



Growing Geeks: Subcultures of consumption and their formative indicators

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Geeks.

Parrotheads.
Fans. MachHeads.
Brand Communities. Fanboys. Achievers.
Tribes. Geeks. Brand Cults.
Customer Evangelists. Mavens.
Deadheads. Trekkers.



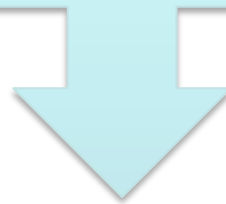
Geeks.
Can we **grow** them?

Economics.
Psychology.

Geeks.

Can we **grow** them?

Economics.
Psychology.
Anthropology.
Religious
Studies.



Geeks.

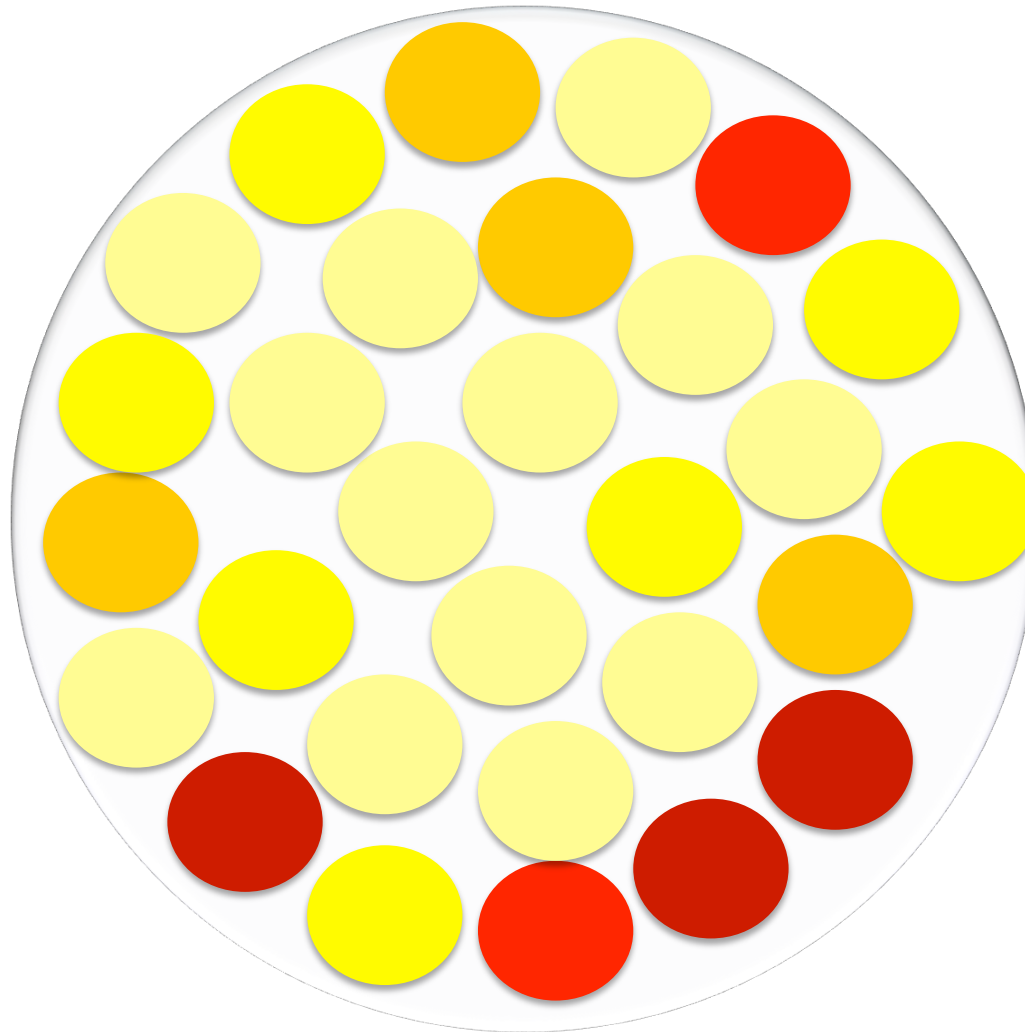
Can we **grow** them?

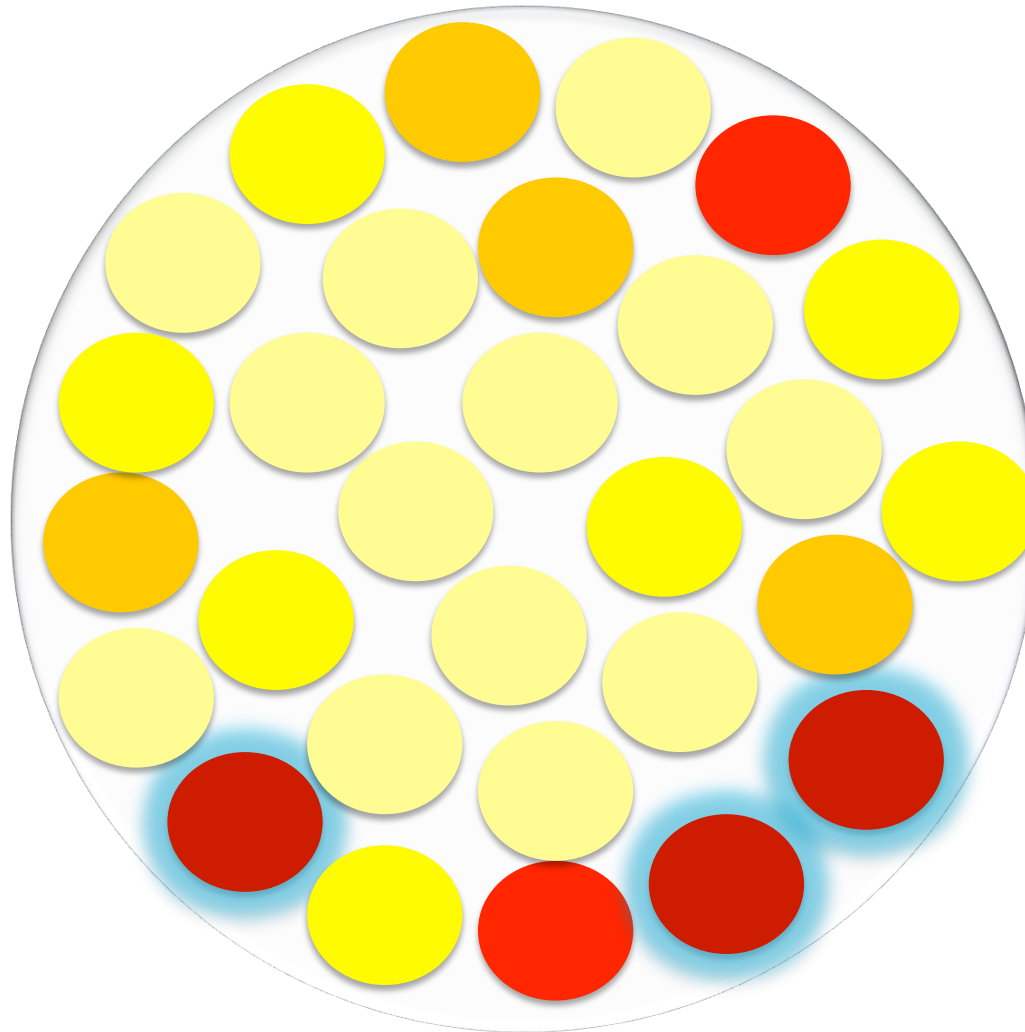


Economics.
Psychology.
Anthropology.
Religious
Studies.



Context.





What if you could know in advance
which of your customers had the
potential to become an evangelist?

What if you could identify the
qualities of people attracted to a
community of consumption around
your product?

subcultures of consumption



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Formative indicators

Experience Driven

Idealistic

Gift Economists

Socially Driven

Authentic

Cultish

Epistemologically Driven



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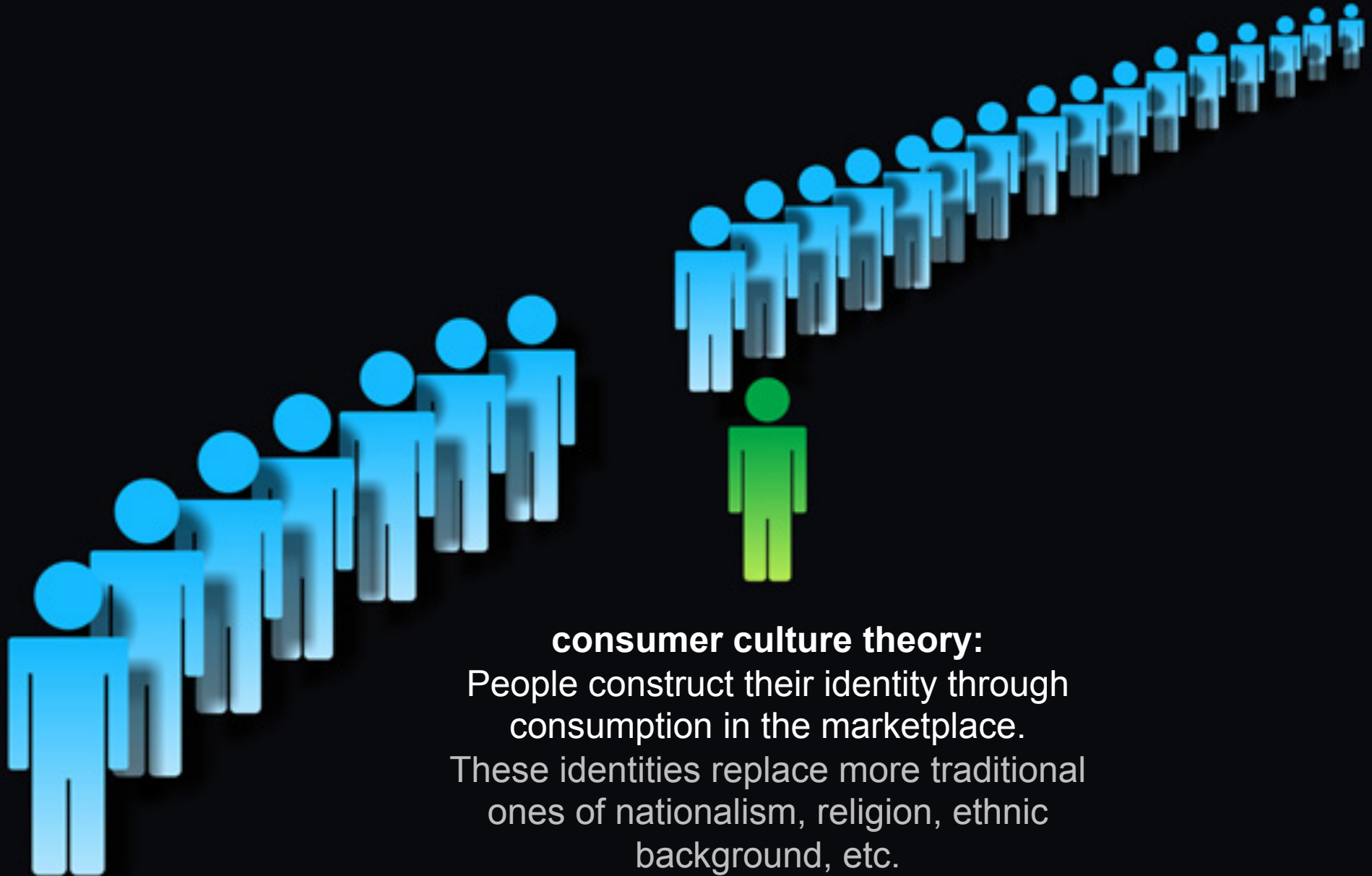
Cultish

Epistemologically Driven

100%

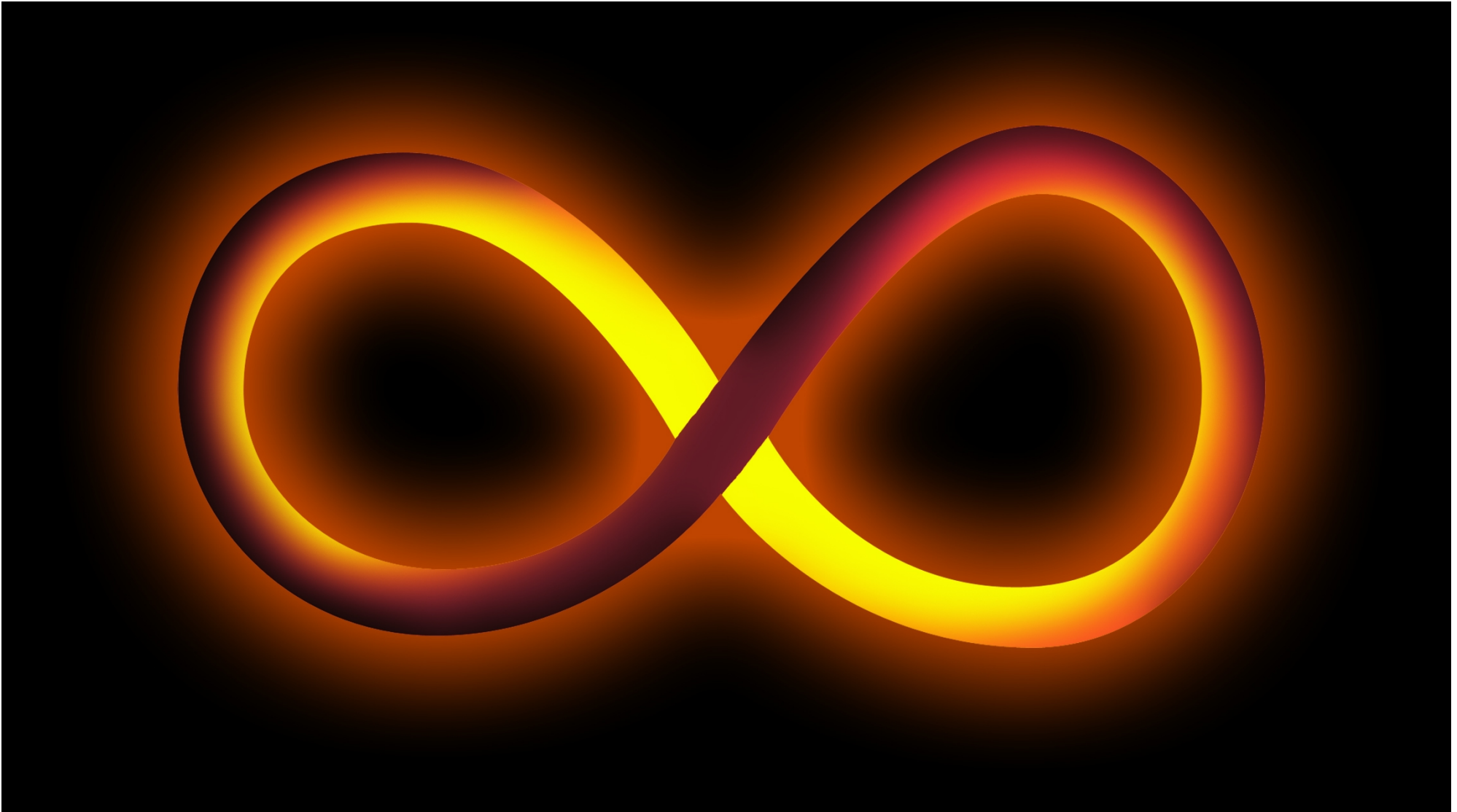


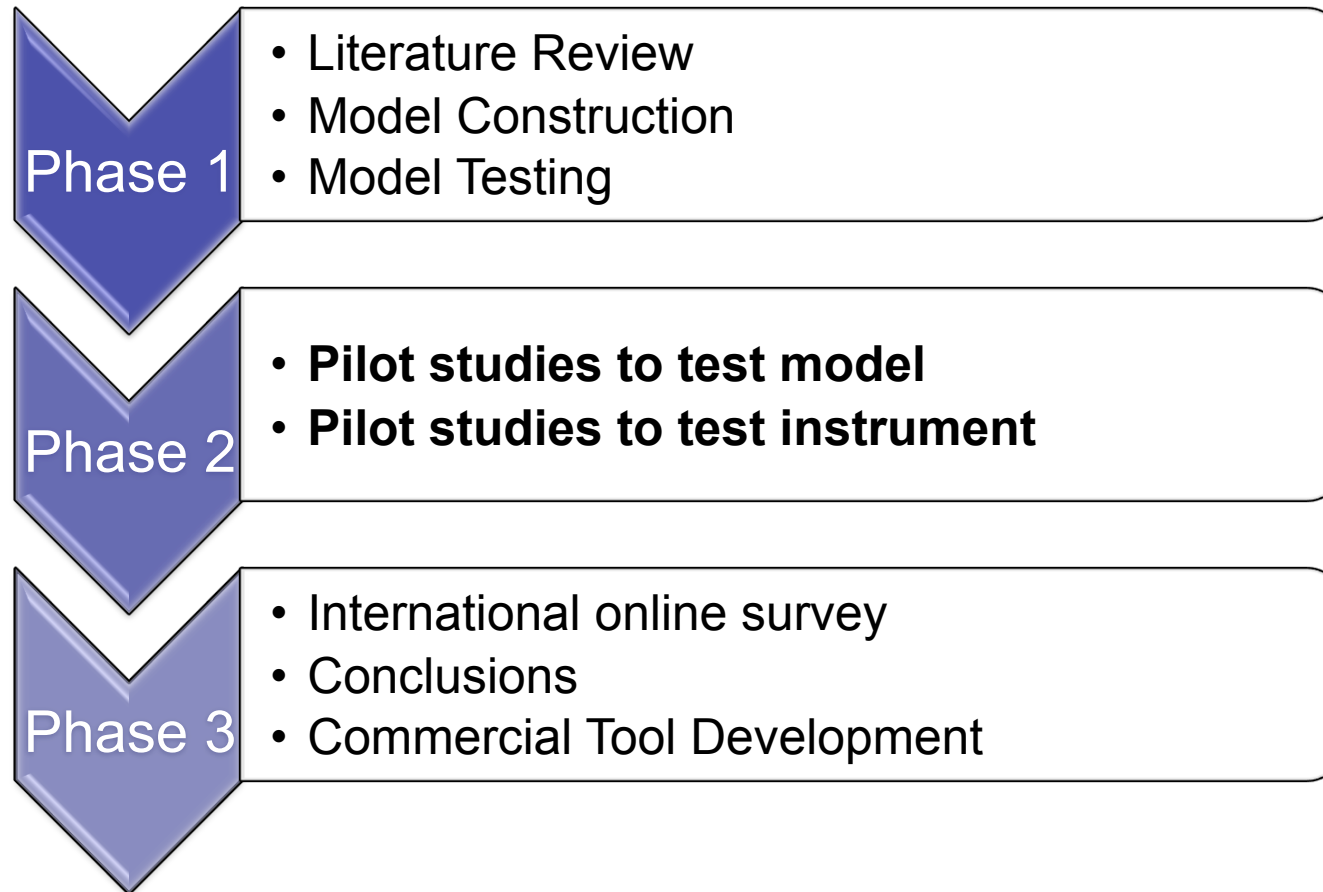
Quintessence.



consumer culture theory:
People construct their identity through
consumption in the marketplace.
These identities replace more traditional
ones of nationalism, religion, ethnic
background, etc.

The infinite game





Pilot research:

- Interviews
- Perceptions in popular culture
- Monitoring activity in online social networks
- Fieldwork
- Surveys to test model/instrument

Major study:

- Online survey comparing propensity for evangelism against behavior in Subcultures of Consumption across brands and/or geographical borders

(or)

- Commercial study testing the effectiveness of a Customer Evangelism tool in increasing positive word-of-mouth

The instrument



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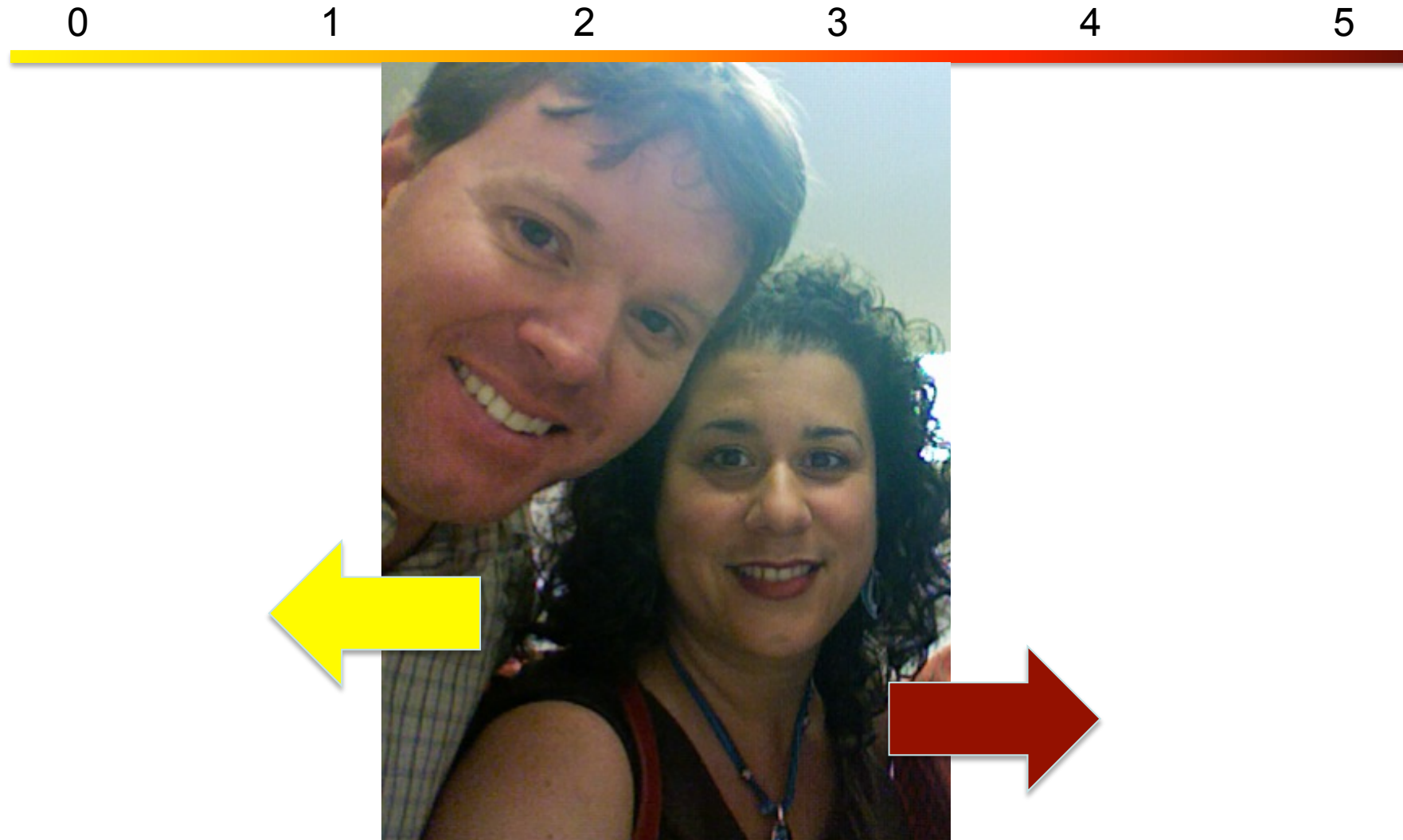
Formative indicators	Sample Questions
Experience Driven	
Idealistic	
Gift Economists	
Socially Driven	
Authentic	
Cultish	
Epistemologically Driven	

Formative indicators	Sample Questions
Experience Driven	I enjoying travel, dining, cultural activities or sporting events more than things like clothes or electronics.
Idealistic	I often upgrade to new versions and styles of products that are important to me.
Gift Economists	I will help someone with a problem even if, at that moment, they can't help me.
Socially Driven	I enjoy activities more if I am in a group of friends.
Authentic	The more accurately a company portrays its product, the more I respect the brand.
Cultish	I don't feel I need to buy what everyone else is buying.
Epistemologically Driven	I like talking about my favourite products, especially to experts who can show me new features or product uses.

The instrument



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Hypothesis: 4 or 5 on the Evangelism scale indicates a propensity for evangelistic behaviour. Use of the tool can determine a proximity on the scale in real time.

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Research Contributions:

- further research on Subcultures of Consumption
- modelling Customer Evangelists by consolidating the literature
- testing the Service-Dominant Logic paradigm
- using cultural and religious theory to inform marketing practice

Research Limitations:

- does Consumer Culture lend itself to a hybrid quant/qual approach?
- do the number of variables and the illusive variable of quintessence limit the applicability of the research?
- will the research conclusions lend themselves to an operational context?

Industry Application:

- identifies evangelistic propensity in customers
- emphasises tangible qualities in the marketing message
- with the diversity of communication channels, provides evidence-based communication guidance



Thank you.
Questions?