platforms focus only on one subculture. The third friction is in social media engagement, which is differently created among resellers and collectors, due to the groups using social media differently. Findings from the frictions in this chapter are substantiated and explained by quotes from social media and interviews.

In this conceptual framework, each friction separately influences another friction. This creates the heterogeneity between the subculture and the difference between the collectors and resellers, strengthening the manifestations of each consumer group within the sneaker consumer community.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework



The friction of valuation

Monetary value

There is a difference between collectors and resellers in how they view the monetary value of the shoe. Resellers find the monetary value on online platforms and seek what they can earn. Collectors look at what it costs for them, to keep the pair stocked. Resellers focus on the monetary value in the market. Collectors focus the value on their own space, time, and costs for storing them.

Resellers are more short-term focused than collectors. Resellers focus on how much they can earn from it as soon as they received their pair. In the back of their minds they know, that the set price can raise or lower in a few years. The resellers talk about the value of the shoes in monetary value when stocking them, what it gives to them and that they need to put their money into stocking them, the following examples exactly describe this phenomenon:

Participant 6: “When participating in reselling, hmm, I go most of the time for shoes from which I know, you can win them and they can be gone very quickly, and people want to pay crazy money for them. I want to get rid of the pair within a week, it goes easily because you know, they are wanted. It gives you something when you do not want to keep the pairs yourself, that is why everyone does resell.”

Participant 1: “Shoes gain worth over the years, in three years they are worth much more than today, but you need to choose before you stock the shoes, that practically, you lose this money for three years or half a year, the profit curve decreases, it is the same as investing.”

Collectors rather talk about the space to ‘stock’ the pairs over time in their own home, as in needing a room and extra space for the shoes, explained in the following quotes:

Participant 6: “My relationship to sneakers is an obsession, so, to say it and to translate it to daily language. I always say to my girlfriend, later in life, we need an extra room to stock my pairs so I can keep them.”

Participant 5: “Funny but later on moving in together with my girlfriend in terms of space it might be a problem. When she first moved in she asked where to put them and half of my friends were interested in where shoes were going to be, and then I sold pairs to make space. When I am with her I rather buy things for her, there is a compromise to put them in the garage.”

Appreciation for the sneakers

Appreciation describes how much joy the collecting and reselling, and involvement in the sneakerhead consumer culture gives consumers. The resellers get happy about the excitement of earning money, participating in sneaker lotteries, and winning something. The negative feelings are left out since missing pairs is the risk of the trade. Apart from the reselling that comes later in their journey. The easiness of earning money is what appeals to them and keeps them getting their joy. They also like the challenge to get access to the shoes. So, the resellers appreciate the profit potential for the resale. Aesthetics is also a reason for appreciation but not the primary reason, when a pair with other aesthetics gives them a reason to make more money, they appreciate that other pair more highly.

Participant 1: “I am happy when I am hyped with a win, because yes, you do make money, and besides that, you win for yourself, you win a shoe that you like and can also wear, which gives a different feeling than a normal state of mind.”

Participant 6: “It is easy, easy to make money passively/actively. The challenging part, shoes that I know are difficult, seeing how much effort you probably must put in and then asking others to help, at 20 entries you are already happy to win it at one. So, that is the challenge.”

For the collectors, happiness and joy occur when they won the pair. Collectors do resell their pairs too. During reselling, they share sneaker experiences with others. Get in contact with other sneakerheads and share their interests. The fun in reselling for them is to help another collector to get their dream pair and have an income stream on the side. The collectors appreciate more varied factors in the sneakers. The history, the story behind it, and the sneakers’ aesthetics. The primary means of appreciation is to add them to their collection.

Participant 4: “I just like collecting sneakers, colourful and timeless models, and that attracted me. Also, the joy it brings, Happiness, new friendships, and knowing new people in the world. You can help someone get their dream couple it is a bit of a risk-free side income.”

Participant 2: “I bought Jordans 3 years ago and liked them. I sold the old ones and bought new ones, and that is how I liked having more. “I do not like reselling. What do you want with so many shoes? Also, because you do not win very often anyway.”

Participant 5: “For me it is a hobby, fun wearing them out, having money from it, seeing friends. After university, I stopped caring what other people think of me. I started to use sneakers to show my personality, using them as a good conversation starter. Try and help others understand what joy is about. Also, a private hobby, I like talking about it, travelling overseas to see what stock they have.”

The friction point in appreciation of the sneakers is that collectors appreciate the face-to-face contact with other collectors. A point of irritation is caused by collectors because their joy is in winning the pair and making new friends helping others. Resellers do it for personal gains. The collectors feel the pain of missing out, as resellers move on to another pair. Also, collectors hold on longer to the joy that a certain pair can potentially give them when having the sneakers, than the resellers passing the pair through, which makes it harder for collectors to distance themselves from it.

Participant 6: “When I do not win a pair, it does not matter. I think, next sneaker better, that is the beauty of it. There are so many coming out every year. I think do your thing, keep making money, part of the game. The people who were in it before reselling became popular and people who are struggling now will look at it differently. I think if you can do it, why not.”

Participant 1: “In principle, I do not participate in a Footlocker raffle. So I miss out on all those. But I do raffles with multiple registration days at Nike and Adidas, some raffles are overloaded, I do not get my pleasure from participating in them, so those pairs I miss out on, that does not bother me at all.”

Friction in secondary selling

Profit has to do with what consumers gain from the sneakerhead consumer culture. This is expressed differently across the resellers against the collectors. The resellers tend to turn to monetary profit. They see their product as what they gain in terms of money, from reselling pairs. They see sneakers as an investment. Resellers quickly sell their pairs and earn money from them as they run out of patience, lose space, or see an opportunity where they gain much money from. Collectors focus not only on their profit. Also, on what the other person can gain from it, in terms of joy they can gain from having the shoe. Although both groups admit that earning money from reselling their pairs is enjoyable, the collectors focus more on what the other can earn from the shoes. Resellers see and describe profit as what they can earn after

reselling (a few) pairs. They focus on what they can buy with the money from their reselling practices. In this respect, the resellers are more individualistic.

Participant 6: “Yes, those new Yeezy's are easy to win, but I do not want to wait a year, because you need to buy them one year ahead. Sometimes I have also thought, win a few times, then put your savings towards something. Then you come to friends of mine with enough patience to buy ahead. I could have bought more in that time than I have the patience for. I know very clearly which ones I want to keep and which ones not. It is not based on value but on what I like.”

Participant 3: “For reselling a sneaker with more value that is what I do, when a sneaker becomes worth twice as much as I would keep it. Then you think is it worth reselling and from one hundred euro upwards. I had a time when I usually bought two pairs, then I kept one for myself and the other one went away. With a higher price or not, they go away anyway.”

The collectors care how much the sneaker is appreciated by the other person who wears sneakers they do not own. This feeling of caring does not apply to the resellers. Also, the resellers frankly admit that they will try the next time for a pair when they missed out. Since sneaker drops keep on continuing at a high pace. The collectors do not mind missing out on a pair, since they want exclusive pairs and (mostly) not the pairs that are hyped-up.

Participant 5: “I do not care, not going for pairs that are hyped up. If another desires them that is fine. Even the weird designed things he is like oh cool! But that is it the ones I like not many people's feet.”

Participant 4: “ Yes, it happened at a Patta raffle in Amsterdam, with the new air max and I was selected, so it was more of a lottery by Patta itself, that would be remembered by the long queue outside the shop of people who wanted them I won. It is nice but you grant others too.”

Participant 2: “I do not mind that. I like the same interests. If anyone has them too, because you know that someone else will have them anyway, otherwise it has to be a pair of more than a thousand euros that is fabricated only once, yeah in my world that does not happen for me.”

The friction, in this case, arises as collectors feel that resellers do not hold the same value as they do towards the shoes. Resellers tend to only buy them for reselling purposes and do not truly value the shoe and its background for what it is, as the collectors. Resellers want to get rid of pairs as quickly as possible. Collectors care about the sneakers, so when reselling they

make sure that their pairs, get in hands of people who appreciate the pairs as much as them, this is one reason the collectors like personal contact when reselling their sneakers.

Facebook commentor 1: “I am disgusted with girls who are now suddenly reselling the Yeezy’s for three hundred euros. I am talking about the girls who only bought them to sell them at a different price so that she can pay her overdue Klarna or After pay bill. I am just sick of these girls. I do not even know you, so I do not grant you that money.”

Facebook commentor 2: “How hard it is to find Nike Jordans? And when you find them, you pay more than four hundred euros. How dare you do that it is not like exclusive- exclusive? That is not normal, it used to be like that, the cheaper, I should have stocked up then.”

Resellers capture a different light on this as they state:

Facebook commentor 3: “It is just modern business. Do not see the seriousness of it, yes, it is annoying if you do not get them, but what do you think every shop does? Zara has a pair of trousers made for €0.30 and sells them for €40. We do not get angry about that either.”

Facebook commentor 4: “People act like companies do not take 800% profit on us with every product we buy. You allow a company to rip you off, but when a normal person does it, it is not ok. It is what the fool gives for it. I Think, go complain about the gas and energy prices please and give your neighbour girl her cash.”

Friction in social media usage

Resellers let social media play a large part in estimating how much they can earn from a shoe. Collectors use social media to see which shoes they like and want to have. They use online communities to interact with others and talk to people. Collectors use the platforms to create content, as where resellers only use the platforms to consume content. Collectors go on social media to get in touch with others to meet each other, whereas resellers only use it to resell and have no deep conversations about the shoes as collectors do.

Social media plays a crucial role in the sneakerhead consumer culture. As collectors react to the videos posted online, the resellers use this as a fruitful resource, to base and select their sneaker choices. The collectors react to the hype in the comments of videos on YouTube. These comments make it easy for resellers to select models to resell.

YouTube commentor 1: “Accessibility, amazing quality, and dope collabs are how NB is the best brand. The amount of readily available fire GR colourways is why I

love the New Balance brand. The fact that they never miss when it comes to collabs is the cherry on top. So hyped for the 990v6 and I am going to have a hard time making my top 10 NB of 2021 video!”

YouTube commentor 2: “Basically, some of the best quality sneakers I have ever seen in my life. The material that is suede is undeniable! 992, 990v2, and 998 are my favourites.”

This is exactly the data the resellers use to base their sneaker choices on and to choose their purchases. In this case, collectors dig their own graves, creating data for the resellers.

Therefore, collectors fuel the hype themselves. Sneaker resellers investigate several social media platforms, for example, Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok to see which model is popular.

Participant 1: “I base my choices on experience because I know which shoes are hyped based on social media and what you see on the streets. In general, the platforms where I gained my experience are Instagram and YouTube. I follow people that make predictions about the profit of the shoe, and then I look at the comments to see if this indeed gets to the audience.”

Participant 2: “I do look at how the sneakers look and how they walk for myself. I do not select on price. Mostly I look at what I like in the aesthetic features. The brands that are hyped on the Internet and social media are the brands that you will pick more rapidly due to the hype around these shoes, to make sure that you can indeed make a profit.”

Participant 4: “I go for shoes from which I know. These are the ones you can win and can easily get rid of. It is easy because you have seen this via social media. Accounts precisely indicate how much they will cost, according to comments on a certain kind of shoe or model.”

To conclude, resellers use social media to discern monetary value and hype for reselling activities. They watch or create content for other resellers. To resell their pairs and hype up others about sneakers. Collectors use it to express their passion for the shoes and to discuss and compare models. The friction that emerges is the actions collectors undertake to enable resellers to figure out which shoes they can sell for higher prices and see which ones collectors are passionate about to resell them for higher resale prices than the initial price.

DISCUSSION

This research about friction has offered a framework that sheds light on undertheorized differences between distinct groups within a shared consumption subculture. The framework builds on the gap, that within distinct consumption community cultures, there are differences that may not necessarily cause damage to the brand, or the continuance and existence of a community (cf. Thomas et al. 2013; Other Key Cites for Consumption Communities). The framework has several theoretical implications that are explained in this chapter.

The analysis highlighted some frictions between resellers and collectors within the sneakerhead consumer culture. In this culture, the several consumer groups involved influence each other. Where the resellers do need the collectors to continue their reselling practices, the collectors do not need the resellers and see them as a blocking factor, not valuing the sneakerhead consumer culture. Despite this, the actions of the collectors do fuel the reselling practices of the resellers. The perceived fairness of the reselling comes into play in the different dimensions in three main frictions, concerning the generosity towards others, and their passion for the sneakers which differs in nature among the collectors and resellers. Secondly, the way how both groups use social media causes friction to grow. Also, the internal values of joy and motivation play a role in how resellers and collectors value the sneakerhead consumer culture. And lastly, the risks they perceive in conducting their practices within this culture are different for resellers and collectors.

The analysis shows that in the sneakerhead consumer culture context, the different practices of both reseller and collector groups support these frictions. Both practices fuel the practices of the other subcultural group in a vicious circle.

Value in dispositioning theory in the sneakerhead consumer culture

As seen in the secondary selling in value in dispositioning theory, the reselling can take place through different channels; these are called the reselling channels (Gregson & Crewe, 2003).

In this theory is stated that consumers can choose and select between these channels. This is already a point of friction for the collectors since most resellers use platforms such as Klekt, StockX, and Restocks. Channels are more focused on resellers, to resell their pairs. This touchpoint is taking the channel choice away from the collectors. The theory of Gregson and Crewe, 2003, also states that this is covered under object placement: the way channels are focused and set up. In the sneakerhead consumer culture, most platforms apply to the desire of resellers to resell, not for collectors to resell.

However, the theory states that object placement (the reselling of sneakers through these channels), makes it possible or impossible for all subcultures within a bigger culture to gain value through these channels. Therefore, if a subculture holds different values, in this case, the collectors, will search for other dispositioning methods or channels that suit their values, and exchanging and reselling potential will be lost.

The channels selected by the consumers in the sneakerhead consumer culture (reselling platforms such as Restocks StockX, Klekt, etc.) favour positions. In this case the position of the resellers against the collectors. Collectors do know these platforms but do not value them highly. Because they do not contribute to the value of personal contact in dispositioning. The social order in this sense is that the resellers have more 'power' in selecting platforms. Collectors mean that resellers have the 'power' to destroy the value of the sneakers and the historical beliefs that are aimed at the internal values of joy from the sneakers which the collectors and resellers share. This power of the resellers and the non-power of the collectors is leading to the three main frictions in dispositioning. Meaning there is a different sense of valuation between collectors and resellers that they experience from the sneakers.

Next to this, online as well as offline channels are used differently, leading to frictions and channels not using the full potential within the community. Also, social media is used

differently within the subcultures which leads to friction leading to activities conducted differently by both groups contributing to the tensions between both subcultures in the sneakerhead consumer culture.

As the secondary selling theory (Ture et al., 2014) implicates, value arises when consumers interact via these platforms and use these platforms. However, in the sneakerhead consumer culture, some values arise around not using these platforms. The collectors choose not to use these platforms to resell, and this may manifest in a way causing that due to that the subcultures that do use these platforms to have more power, which contributes to a stronger power or image of the reselling platforms. The place where the reseller decides to resell their pairs is an important source of where value is gained (Gregson and Crewe, 2003). Also, the decision of some subcultures to specifically not interact with these platforms could lead to an increase in value in the sneakerhead consumer culture. Value may arise through the avoidance as well as through usage of the platforms. Therefore, this can be seen as a place wherein sustained balance is created. Value is gained through perceiving the sneakers and sneaker usage in reselling for resellers, and by gaining relational value for the collectors, to connect to other people in the community (Ture et al., 2014). Both resellers and collectors have shared values in the entire sneakerhead consumer culture community.

Appadurai (1986) suggests that the main source of value for the community is the circulation in different time and space regimes. Meaning the sneakers travel through different countries in different time zones, like vintage clothing that gains more worth over the years entering different communities. But in this case, in the sneakerhead consumer culture, the circulation is manifested even at the same time sneakers go from person to person, gaining more value when each pair arrives at a reseller and is hyped up by people on social media.

Resellers can value the same sneakers differently as collectors do, according to the framework. They are both handled as individualistic to enhance interests, collectors do this for

their value of connecting with others and resellers handle it to gain monetary value. within the sneakerhead consumer culture, different value regimes play distinct roles. The value regime of the resellers, stating that reselling is socially accepted within the culture is different from the acceptance and tolerance of reselling for the collectors.

There are different standards within the sneakerhead consumer culture, collectors do not like reselling practices this is seen in the value that has been given to the shoes. Meanwhile, for resellers, the sneakers gain more value as long as people ask more money for the pairs, but for collectors, the sneakers lose value when they are wanted by more people, and when they are resold for multiple times the retail price. These value regimes are for resellers, the higher the price the more value, and for collectors the more unknown, and the lower the price the better. The allowance of these different value regimes for the sneaker to move across different subcultural standards is seen in the sneakerhead consumer culture (Ture, 2014).

In earlier research of consumer culture, the person that gives the sneaker away, this can either be the reseller but also the collector, holds superior power over the receivers (Godelier, 1999). However, in the sneakerhead consumer culture, some platforms are aimed at one subculture, namely the values of the resellers that hold superior power over the collectors, in giving their possessions away. The platforms 'decide' how the process takes place, incorporating the resellers' values. The platforms do contribute to the power imbalance between the collectors' and resellers' values but do keep the community intact.

Community frictions in the sneakerhead consumer culture

Thomas, (2013) described that within communities, resource dependence and heterogeneity between different subcultures co-occur and are highly intertwined, in such a way that the community sustains itself. While other work describes producer-consumer dependence while producers are in one group and consumers in the other, this thesis describes this producer-

consumer dependence as people in the groups can take on both roles. This dependence is due to a network of dependent social, and economic resource exchanges between the different actors within that community. Thomas, (2013) shows that the heterogeneity of these subcultural groups threatens the belonging of the actors to the community by different tensions, but the resource dependence is what drives them as the benefit to set aside these tensions and in turn, strengthen the belonging to that community.

In the work of Thomas, (2013) tensions may exist, but the need for the resources is higher than avoiding the community due to friction, and that is what keeps the community intact. The running community that the work of Thomas, (2013), states that all people share the same passion: running, they may all need running shoes and running clothes, from certain brands. In summary, although the groups have different values and diverse needs, they come together with a shared sense of belonging: running.

However, in the sneakerhead consumer culture, the shared sense of belonging is not what the community upholds, in this community, it is the heterogeneity. Also, resource dependence does not apply to both groups in the sneakerhead consumer culture, as it does in the running community. Collectors distance themselves from the pairs that are popular and resold by resellers. Resellers are dependent on the collectors buying the shoes, and collectors are not dependent on the higher-priced popular sneaker offerings of the resellers. Since collectors will look for other pairs being in circulation.

In the sneakerhead consumer culture, there are no resource dependence benefits as in the theory of Thomas, 2013. In this case, the collectors have a different sense of belonging to the sneakerhead consumer culture than the resellers, but both are consumer groups, and both groups slightly participate in reselling, as a producer. For example, resellers sell pairs they recently bought for a higher price given on hypes, and collectors resell their own (un)worn pairs they have had stocked for a while. The point in this reselling game is, that resellers do

not necessarily feel like they ‘belong’ to the sneakerhead consumer culture and see reselling only as a monetary investment. However, collectors do feel that their reselling practices are what keeps the community alive and keeps them involved, and does give a sense of belonging to the consumer culture.

Another challenging point in the sneakerhead consumer culture following from the aforementioned example is, that reseller practices are not what strengthens the collectors’ belonging, but what limits belonging. Only reselling practices of collectors strengthen their belonging. This thesis shows that the contradicting groups are dependent on different resources: the popular sneakers for resellers and unpopular sneakers for collectors, keeping the culture alive and standing. The collectors find a unique way and different resources to seek for their pairs than how resellers use their resources. This implies that for managers, even when there are groups without consensus, it does not necessarily mean that it is bad for a brand’s reputation. The image of a certain brand is not always at stake.

In summary, the theory of Thomas (2013), states that the shared sense of belonging and the resource dependence from equally dependent heterogeneous groups is what keeps the community alive, but the sneakerhead consumer culture challenges this with different subculture groups that are not being mutually or equally dependent of each other, and groups that differ in their sense of belonging. Future research could find out what factors in detail exactly play a role in how resellers and collectors somehow keep this community alive, and how these differences balance each other out leading to the consumer community growth. Also, future research could focus on how the manifestation of groups not being equally dependent, as resellers are dependent on the collectors, but collectors not on the resellers lead to the booming sneakerhead consumer culture.

Managerial implications

Friction in valuation of the sneakers:

In light of frictions in valuations, managers should have in mind which values each subculture group worships within the community that is created dynamically around the brand. Managers should consider how, and if, this balances each other within the ecosystem of the brand to sustain the community and make strategic marketing decisions. On this part, it is key for managers not to necessarily avoid frictions. These frictions can cause greater brand popularity since people start talking about the sneakerhead consumer culture manifestations, and sneakers, plus sneaker events gain more popularity from the media. Several news articles have proven this popularity, and even sneaker events around the sneakerhead consumer culture gain more popularity and attention from people outside the sneakerhead consumer culture through different media and press releases and articles (Gelderlander, 2022).

Friction does not necessarily mean that it is bad for the brand, because brands can also attract other audiences by the attention that friction draws to them. However, managers need to be aware of the risk of friction that can cause damage to their brand and try to avoid this. It is a trade-off that needs to be managed in the consumer culture. Therefore, managers should map out in system dynamics how this relationship or multiple relationships between different subcultures hold up and balance each other.

Friction in secondary selling:

Managers should make strategic choices about how (brand)platforms can be set up or used, to appeal to and adhere to the preferences and customer journeys of the different subcultures within a community to reach its highest and full potential. Different platforms have been set up to serve the resellers. These platforms are focused on the online reselling practices from resellers only, rather than focusing on collectors who would prefer meetings in person. Different platforms could set up in-person swap meetings, bringing collectors in contact with

each other to serve them also. This offering could lead to both groups being satisfied and feeling involved in the community again.

Also, by holding these meetings in person, these platforms could win over the collectors that would have otherwise avoided their platform. Just like what happens currently within the consumer culture community. The Collectors use platforms such as Facebook themselves to start serving their own needs of meeting in person and having a deeper connection with others in the community.

For managers, this is an opportunity to look at their customer journey within the community and respond to the customers' needs and engage more people as well when all needs of the current community members are fulfilled. This may not only apply to the sneakerhead consumer culture but could apply to different consumer cultures as well.

Friction in social media engagement:

Each subculture uses social media differently. Collectors function as content creators and resellers as content consumers. This causes friction between the subcultures because collectors feel their passion and their love for sneakers drained by the resellers, who only use these expressions to facilitate their practices. Resellers see these manifestations, other than collectors in the community, as the way things are.

Nevertheless, the collectors are unaware of their social media activities that help the resellers' practices, since they innocently want to share what they like with other collectors, not with the people who profit from it. Despite this, the collectors keep on conducting these activities, since comments under public YouTube videos are very accessible for all the platforms' visitors. Another complication is to keep a 'collectors only' group since people can access Facebook groups very easily. If frictions like these happen around the community that a brand engages in, managers could set up intelligence gatherings to create subculture spaces for the communities they serve. From this example, managers could also explore how each

subculture within the community engages with the brand. How subcultures use the created content by the brand as well as by the different consumer subcultures. Use this information to make strategic marketing decisions to see how this drives each subculture to maintain the community.

Future research directions

Firstly, this work sets up quantitative work for the future. Experiments could be done to extend this work by figuring out if different subcultures are more or less engaged by frictions within a consumer community. The results could be assessed if frictions eventually lead to more or less engagement and/or activities within a brand community. These experiments could measure the different, changing subculture's feelings or activities towards brands. For example, experimenting with new groups entering a community. Creating certain frictions and monitor how these communities evolve and how it does play out against the members of a community, that already have been around for a while. By doing these experiments, in turn, the possibility to generalize the findings of this work, could be extended to other consumer cultures. Behaviour around friction, within a community with different subcultures, can be studied.

A second interest for research, for sneaker brands such as Nike, Adidas, and New Balance, is how resellers could be stopped by brands. From learning, taking advantage of, or using collector-made content for their monetary profit. This way, collectors and resellers can both be satisfied with the practices of the opposed subculture group in the sneakerhead consumer culture. It is a pain for the collectors and a gain for the resellers. Future research could investigate the value proposition between the resellers and collectors within the community, aiming to find out pain relievers and find out how to create gains for not only the resellers but also the collectors.

Future behavioural studies can find ways why collectors still exploit their activities on

social media, knowing that it fuels the actions of the resellers, hindering their own practices. Resellers using collector-made content creates several frictions. However, collectors keep on creating the same content consistently, despite them being aware of resellers using it.

Also, future research could apply the lens of system dynamics (Meadows, 2008), to the sneakerhead consumer culture. This research could figure out why and how the different paths of collectors and resellers are followed, both keeping the culture in balance and alive through their separate contributions. Within this research different subculture activities and the journey, they walk through, could be put into system dynamics, to investigate how activities balance each other, leading to a sustainable community. Despite the friction involved between different subcultures. The role of the brand could be involved to examine strategic decisions upon the positive and the negative flows that follow from the activities, conducted by the brand, the consumers, and even other parties in the consumer culture.

One more interest for research is, how it is ethically justified for resellers to make a profit and gain money from reselling sneakers, which can lead to negative feelings towards collectors. These negative feelings lead to frictions, where different morals and ethics may come into play, which cause damage to a brand. Research could investigate when and if members of different subcultures eventually leave the community, when and why the collectors' moral boundaries are crossed by the activities of the resellers, and what brands can do to avoid such negativity towards the activities of the brand community. Research can find out if there are indeed differences regarding moral values causing frictions. Also, between distinct brands in terms of boundaries that are set by different subcultures.

Limitations

First, the theories used for this study are within CCT, and the empirical findings of the papers are restricted to the differences in consumer consumption communities and value in dispositioning theory. The scope of this study is restricted to this sample of papers. If the

scope is broadened, more theories could apply diverse types of thinking about the sneakerhead consumer culture. If other theories were used, diverse ways could be discovered why certain groups behave in certain ways: why resellers behave as they do and how collectors react to it and vice versa. Also, different theories could explore how different subcultures in a community are recognized and how they manifest through their different actions.

Another limitation of this study is generalization, which is only applicable to resellers coming from the Netherlands according to this study. Diverse cultures that stand differently towards the sneakerhead consumer culture and the norms and values applied by these different subcultures within the community are not considered. In the interviews, the resellers interviewed, live in the middle regions of the Netherlands. So, there are no demographic differences measured within the Netherlands as well. This limits the generalization of the results that now only apply to a smaller group.

Thirdly, one limitation is time. Due to the time span to collect data for this research being from January 2022 until May 2022, not all available data could be gathered. More rich data could have been uploaded in the meantime, since the sneakerhead consumer community is still increasing every day, creating more awareness online as well as offline. The online world changes fast, so new ways, new channels, and new subcultures that could have entered the community are not considered.

The last limitation of this study is the accessibility of online network groups, such as Facebook community groups, Instagram pages where different forms of contact take place, and other social media communities. Different data could be exchanged, not coming forward into this study due to the inaccessible exchange of conversational data within private groups that manifest deeper in the sneakerhead consumer culture.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has argued throughout this work, what the point of frictions within a community can mean for different consumer groups in the sneakerhead consumer culture. The findings have stated that frictions occur in subcultural group differences, mainly in monetary valuation of the sneakers for resellers and appreciation of the sneaker culture for collectors. Frictions in reselling occur, due to resellers wanting to resell their pairs online, without much contact with the buyer. Meanwhile, collectors appreciate conversations and connecting offline with their sneaker buyers. The last key takeaway is frictions occurring in social media usage, the resellers consuming all content that collectors make, while collectors do not know that they are smashing their own windows.

Although theories state that different consumer groups are dependent on each other for the community to sustain, this thesis has shown that mutual dependency for community survival is not always the case. Also, differences between community subcultures do not necessarily have to damage a community.

So, for one to stay true to their authentic self, one must dare to be different, to show their passion. It does not always lead to harm to others or unpleasant events within the community in which one engages. it could lead to becoming more valuable than ever before, just like sneakers.

REFERENCES

- Arnould, E.J., & Thompson, C.J. (2005). Consumer Culture Theory (CCT): Twenty Years of Research. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 31(4), 868-882.
- Arsel, Z., (2017). Asking Questions with Reflexive Focus: A Tutorial on Designing and Conducting Interviews, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 44, (4), 939–948, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jcr/ucx096>
- Braithwaite, N., (2021). How sneakers became a \$79 billion business—and an undisputed cultural symbol for our times. Retrieved from: <https://www.fastcompany.com/90637534/how-sneakers-became-a-79-billion-business-and-an-undisputed-cultural-symbol-for-our-times>
- Braithwaite, N., (2020, May, 17). The history of sneakers, from commodity to cultural icon. Retrieved from: <https://theconversation.com/the-history-of-sneakers-from-commodity-to-cultural-icon-127268>
- Brink, E., (2021). De Europese wortels van de sneakers. *Mode, Schoenen & Sport*. Retrieved from: <https://www.thesoulofeurope.com/geen-onderdeel-van-een-categorie/de-europese-wortels-van-de-sneaker/>
- Bunn, C., (2021, October, 23). Sneakers are so hot; resellers are making a living of coveted models. Retrieved from: <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/nbcblk/sneakers-are-hot-resellers-are-making-living-coveted-models-rcna3619>
- Chalmers, T., Price, L. L., Schau., H. J., (2013). When Differences Unite: Resource Dependence in Heterogeneous Consumption Communities. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 39(5), 1010- 1033.
- Choi, J. W., Gaal Cluver, B., & Kim, M. (2017). Social media's place in sneakerhead culture. *Global Fashion Management Conference 2017 Global Fashion Management Conference at Vienna*. Retrieved from: <http://db.korea scholar.com/article.aspx?code=325872>
- Choi, (2017). Sneakerheads' Assessment of Sneaker Value and Behaviors throughout the Sneaker Ownership Cycle. *Journal of Philosophy*. 227.
- Ciment, S., (2021). How to get sneaker bots: the controversial tech that helps resellers flip hundreds of hyped pairs of Jordans, Dunks, and Yeezys. Retrieved from: <https://www.businessinsider.com/sneaker-bots-how-to-buy-make-and-run-the-tech-2021-1?international=true&r=US&IR=T>

- Franco, P. (2022, forthcoming) – The Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) Research Tradition and Digital Marketing. In A. Hanlon & T. Tuten (Eds.), *SAGE Handbook of Digital and Social Media Marketing*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Gelderlander, de., (2022). Sneakers van alle tijden tentoongesteld in Den Bosch. Retrieved from: <https://www.gelderlander.nl/video/sectie/nieuws-1/productie/sneakers-van-alle-tijden-tentoongesteld-in-den-bosch-302112>
- Groce, N., (2017). How The Forrest Gump Sneaker Is Making a Comeback. Retrieved from: <https://footwearnews.com/2017/fn-spy/entertainment/forrest-gump-shoes-nike-cortez-388967/>
- Habibi, S., S., L., (2021). Static vs. dynamic methods of delivery for science communication: A critical analysis of user engagement with science on social media. *Journal of Science*. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0248507>
- Hunt, J., (2021, February, 25). Sneakerheads Have Turned Jordans and Yeezys Into a Bona Fide Asset Class. Retrieved from: <https://www.bloomberg.com/features/2021-sneaker-investment/>
- Kawamura, Y., (2017). Sneakers, fashion, gender, and subculture. Retrieved from: <https://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/sneakers-9780857857224/>
- Kotler, P., & Keller, K. (2011). *Marketing Management*. Prentice Hall PTR.
- Kozinets, R. (2002). The field behind the screen: Using netnography for marketing research in online communities. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 39(1), 61–72.
- Matthews, D., Cryer-Coupet, Q. & Degirmencioglu. (2021). I wear, therefore I am: investigating sneakerhead culture, social identity, and brand preference among men. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40691-020-00228-3>
- McAlexander, J.H., Schouten, J.W., & Koenig, H.F. (2002). Building Brand Community. *Journal of Marketing*, 66(1), 38-54
- Meadows, Donella H. (2008) *Thinking in Systems – A Primer*. Chelsea Green Publishing, White River Junction, ISBN: 978-1-60358-055-7
- Muniz, A., & O’Guinn, T. (2001). Brand Community. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 27(4), 412-432
- Myers, M.D. (2020) *Qualitative Research in Business & Management*, 3rd edition. Los Angeles: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Nike. (n.d.) partnership with famous athletes <https://nikejustdoitproject.weebly.com/partnerships-with-famous-athletes.html>
- Robinson, T.D., & Arnould, E.J. (2020). Portable Technology and Multi-Domain Energy Practices. *Marketing Theory*, 20(1), 3-22.

- Saatcioglu, B., & Ozanne, J.L. (2013). Moral Habitus and Status Negotiation in a Marginalized Working-Class Neighborhood. *Journal of Consumer*, 40(4), 692-710.
- Saunders, Evan., (2021, March, 8). Sneaker Resellers: Nike Scandal Is Everything I Hate About The Community. Retrieved from: <https://www.fortressofsolitude.co.za/sneaker-resellers-nike-scandal-community/>
- Schau, H.J., Muñiz, A.M., & Arnould, E.J. (2009). How Brand Community Practices Create Value. *Journal of Marketing*, 73(5), 30-51.
- Schouten, J., & McAlexander, J. (1995). Subcultures of Consumption: An Ethnography of the New Bikers. *Journal Of Consumer Research*, 22(1), 43-61.
- Semmelhack, E., Garcia, B., Lepri, E., Willis, P., & Hatfield, T. (2015). *Out of the Box: The Rise of Sneaker Culture*. Skira Rizzoli.
- Slaton, K., & Pookulangara, S., (2021). Collaborative consumption: An investigation into the secondary sneaker market. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*. Retrieved from: <https://onlinelibrary-wiley-com.ru.idm.oclc.org/doi/pdfdirect/10.1111/ijcs.12725>
- Souphanh, M., (n.d.). Real Talk: Reselling Is Killing Sneaker Collector Culture. Retrieved from: <https://www.sneakerfreaker.com/features/real-talk-reselling-has-killed-sneaker-collector-culture>
- Steinberg, T., (2018, September, 17). The Profitable Hidden Sneaker Market. Retrieved from: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/leighsteinberg/2018/09/17/the-profitable-hidden-sneaker-market/#1999e2045925>
- Türe, M. (2014). Value-In-Disposition: Exploring How Consumers Derive Value from Disposition of Possessions. *Marketing Theory*, 14(1), 53-72.
- Turner, T., (2019). *The sports shoe, A history from field to fashion*. Bloomsbury publishing. Retrieved from: <https://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/sports-shoe-9781474281805/>
- White, R. D., (2019, February, 11). How Michael Jordan became a brand (even though he almost skipped the meeting with Nike). *The Seattle Times*. Retrieved from: <https://www.seattletimes.com/business/how-michael-jordan-became-a-brand-even-though-he-almost-skipped-the-meeting-with-nike/>

APPENDIX

Interview guide

Personalia

Name: age: (gender):

What do you do for work/ study?

How would you describe your family situation, who lives with you at home?

Introduction questions

1. How would you describe your relationship with sneakers?
2. How did your interest in (collecting) sneakers start? □ Trends, relatives, friends?
3. How did you start participating in the sneaker collecting?
 - Why do you (want to) collect sneakers, what can it bring you?
 - Do you have reasons for participating in a raffle or lottery, other than for money/ profit?
 - Do you have a story participating about entering a raffle and what happened?
4. How much time/ money do you devote to sneaker collecting?

Do you get the feeling that collecting may have had an influence on your goals, study, or work progress or may it have distracted you in planning/time?
5. Based on which reasons or grounds do you choose for the shoes you have collected or planning to collect? (Price, looks, brand, referrals)
6. What was the reason you chose to join online raffles instead of buying in-store?
7. What feeling do you get after “winning/getting” the sneaker?
8. How do you feel after not getting the sneaker for which you were aiming?

Reselling questions

1. Are you interested in purchasing sneakers for the purpose of reselling?
2. Have you ever participated in reselling sneakers? □ Can you talk about that experience?
3. What is exciting about reselling the sneaker? What is challenging about reselling?
4. How do you think the sneaker culture does/can benefit from reselling?
5. What feeling do you experience, seeing someone else with the pair you wanted but missed out on?
 - a. Do you get feelings towards other people if you ask for a higher price for the pair that others missed out on? b. and the other way around?
6. Do you get the feeling that collecting sneakers may affect people around you?
 - a. What do your (partner/family/friends) think about your sneaker collecting activities?
 - b. Did you ever discuss buying or reselling with someone?
7. Do you ever regret reselling pairs when eventually they gained more value/ worth?