



# **Consumer Culture, Identity and Well-Being: The Search for the 'Good Life' and the 'Body Perfect' (European Monographs in Social Psychology)**

*Helga Dittmar*

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Advertising, materialism and consumption are central aspects of contemporary Western culture. We are bombarded with idealised images of the perfect body, desirable consumer goods, and affluent lifestyles, yet psychology is only just beginning to take account of the profound influence these consumer culture ideals have on individuals' sense of identity and worth.

*Consumer Culture, Identity, and Well-Being* documents the negative psychological impact consumer culture can have on how individuals view themselves and on their emotional welfare. It looks at the social psychological dimensions of having, buying and wanting material goods, as well as the pursuit of media-hyped appearance ideals. In particular, it focuses on:

- the purchasing of material goods as a means of expressing and seeking identity, and the negative consequences of this
- psychological buying motivations in conventional buying environments and on the Internet
- the unrealistic socio-cultural beauty ideals embodied by idealized models.

Throughout, different approaches from social psychology are integrated, such as self-completion, self-discrepancy and value theory, to create a comprehensive theoretical framework for understanding the impact of internalising core consumer culture ideals on how individuals see themselves and the implications this has for their psychological and physical health.

This book is of interest to anybody who wants to find out more about the psychological effects of living in modern consumer societies on children, adolescents, and adults. More specifically, it will be of interest to students and researchers in social psychology, sociology, media studies, communication and other social sciences, as well as to psychologists, health workers, and practitioners interested in the topics of identity, consumption pathologies, body image, and body-related behaviours.

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