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Nostalgia marketing and (re-)enchantment

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ABSTRACT

Most marketing and branding activities are essentially concerned with enchantment—the rendering of the ordinary into something special. To create enchantment, companies are increasingly marketing past-themed brands and products. Yet, there is little research about why and how such nostalgia marketing creates enchantment for consumers. Building on different modalities of nostalgia identified in sociological literature (reluctant nostalgia, progressive nostalgia, and playful nostalgia), we analyze the creation of enchantment through a longitudinal, qualitative, multi-method program of inquiry. We find three routes to enchantment grounded in different nostalgia modes: (1) re-instantiation (symbolic retrojection into a past), (2) re-enactment (reflexively informing the present with past-themed brands and practices), and (3) re-appropriation (ludic re-interpretation of the past). By unfolding the different ways in which marketers can press rewind to create enchantment, we discern important implications for theorizing and managing past-themed brands in terms of marketing strategy, targeting and positioning, brand experience design, and marketing communications.

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1. Introduction

Most marketing and branding activities are essentially concerned with enchantment, that is, rendering the ordinary into emotionally-charged, exciting, magical, and special market resources. Marketers and brand managers increasingly attempt to enchant consumers through nostalgia marketing by offering past-themed market resources, which are here understood as brands and products that foreground an actual or fictitious link to a past. In the hands of marketers, nostalgia appears to be the very fabric from which they fashion and promote brands and products, aspiring to promulgate consumer value across a wide range of market offerings. Nostalgia marketing permeates and upholds to a large part the entertainment, film, music, tourism and cultural heritage industries but also technology, food, and fashion sectors—for example, reuniting bands from the past like Guns N' Roses, the comeback of vinyl, retro-sounding music by chart-storming pop artists like Adele and Sam Smith, revamped NOKIA phones and Hydrox cookies, or nostalgia-framed series like *Vikings*, *Mad Men*, and *Stranger Things*.

Why and how does nostalgia marketing create enchantment? In the literature, the relationship between marketing, nostalgia, and enchantment is implied in three relevant but separate research streams. In the first stream, literature on brand heritage discusses how (corporate) brands can amaze consumers with a story of a brand's past (Dion & Borraz, 2015; Merchant & Rose, 2013; Rose, Merchant, Orth, & Horstmann, 2016; Urde, Greyser, & Balmer, 2007). Brand heritage becomes a key performance driver for marketing (Wiedmann, Hennigs, Schmidt, & Wuestefeld, 2011), which explains why some brands invent a past (Brunnige &

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Hartmann, 2018). A second stream discusses the relaunch of brands from the past as retro brands, or updated historical brands (Brown, Kozinets, & Sherry, 2003; Cattaneo & Guerini, 2012; Davari, Iyer, & Guzmán, 2017; Dion & Mazzalovo, 2016; Närvänen & Goulding, 2016). These brands can become dear to consumers when they manage to integrate contradictions between past and present, such as juxtapositioning new features with nostalgic associations (Brown et al., 2003; Davari et al., 2017). Lastly, the third stream of relevant research is sociological literature which highlights how nostalgia can simultaneously be backwards-oriented and melancholic and forward-looking and utopian, rendering nostalgia a multi-modal phenomenon (Higson, 2014; May, 2017; Pickering & Keightley, 2006).

However, what remains surprisingly absent from this canon of past research is a more granular and differential understanding of the ways in which enchantment is created in the context of these different modalities of nostalgia. Extant marketing literature has not fully addressed the assertion that “nostalgia can only be conceptualized as a contradictory phenomenon, being driven by utopian impulses—the desire for re-enchantment—as well as melancholic responses to disenchantment” (Pickering & Keightley, 2006 p. 936). An object and/or memory can evoke different nostalgia responses from different consumers (Higson, 2014; May, 2017; Pickering & Keightley, 2006); similarly, we cannot assume that the creation of enchantment follows one universal and singular route. Rather, it is plausible to expect that different nostalgia modes are linked with different ways of creating enchantment, which, like nostalgia, must be understood in its sociohistorical context.

This paper elucidates the relationship between nostalgia marketing and enchantment, asking *why and how does nostalgia marketing create (re-)enchantment?* Central to our analysis is the idea that consumers enact brands and their performative outcomes—in this case, enchantment—when they integrate them into their consumption practices. From this perspective, enchantment is neither an essential quality of any given brand created purely by marketers nor is it generated entirely by consumers from their own lives. Although enchantment is a collective process to which various actors contribute (Badot & Filser, 2007; Hartmann & Östberg, 2013), enchantment is actualized at the consumption level. Consequently, in this article we treat consumption as the epistemological window through which to study the relationship between nostalgia marketing and enchantment. We draw on longitudinal qualitative—introspection, interview, archival and netnographic—data collected in the context of the upsurge of nostalgia-framed brands and their consumption following the collapse of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and its re-unification with the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG).

Our analysis of how and why the marketing of past-themed market resources creates enchantment in different ways yields important contributions: first, our findings and analysis provide a granular understanding of how enchantment is created in the context of different nostalgia modes, thus contributing to the theorization of nostalgia as a historically-embedded consumer cultural phenomenon rather than a purely individual phenomenon. Second, building on this theorization, the article provides concrete managerial guidelines for how marketers of past-themed brands can foster enchantment to create brands and products that matter to consumers and their lives. Thus, we discern important implications for differences in marketing strategy, targeting and positioning, brand experience design, marketing communications, as well as eminent opportunities and risks. Third, the conceptualizations we offer provide useful fodder for further research and methodological expansions for the investigation of nostalgia marketing.

2. Theoretical background

To study and better understand why and how nostalgia marketing creates enchantment, we first consider enchantment, which has evolved into a central recurring theme in marketing literatures. Enchantment is critical because it relates to individuals' experience of larger societal processes witnessed in the trajectory of modernity. Weber's (1922/1978) early sociological work observed that rationalization, here understood as an effort to increase efficiency, control, calculability, and predictability (Ritzer, 1996, 2005), increasingly permeates more sectors of society and goes hand-in-hand with an erosion of enchantment, or myth, romance, and magic in the relationship people have with the world. In other words, a dominant focus on rationality in many parts of everyday life displaces and reduces the room for imagination, fantasizing, wonder, romance, and magic over time. However, because such moments of specialness—or enchantment—are an important and cherished part of human existence, this quest for enchantment leads to a growing desire for consumption that promises to recuperate these lost aspects (Arnould, Price, & Otnes, 1999; Firat & Venkatesh, 1995; Kozinets et al., 2004; Ritzer, 2005; Thompson & Coskuner-Balli, 2007).

Consequently, the market has become a prime site for negotiating enchantment in many contemporary societies. Ritzer (1996, 2005), for example, shows how the rationalizing qualities of what he calls the McDonaldization of society can create short-lived enchantment but inevitably lead to experiences of disenchantment, which, in turn, incline both consumers and producers to seek to re-establish enchantment. Conceptually, in this article, we are dealing with this re-establishment of enchantment, which we refer to as (re-)enchantment—the recovery of utopian, romantic, mythical, emotional, and imaginary elements of the relationship consumers have with the world (Holbrook, 1997; Østergaard, Fitchett, & Jantzen, 2013; Ritzer, 1996, 2005; Weber, 1922/1978). Thus, (re-)enchantment is about recovering a sense of specialness in what is supposedly ordinary. The mediation of (re-)enchantment via markets is a central feature of many contemporary consumer cultures. In other words, if consumer culture is “the ideological infrastructure that undergirds what and how people consume and sets the ground rules for marketers' branding activities” (Holt, 2002, p.80), then the desire for (re-)enchantment is deeply ingrained in what and how people consume, as well as marketers' branding activities.

In marketing terms, such (re-)enchantment can be defined as “a set of practices initiated by both manufacturers and consumers to incorporate non-functional sources of value in goods and services, and turn them into sources of hedonic, symbolic, and interpersonal value” (Badot & Filser, 2007, p.167). From this perspective, the creation of (re-)enchantment is part and parcel

of marketing and branding activity and enacted on the level of consumption where the hedonic, symbolic, and interpersonal dimensions of value must be experienced to exist. In marketing literature, this is evident, for example, in studies on river rafting or skydiving (Arnould et al., 1999; Celsi, Rose, & Leigh, 1993), the construction of ever-more utopian retail spectacles (Kozinets et al., 2004; Ritzer, 2005), branded enchantment business models (Langer, 2004), the discursive rendering of ordinary mass production into a more special craft production (Hartmann & Östberg, 2013), and the romance of the return to producing and consuming somewhat archaic and less rationalized community-supported-agriculture food (Thompson & Coskuner-Balli, 2007).

Against this background, one prominent way in which marketing aims to evoke (re-)enchantment is by creating and serving consumers' sentimental, romantically-charged longing for the past, home, and comfort—a historical emotion referred to as nostalgia (Boym, 2001; Davis, 1979; Holbrook, 1993). Originating from the Greek words *nóstos* (return home) and *álgos* (longing), nostalgia mourns for “the loss of an enchanted world” (Boym, 2001, p.8). Past-themed market resources offer reclamation by facilitating (re-)enchantment, which, following Østergaard et al. (2013, p.338) is squarely linked to the past when these scholars define it as an emotional return to a “prior cultural form, a rediscovery of a condition that once existed but does so no longer.” If we wish to understand how nostalgia marketing can create such (re-)enchantment, we cannot assume that nostalgia is merely the individual-level, psychological and backward-oriented phenomenon commonly described (Holbrook, 1993; Holbrook & Schindler, 1994; Loveland, Smeesters, & Mandel, 2010; Schindler & Holbrook, 2003), but it must also be conceptualized against its social, cultural, and historical dimensions.

Recent sociological literature informs us that nostalgia is almost always rooted in an experienced lack of belonging—a sense of displacement, an uneasiness with oneself or one's surroundings (May, 2011). Belonging “is a fundamentally temporal experience that is anchored not only in place but also in time” (May, 2017, p. 401; Holak, 2014). While a lack of belonging can be triggered by individual experiences and environments (e.g. a memory of a childhood experience; a loss of a loved one; personal wellbeing), it is inherently linked to shifts in the broader macro landscape of cultural, historical, social, and institutional dimensions such as globalization, hyperwesternization, migration and diasporic conditions, border shifts and the emergence of new countries, military conflicts, loss of community ties, or an experienced erosion of moral standards. This is in line with Davis (1979), who suggests that societies undergoing turmoil develop a predisposition to nostalgia, and resonates with Brunk, Giesler, and Hartmann's (2018) observation that the development of different nostalgia markets is precipitated by disruptions in the institutional landscape. Along these lines, Zhou, Wang, Zhan, and Mou (2013) report that feelings of existential and social insecurity increase consumer preferences for nostalgic products in China. It is therefore not surprising that contemporary conditions—tense political climate, rapid sociopolitical changes, religious wars and mass migration—provide fertile breeding grounds for feelings of displacement and uneasiness with one's environment. These conditions allow nostalgic sentiments to thrive, creating viable marketing opportunities for (re-)enchantment, reflected in the ever-increasing market relevance for nostalgia-linked products (Lasaleta, Sedikides, & Vohs, 2014; Loveland et al., 2010; Zhou et al., 2012). By offering a valuable resource that anchors consumers to a particular (lost or utopian) place and/or time, thereby allowing consumers to re-establish a temporal experience of belonging (May, 2017), past-themed marketing offerings serve as a valuable tool for creating (re-)enchantment.

In contrast to most prior marketing studies dealing with nostalgia (Cattaneo & Guerini, 2012; Lasaleta et al., 2014; Loveland et al., 2010; Zhou et al. 2012), sociological literature highlights nostalgia as a contradictory, multi-modal and multi-layered phenomenon that can be as much a melancholic attachment to the past as a forward-looking and utopian daydream (Higson, 2014; May, 2017; Pickering & Keightley, 2006). This literature suggests that nostalgia can be reluctant, backwards-looking and negative (May, 2017) but also progressive, reflective and productive (Boym, 2001; May, 2017), as well as playful, ludic, and ironic (Pickering & Keightley, 2006). From this perspective, the consumption of an object or a memory can be related to different nostalgia modes for different consumers (Higson, 2014; May, 2017; Pickering & Keightley, 2006). This suggests that to understand how nostalgia marketing creates (re-)enchantment, we need to pay attention to these different modalities of nostalgia as i) reluctant, ii) progressive, and/or iii) playful, and understand its different roots or the experiences of dislocation against which it emerges.

To summarize, a granular and differential understanding of how the creation of (re-)enchantment might be undergirded by different modalities of nostalgia is absent in extant literature. From sociological literature on nostalgia we discern that the creation of (re-)enchantment can only be understood by unpacking the different ways in which the marketing and consumption of past-themed brands and products relates to different underlying nostalgia modes, which, in turn, must be understood in relationship to their sociohistorical context.

3. Contextual background

We conducted our study on the link between nostalgia marketing and (re-)enchantment in the empirical context of the German reunification and the emergence of GDR-related nostalgia marketing. This rich macro-institutional context allows us not only to observe the different modalities of nostalgia highlighted by the sociological literature but also to trace longitudinally the sociohistoric roots of the loss of belonging that undergirds nostalgia. Table 1 offers an overview of the sociohistoric trajectory in our research context and its relevance for our investigation.

Following Ritzer (1996, 2005), the table also offers an empirical synopsis of the historic patterning of enchantment, disenchantment, and re-enchantment dynamics in the course of Germany's reunification. Officially, the GDR dissolved on 3 October 1990, marking the political and economic reunification of Germany. The political decisions surrounding the reunification were characterized by a strong emphasis on efficiency, control, calculability, and predictability, which represents a macro-institutional and

Table 1
Historical contextualization.

Key event	Description	Research relevance
Founding of the GDR 7 October 1949	German nation state (German Reich) splits into Western capitalistic democratic state (FRG) and Eastern socialist totalitarian state (GDR) in line with the occupation zones of the allied forces following World War Two.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Germany becomes microcosm of geopolitical order (Boyer, 2001), with consumption and material prosperity as the major battlefield of competition between the two systems. - Rapid industrial growth in the FRG (Wirtschaftswunder), but slow economic post-war recovery in the GDR. - FRG's steadily increasing material prosperity becomes an ever-present point of comparison to the scarcity of consumer goods caused by the planning economy and state financial shortages in the GDR (Landsman, 2005). - Opposing value systems and ideological grids: The capitalist consumption culture in the FRG promotes individuality and distinction through freedom of choice. The socialist consumption culture in the GDR promotes community and equality in material and social status (Hartmann & Brunk, 2015).
Construction of the Wall 13 August 1961	GDR initiates the construction of a wall as a border around the GDR; cutting off its citizens from access to the West solidifies ideological division.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Differences between GDR and FRG consumption cultures become ever-more pronounced following increasing shortages in the GDR. - Increasing dissatisfaction of GDR citizens. - GDR Ministry for State Security (Stasi) increasingly infiltrates nearly all aspects of everyday life. - GDR products and brands are perceived as inferior in terms of quality, taste, functionality, design, symbolism, and identity value. - In the GDR, the longing for Western brands as "the real deal" is further fueled by access to West German TV and product advertising (Landsman, 2005; Veenis, 1999) as well as care packages with Western brands sent by FRG relatives.
Monday protests start 4 September 1989	Weekly peaceful political demonstrations against GDR leadership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Showcases the dissatisfaction with the current cultural condition and the rising quest for more freedom and aspiration to participate in Western-style consumer culture (Landsman, 2005; Veenis, 1999, 2011).
Fall of the Wall 9 November 1989	Relentless protests lead to peaceful revolution. GDR opens border.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Euphoric delirium. - GDR citizens celebrate long-awaited freedom and access to Western consumer culture.
Monetary reunion 1 July 1990	FRG's currency (Deutschmark) is introduced to GDR territory; savings are converted at a fixed exchange rate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sociopolitical and economic rationalization is intended to speed up economic integration, solve inefficiencies of co-existing currencies, simplify economic calculability, planning, control. - GDR brands vanish literally overnight from East German retail shelves in exchange for desired West German brands (Blum, 2000). - Demand for GDR brands plummets. - Hyper-consumption of Western brands. - Devaluation of GDR brands and wholesale rejection of anything East German (Berdahl, 1999; Veenis, 1999).
German Reunification 3 October 1990	Political and economic reunification of Germany; GDR officially dissolves.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Former GDR products entirely disappear from German retail landscape. - All aspects of existing FRG sociopolitical system grafted onto the former territory of the GDR (Cooke, 2005; Hogwood, 2000) in a "unilateral process of assimilation" (Boyer, 2001). - GDR citizens forced to relocate in society with completely unfamiliar value systems and cultural norms (Blum, 2000).

sociopolitical form of Ritzer's rationalization. The reunification, with its sudden access to Western consumer culture, was celebrated with euphoria and initially fostered excitement and *enchanted* experiences (Veenis, 1999, 2011). However, the phase of initial enchantment was short-lived for many East Germans and followed by *disenchantment*—a hangover phase when the shiny facade of Western consumer culture gradually began to crumble, leading to the realization that capitalism was far from the all-enchanting experience envisioned. As the harsh consequences of the political and economic restructuring became more apparent (e.g. de-industrialization and mass unemployment; loss of personal ties and community feel; emergence of more explicit social classes; mass migration and resulting swaths of rural emptiness; loss of cultural identity), many East Germans felt uprooted and dislocated in their new cultural environment.

Against the backdrop of these sociohistorical trajectories of rationalization and its initially enchanting but subsequently disenchanting consequences, we witness an upsurge of nostalgia marketing that counters the disenchantment experienced and recovers a sense of specialness, romance, and magic in everyday life. Initially emerging in the 1990s (Bach, 2002; Berdahl, 1999; Blum, 2000; Boyer, 2006), today, almost 30 years after the reunification, the marketing of GDR-related market resources is still going strong and continuously evolving (Brunk et al., 2018). This includes not only the unfaltering revival of previously disliked GDR brands but also a variety of consumptionscapes (e.g. hotels; restaurants; Trabant safaris; exit room escape games; museums); GDR-specialized mail-order companies (e.g. Ostprodukte-Versand; Ossiladen), and product fairs (e.g. OSTPRO).

4. Methodology

4.1. Overview of program of inquiry

To study why and how nostalgia marketing creates (re-)enchantment necessitates data collection techniques that can produce empirical material which enables an analysis of the modalities of nostalgia and the specific routes to (re-)enchantment they create. From our theoretical and contextual work above, we discern that the empirical material must address both the historical and contemporary dimensions of nostalgic consumption (life in the GDR and life today), as well as transitional experiences between “then” and “now,” between “belonging” and “loss of belonging.” Thus, to contextualize historically the prevalent nostalgia marketing and its conceptual links with (re-)enchantment, we followed a qualitative multi-method program of inquiry that includes primary data in the form of introspective essays, in-depth interviews, and online ethnography (netnography) as well as secondary data in the form of historical data and pop-cultural material.

The secondary data primarily serves to explicate representations of the past and provides a historical anchor point. Netnography covers the other side of the temporal spectrum by offering a representation of the present and scrutinizing ongoing collective (re-)negotiations. Introspective essays and in-depth interviews bridge past and present by discussing key informants' trajectories and related cultural (re-)negotiation processes from the time before the political changes until today. This combination of various data-collection techniques allows us to empirically tap into the various dimensions and modalities of nostalgia that are essential for our theorization, i.e. the “then,” “during” and “now” (temporal); the “here” and “there” (place); the individual and collective (social) as well as experienced belonging. In addition, our methodological approach of employing multiple methods facilitated data triangulation across the various data sources, a procedure commonly used to strengthen and validate qualitative findings. Our program of inquiry thus follows recent calls to combine offline and online methods to generate insights beyond what conventional methods alone can achieve (Heinonen & Medberg, 2018).

4.2. Collection of empirical material

Our data collection started in 2010 with observations of the research phenomenon in popular culture. We reviewed historical data sources such as historical documents and publications, history books, and general population surveys as well as media and pop-cultural material including newspaper and magazine articles, documentaries, and other TV programs with the goal of (1) establishing an understanding of the historical context and (2) familiarizing ourselves with the cultural categories related to the phenomenon under investigation (McCracken, 1988). The collection and analysis of historical archival and pop-cultural material continued throughout the iterative process.

In quantitative inquiries, the key sampling consideration is representativeness; in qualitative research, contrasting consumer profiles are a prerequisite for capturing the breadth of prevailing sentiments and underlying cultural dynamics. As recommended, our overall sampling approach was guided by the analytical process of constant comparison across varying respondent profiles, which is commonly achieved by recruiting interviewees via convenience and multiplicity sampling (McCracken, 1988; Spiggle, 1994). Additional sampling considerations specific to each data collection technique are outlined in more detail below. The collection of primary data took place between 2011 and 2018.

4.2.1. Introspective essays

Primary data collection began with introspections. To address the sociohistorical dimension and explore the different, culturally-situated, modalities of nostalgia today, we sought a research procedure that allowed us to tap into the everyday life and consumption of participants in culture, both “then” and “now.” To this end, empirical material was collected through eleven written introspective essays (Brown, McDonagh, & Shultz II, 2013; Hart, Kerrigan, & vom Lehn, 2016; Wallendorf & Brucks, 1993). The main sampling criterion was socialization in the GDR. Participants thus had to have been at least 18 years old when the Wall fell. To gain access to this particular demographic profile, participants were recruited via personal contacts as well as study calls in GDR-related Facebook pages and other websites.

A two-page briefing informed the introspection participants about the general purpose of the study and gave instructions on writing an introspective essay. Specifically, we asked participants to reflect upon and describe their life before, during, and after the reunification. Our instructions encouraged them to consider *all* aspects of everyday life including work, family, and social life, their economic situation and consumption experiences, and to write down anything they can remember from these time periods—regardless of how relevant it might seem—as well as openly expressing their emotions and feelings. The instructions contained neither maximum length nor structural requirements. The final essays were up to 54 double-spaced A4 pages of text long and presented us with rich material on the study participants' lived experiences through the course of Germany's reunification and beyond.

4.2.2. Interviews

To further explore the emerging findings from our introspective essays and hone in on our research purpose, we conducted 19 in-depth interviews which took place in participants' homes and followed the guidelines set by McCracken (1988). Key sampling criteria were identical to those for introspection participants but with a specific focus on increasing demographic variety. Thus, we complemented the recruitment via initial personal contacts and online posts with the distribution of flyers at public locations to achieve diversity in terms of age, education, and gender. The final purposive sample of participants is shown in Appendix 1.

The interview guide was semi-structured, with a set of core questions and topics, yet with room for adjustment depending on the participant's background and age. Questions related to positive and negative aspects of life in the GDR in general as well as consumption, with the aim of studying experiences of sociohistorical trajectories and the collective experiences of our informants as participants in culture. The interview proceeded mostly chronologically, starting with life in the GDR and finishing with questions about participants' consumption today. Interviews ranged between 2 and 4 h in duration and, with the consent of the participants, were recorded and transcribed. After each interview, observation notes captured additional material and experiences that emerged before or after the interview recording, such as observations related to the environment (i.e. the participant's home) as well as introspective reflections on the overall interview experience.

As not all consumption of GDR-past-themed brands and products is by former GDR citizens, six additional interviews with customers of a store selling GDR-related products were conducted to further scrutinize our theorization with the help of contrasting cases. We sought to complement the existing sample with participants whose socialization process took place outside the GDR (either in West Germany or internationally), and who thus lacked the lived experiences related to "the place" referenced. Besides the prerequisite of having made a purchase in the shop, no other sampling criteria (e.g. demographics) were applied.

4.2.3. Netnography

While interviews and introspections provided us with individual-level data covering participants' transition from the past to the present, allowing us to build a conceptual bridge between representations of their bygone lifeworld and consumption behavior today, netnography (Kozinets, 2010; Langer & Beckman, 2005) allowed us to observe the collective manifestations and negotiations surrounding GDR-related nostalgic consumption today. Netnography is an increasingly popular research method that has been used in a variety of different ways in marketing research and is highly complementary with other, more traditional, data collection methods like interviews (Heinonen & Medberg, 2018). Netnography is fruitful, because online environments are particularly conducive to researching nostalgia-related phenomena (Holak, 2014).

While we generally followed the methodological recommendations set by Kozinets (2010), we opted for a covert, non-participant research approach in our search for webs of significance. Following Langer and Beckman (2005), we took this decision due to the difficulty we had previously experienced in recruiting introspection and interview participants. For some East Germans, talking about and reliving the tumultuous and sometimes degrading experiences during the political changeover in front of an unknown researcher was sometimes sensitive. Public online spaces, on the other hand, provided a context where participants (sometimes anonymized) felt comfortable openly sharing their experiences, opinions, and concerns. To explore these public and open collective reflections, we opted for an unobtrusive way to collect netnographic data.

Our primary sampling criterion was to select online spaces that allowed us to observe collective interactions related to GDR nostalgia and consumption. Following Kozinets' (2010 p. 89) criteria for selecting online field sites that are relevant, active, interactive, substantial, heterogeneous, and data-rich, we opted to study multitudinous online domains. More specifically, for approximately seven years we followed online interactions on selective blogs, fan pages, and online communities formed around the consumption of GDR-related products and services; commercial websites, marketing communication and customer interactions on retailer websites; and reader comments and discussions in online newspaper forums related to the research phenomenon. Thus, in addition to collecting consumer-type data, we also reviewed marketing-type data on the communication and representation of GDR-related brands and services. Online interactions were systematically followed by observing, reading, and archiving posts related to sentiments of nostalgia, consumption, and (re-)enchantment.

4.3. Analysis of empirical material

Our theory-building efforts were guided by analytical procedures suggested by Spiggle (1994): categorization, abstraction, comparison, dimensionalization, integration, iteration, and refutation of the data. Contrary to positivist, hypothesis-led research approaches, interpretivist research generally follows an inductive analytical strategy, meaning that conceptualizations take shape during the course of the research and emerge from the data rather than being predefined by the literature. As is common for this type of inquiry, data analysis was an ongoing and iterative process that gradually evolved throughout the data-collection phase (*iteration*). Preliminary analysis started upon a first cycle of data collection and continued at regular intervals until theoretical saturation was reached. This entailed continuous refinement of the data collection techniques (e.g. interview guide; sampling criteria; coding scheme) as new patterns and dynamics were uncovered and interpretations proceeded. This constant *comparison* procedure allowed data collection and analysis to intermingle—a central tenet of this type of research (McCracken, 1988).

Our analytical process began with an independent impressionistic reading of the empirical material. To extract meaning, we read the material repeatedly in search of recurrent themes and patterns (*categorization*). We began coding by identifying emic instantiations of nostalgic sentiments in relation to consumption and experiences of (re-)enchantment before further exploring potential conceptual links and cultural underpinnings vis-à-vis the historic trajectories and lifeworlds of our participants (*abstraction*). For example, categories resulting from this initial open-coding process were, among others: manifestations of enchantment, sense of belonging, reconstruction of the past, present, transition experience, place and instantiations of nostalgia. Subsequently, these categories were further dimensionalized, e.g. transition experience was sub-categorized into positive and negative; nostalgia into backward and forward looking; belonging into high and low; place into here and there, and so on (*dimensionalization*). As we advanced the analysis and conceptual development through constant comparison, relationships of categories and subcategories were delineated and conditions that facilitate (re-)enchantment were defined. For example, negative transition experiences were linked to a sense of dislocation that fostered backward-looking nostalgia ("everything was better

back then”). Coding became increasingly focused on consumers’ dislocation and the operation of different modes of nostalgia in creating routes to enchanting consumer experiences (*integration*).

We subjected our emerging theory to further empirical scrutiny by purposely sampling additional participants who were outside our original sampling frame yet related to the empirical phenomenon, to explore contrasting cases (see Interviews section) and triangulate our data (*comparison; refutation*). This proved particularly useful for refining our theory and adding conceptual nuances to our findings. For example, this stage was essential for conceptually refining the last path to enchantment (re-appropriation) as being inviting to all consumer profiles, irrespective of prior lived experience in that particular time and place. Throughout the entire analytical stage, we engaged in hermeneutic interpretation and processing, i.e. coding and recoding, inter-researcher comparisons and discussions as well as iteration and triangulation between our data sources and emerging conceptualization (Thompson, 1997). For validation purposes, we also engaged in selective member checking.

5. Findings and analysis

Our findings and analysis reveal three different routes to (re-)enchantment by nostalgia marketing: re-instantiation (symbolic retrojection into a past), re-enactment (integrating the performance of past-referenced brands and practices into contemporary everyday life), and re-appropriation (ludic re-interpretation of the past). These routes are undergirded by different experiences of dislocation which in turn activate different nostalgia modes that include reluctant nostalgia, progressive nostalgia, and playful nostalgia.

From this perspective, a past-themed market offering can create (re-)enchantment through re-instantiation, re-enactment, and/or re-appropriation depending on whether consumers use it as an identity-laden means to retroject themselves into a past condition (re-instantiation), as a resource to inform the present and future (re-enactment), or as purely ludic raw material to add sparkle, style, and vitality to the present (re-appropriation). Consequently, the conceptual distinctions between heritage brands, retro-brands, repro-brands, retro-repro brands, nostalgia brands, vintage brands, revitalized brands, and so on (Brown, 1999; Brown et al., 2003; Dion & Mazzalovo, 2016; Urde et al., 2007) begin to lose importance when they can all create (re-)enchantment by fashioning a particular temporal experience of belonging anchored to a particular (lost and/or utopian) place and time (May, 2017), thereby valorizing a particular nexus between past, present, and future.

Past-themed brands can be used by consumers to recover a sense of magic, myth, specialness, and romance—in other words, (re-)enchantment—by not only revisiting a past condition but also by making it matter for the present and future. Marketers and consumers have more than one way of pressing rewind. We propose to foreground the ways in which these past-themed brands can create (re)enchantment by stimulating re-instantiation, re-enactment, and/or re-appropriation to inform strategic marketing and branding decisions. Table 2 offers an overview of the different (re-)enchantment routes and their underlying nostalgia mode.

5.1. Re-instantiation

Nostalgia marketing and past-themed market resources can create enchantment by re-instantiating a past. This enchantment route is rooted in reluctant, melancholic, and backward-looking nostalgia, from which an experience of temporal belonging is created by symbolically travelling back to a better and happier, but now lost, time and place. To better understand this creation of enchantment through re-instantiation, it is useful to recall that nostalgia phenomena go hand in hand with some sense of dislocation or lack of belonging (Davis, 1979; Higson, 2014; May, 2017; Pickering & Keightley, 2006). In our research context, many East Germans experienced a deep sense of dislocation in the course of the re-unification when they found themselves suddenly unemployed and encountered a broadscale devaluation of anything East German (Berdahl, 1999; Blum, 2000; Veenis, 1999). Our informant Sascha and his family are a good example of this dislocation. They have struggled to make a transition into a

Table 2
Nostalgia marketing and routes to enchantment.

	Re-instantiation	Re-enactment	Re-appropriation
Description	Past-themed market resources inject consumers into a past condition achieved by reminiscing and reclaiming a romanticized sense of belonging. Consumers valorize past-themed offerings as reverberations of a better, happier condition and as identity salves (Holt, 2004) that can symbolically re-instantiate a past lifeworld.	Past-themed market resources facilitate a symbolic return to selected morally valuable aspects and consumption practices of a past. Consumers valorize past-themed offerings as symbols of moral superiority that can be used to shape a better present and future.	Past-themed market resources render a past condition as a site for hedonic, ludic, playful, and ironic engagement and creative patchwork. Consumers valorize past-themed offerings purely as ironic, hipsterian, and quirky fashion items that can enliven the present.
Dominant nostalgia mode	Reluctant nostalgia Here understood as an era-focused melancholy and negative nostalgia that mourns experienced belonging and is firmly focused on past times (Flinders, 2018; May, 2017).	Progressive nostalgia Here understood as a productive, reflective, and anchoring nostalgia (Boym, 2001; May, 2017) that brings past and present into dialogue (Pickering & Keightley, 2006).	Playful nostalgia Here understood as foregrounding the fun, ironic, and ludic dimensions of nostalgia (Pickering & Keightley, 2006; Rethmann, 2009) as cultural style and retro markers of taste (Grainge, 2002) firmly focused in the present.

new life since the Wall was toppled. Sascha was often unemployed despite having several professional (re-)qualifications. He experienced many of his friends becoming selfish as they were trying to re-organize their own lives and make ends meet. Consider the following excerpt from his introspection:

I have already said: "I would like to have the GDR back, I was happy there, I found the social system and medical care was much better, even if one was restricted. ... I will build the Wall again, but this time around the former GDR, and I make it ten meters higher." When I say this, I am often portrayed as stupid. But nevertheless, some people agree with me here, because they are not happy and satisfied with the current system. ... The relationship of friendship or neighborhood assistance was different, more intense. We knew that we would help each other. This is no longer the case because everyone has become so selfish trying to make ends meet. In the more rural areas, consumption was more moderate because not everything was available. As soon as something out of the ordinary was for sale, the word spread like wildfire and you simply had to queue. Then EVERYONE had to take part, grandma, aunt, son, etc., in order to get hold of at least a small supply, which is unthinkable today, because you can buy EVERYTHING you want.

[Introspection, Sascha]

This excerpt illustrates a reflection on experiences of dislocation—here construed as the loss of a sense of community, togetherness, moral responsibility, sensible consumption, and overall happiness—and showcases how these experiences foster a wish to return to life in the GDR to counteract the experienced lack of belonging. This wish to return to a past cultural condition mobilizes a moralistic discursive frame (Brunk et al., 2018) by emphasizing discrepancies between then and now, specifically with regard to the experiences of social linking value created in a socialist consumer culture of scarcity.

Conceptually, these reflections on the loss of a previous social condition represent a reluctant nostalgia mode, which is here understood as an era-focused negative melancholy, an obstructive, detrimental, pessimistic, and defeatist nostalgia which mourns the loss of experienced belonging and is firmly focused on a past time (Flinders, 2018; May, 2017). Here, this reluctant nostalgia mode is particularly activated by a sense of moralistic dislocation.

One way in which nostalgia marketing—and the consumption of past-themed market resources—can create (re-)enchantment in this context of reluctant nostalgia is through what we call re-instantiation. Here, past-themed market resources inject consumers into a past condition, reminiscing and reclaiming a romanticized sense of belonging. Consumers valorize past-themed market resources as symbols that re-instantiate a past lifeworld. In other words, we propose that reluctant nostalgia creates opportunities for nostalgia marketing to create (re-)enchantment specifically by enabling consumers to retroject themselves, if only symbolically, into a past cultural condition and re-instantiate it in the here and now. From this perspective, past-themed market resources can be thought of as retrojection devices that can re-instantiate consumers' past lifeworld, turning these ordinary market resources into fascinating, romantic, magic, and enchanting brands.

An example of this is the GDR brand "Club Cola," which was developed as the socialist doppelgänger brand for the Western brand Coca Cola (Veenis, 2011). In 1993, it was marketed with an advertising spot that showed various old GDR state propaganda film materials with the slogan "I know that we will meet again." The success of this nostalgia marketing took even the marketers by surprise, but "seemingly they have, after the first sweep of Western euphoria, addressed a certain yearning felt by former GDR citizens" (Fugmann, 2014). Other examples include a GDR-dinner TV show that is marketed with the slogan "Let yourself be transported back into the GDR era and experience an evening in the GDR" (Focus, 2016), GDR-themed sightseeing tours headlined as "Turn back time with us and take a seat in our old-timer cars, embark on a trip through time" (<https://bit.ly/2FPErAp>), countless privately-owned GDR museums like the "GDR museum time travel" (<https://bit.ly/2Qnljg6>), or the "GDR soft ice cream" promising "ice-cream eating as time travel" (<https://bit.ly/2Rhycm2>). The value propositions of re-instantiation resonate particularly well with a reluctant nostalgia mode, which induces the creation of enchantment by re-instantiating a bygone experience, thus enabling consumers to relive certain aspects of a past condition. Consider the following letter, written by a consumer describing an enchanting experience of using "Badusan," a GDR brand bubble bath:

Dear Badusan team! Unlike the majority of customers here, who have lived many years in the GDR, I was born in the GDR, yet hardly have any memories of everyday life in the "East." Until, thanks to a birthday surprise present, Badusan stepped into my life (and into my bathtub) and suddenly the memories shot into my head, or, put literally, into my nose ... this fragrance, [I thought to myself] you know that somehow! After the first, tentative sniff, I was sure. And before I could grab the telephone to quiz my mother and grandmother about Badusan, I found myself back in the bathroom of my parents' house, the small yellow rubber duck in my hand. And exactly like my hazy memories, that's how it apparently was, my parents and grandparents confirmed it. And now once again, Badusan magically creates a wonderful feeling of coziness and homey comfort in my bathroom, even though for many years I wasn't even aware of how much I actually missed this smell of my childhood days. Thus, every bath takes me on a little journey back, with all its pleasant memories, and this makes this bubble bath at least twice as relaxing as the pleasant smell and the countless bubbles. Thank you for bringing something so nice back to life. Best of luck and I hope you will always achieve outstanding sales with your wonderful products.

As this letter shows, past-themed brands can create enchantment by offering a consumable instance of a past in the here and now, acting as springboards from which consumers can access individual memories that could otherwise, as in the case above, remain idle and irrelevant. Following Blum (2000, p. 231), "the very otherness of GDR products, manifest in their physicality that can be seen, felt, tasted, smelled, and heard, serves as the starting point of these journeys into the past." Here, it was the immersion

into the enchanting consumption experience of the bubble bath that made this consumer realize that “for many years I wasn’t even aware of how much I actually missed this smell of my childhood days.” While Boym (2001, p. 4) suggests that “the nostalgic had an amazing capacity for remembering sensations, tastes, sounds, smells, the minutiae and trivia of the lost paradise that those who remained home never noticed,” our excerpt specifically illustrates a dialectical interplay between brands and memory (Brunk et al., 2018): not only do brands engage in public memory-making when they create, design, and market consumable pasts but they also create the very yearning, lust, and urge to deal with and to miss aspects of a past. These brands re-instantiate specific fragments of that past by symbolically retrojecting consumers into a bygone condition (“I found myself back in the bathroom of my parents’ house, the small yellow rubber duck in my hand”), effectively creating the very longing they are offering to quench.

While re-instantiation specifically resonates with natives of the previous cultural space and their personal memories and experiences, we notice also that there is a more generalized re-instantiation at play in our empirical material. Personal memories of prior brand experiences and a past condition can be, but are not necessarily always, politicized. They can, as in the case above, unambiguously revolve around non-politicized childhood memories of taking a bath. However, re-instantiation can also create (re-)enchantment as a politicized retrojection into a past condition by foregrounding an ideological dimension that is inherent in reluctant nostalgia and its mourning of experienced belonging. This means that, beyond personal memory (“I was well back then”; “Badusan magically creates a wonderful feeling of coziness and homey comfort in my bathroom”), past-themed brands and products can also create (re-)enchantment by revalorizing a past condition more generally, for example by symbolically re-instantiating an ideology, or *Weltanschauung*. In our context this can, for example, revolve around the mode of production in the socialist GDR. GDR brands can create (re-)enchantment by symbolically re-instantiating a generalized experience of “honest quality products made in the right way and for the right reason,” that stand out from the “array of shiny and deceiving Western brands and products.” Consider the following interview excerpt:

Hildegard: And so I find that nowadays, you can still feel that; this particular attitude towards production in the East, especially Eastern brands that have resurfaced here and there—and by the way also in the West—and being very very successful. But why? ... Here you build on the good old workforce and by that I mean the GDR workforce. Handcraft. Tradition. Quality. Honesty and conscientiousness. Someone that cares and is committed. We just leave out all the bells and whistles. And you can very clearly sense that in the quality of the products. Don’t you think so?

Interviewer: Well, if you say it that way, when this ...

Hildegard: Believe me, I worked in retailing in the GDR and touched every product that we sold. And I now see these (GDR) products, today, in the shops! I knew many people, friends, acquaintances, family that worked and developed stuff in these factories. There you focused on the essential, had to achieve great things with only very little means. And they did it! One was and is creative. And that’s become part of our nature and, thank God, it still is. We couldn’t, neither back then nor today, afford to just cobble something together in order to foist this on to innocent and unsuspecting people. ... Today, many of these small [East German] companies simply don’t have the resources, that these peacockish Western firms have, and still today they have to make ends meet with very little. And you can achieve this with creativity and personal commitment, handcraft, omission of additives, artificial stuff ... and without all this design rubbish, simply by offering a product that meets the highest standards.

This excerpt showcases how past-themed brands can create (re-)enchantment by re-instantiating a previously ordinary but now utopian and politicized former mode of local production that renders East German brands as special compared to their Western counterparts. This comparison also highlights the tension between the newer, more global, consumer culture the political changes brought about and the older, more local, consumer culture, which features prominently in many consumer narratives. In this context, GDR brands can create (re-)enchantment because they act as melancholic-utopian (Pickering & Keightley, 2006) and as the politicized no-frills quality underdogs that represent the mythologized values of the GDR workplace and workforce that disintegrated in the course of the structural remodeling of the re-unified labour market, causing feelings of dislocation. Through re-instantiation, past-themed local brands can become special market resources that re-establish a temporal sense of belonging—specifically for consumers who experience reluctant nostalgia.

5.2. Re-enactment

Nostalgia marketing and past-themed market resources can also create (re-)enchantment through, what we call, re-enactment—a symbolic return to selected morally valuable aspects of a past. In this case, consumers valorize past-themed brands as tokens of a cultural condition that now appears to be superior in some way. This condition and its tokens can now be used to shape a better present and future. Such re-enactment is rooted in progressive nostalgia, which is reflective and anchoring, melancholic and yet forward-looking (Boym, 2001; May, 2017). Here, the experience of temporal belonging is created by bringing the past and present into dialogue, by symbolically turning back to selected morally valuable aspects of a lost time and place, re-enacting them in everyday life, and thus leveraging them productively. Progressive nostalgia thus embodies a utopian vision of a better society than the current one (Velikonja, 2009).

To better understand this creation of (re-)enchantment through re-enactment, we need to turn briefly to the specific sense of dislocation that underlies progressive nostalgia. Rather than the entirely past-anchored nostalgic longing of “turning back the clock” that underlies reluctant nostalgia, progressive nostalgia embraces the new cultural sphere. However, the lived experiences in both cultural environments activate a reflective engagement with the past and allow East Germans to juxtapose both systems.

This leads to the realization that not everything was “bad” back then and that the wholesale devaluation and subsequent eradication of anything East German was—in the context of the current cultural condition, which is also flawed—unjustified. The realization that valuable aspects of the past are lost leads to the sense of cultural uneasiness and dislocation that underlies progressive nostalgia. Central to the activation of this nostalgic mode is East Germans' socialization in a consumer culture of scarcity which, when viewed in relation to negative trends such as globalization, global warming, and environmental damage, as well as increasing social isolation in Western societies, offers a range of morally valuable aspects.

After the fall of the Wall, many East Germans celebrated the sudden access to the Western consumption system of abundance. Yet, when compared to the condition of permanent scarcity in the GDR, the new ubiquitous availability of literally anything exposed a deeper lack of meaning: in a system where bananas and other fruits, chocolate, coffee, jeans, and vinyl records were once considered “special items” but are now mundane, an experience of specialness is lost; “special” has become the new mundane. Many East Germans began experiencing a sense of uneasiness with this consumer culture of abundance and missed the social facets of sourcing their products locally, their DIY adventures with friends and neighbors, queuing together for special items, or saving “special” consumption goods for “special” occasions and sharing them with family and friends. While most East Germans now appreciate a condition with almost no systemic scarcity from a practical standpoint, they also began valorizing the sense of belonging and meaning fostered by a consumption system in which not everything was available at all times. Consider how our informant Susan describes the receipt of a “West package” (a care package sent by Western relatives containing Western brands) as fostering a sense of specialness and family through the interplay between rituals and symbolic marketplace resources (Wallendorf & Arnould, 1991):

That was a special highlight in our family: the arrival of the parcel was a secret closely guarded by my mother until the evening. After we had dinner together, a surprise was announced. All family members stood around the kitchen table (no one was allowed to be missing, otherwise the ceremony was postponed to the next day). With ceremonial gestures the package was opened slowly and carefully. Even the wrapping paper was valuable. The content was completely unspectacular from today's perspective. Inside it, there were mundane consumer goods, but they were not easy to come by in the GDR and were also very expensive. The attractive packaging of coffee, cocoa, and chocolate made the simple commodities into something very special. If there were a couple of pairs of stockings [tights] in the parcel, the pleasure was huge.

This excerpt showcases how, from an East German standpoint, a consumer culture of abundance can create a sense of uneasiness as a combination of reflective melancholy and disenchantment (Pickering & Keightley, 2006), which is here construed as the loss of moments of specialness and related (family) consumption practices. The loss of some of these deeper meanings of consumption activates a progressive nostalgia mode as a moment of reflection and learning from the past that counteracts what appears, from an East-German point of view, to be an excessive, individualistic, symbolic, and moreover, non-sustainable consumer society. Progressive nostalgia thus involves the wish to bring past and present into dialogue (Pickering & Keightley, 2006). Consequently, progressive nostalgia is a productive reflection that anchors the present in the past and vice versa (Boym, 2001; May, 2016).

Against this backdrop of progressive nostalgia, the marketing and consumption of past-themed market resources can create (re-)enchantment through re-enactment. Here, past-themed market resources promote the re-enactment, reproduction, or replication of past GDR consumption practices, thereby allowing consumers to consolidate and strengthen the relation between past, present, and future by re-integrating selected moral values of a past condition into the here and now. Consequently, a progressive nostalgia mode creates opportunities for marketers to create (re-)enchantment by enabling and supporting consumers to perform selected aspects of the past, such as certain scarcity-related consumption practices, to bring a sense of specialness into contemporary everyday life. By paradoxically turning to the GDR and its consumer culture of scarcity as a consumption spectacle, past-themed market resources enable consumers to inform their contemporary lives by re-enacting practices which revolve around deprivation, sharing, saving resources, and smart solutions. This involves the valorization of such past practices as a general benefit for society, a moral high ground that creates welfare not only on an individual level but also on a cultural level.

For example, the empty plastic bottle of Badusan bubble bath can be re-used as a piggy bank, just like back then, to avoid the waste of valuable resources and encourage savings for a rainy day (Sorge, 2011); the washing detergent brand “Spee,” advertised with the slogan “the smart way to do your laundry,” because “you get wonderfully fragrant and clean laundry while saving the smart way” (<https://bit.ly/2TX9Eor>); mail-order firms offering the “East package” filled with East German brands, an inversion of the iconic West parcel, with slogans like “back then you were waiting for a care package with Western products, but today you can't wait for your package with GDR products to arrive”; and the washing-up liquid brand “fit” proclaims that “for others the issue of sustainability is trending right now. For us it is tradition” (<https://bit.ly/2DSZAHw>). Here the emphasis is on the myth that, contrary to the West, where corporate social responsibility and sustainability are fashionable marketing buzzwords, in the GDR sustainable consumption was inevitable lived reality, a societal value that—with hindsight—is worth re-enacting to benefit society in times of environmental destruction and global warming. Thus, seen from the perspective of progressive nostalgia, these marketing claims hit a nerve with consumers who feel that there are facets of GDR consumer culture that can enrich the contemporary condition.

GDR brands like mustard maker “Bautz'ner Senf” speak to this progressive nostalgia with slogans like “in the East, one likes to add one's mustard” (Dierig, Buschmann, Sogorski, & Trentmann, 2010). This paraphrases a German saying, “adding one's mustard”, a tongue-in-cheek expression meaning to share one's point of view on a specific issue. On a deeper level, the underlying meaning and rhetorical crux of this slogan is that East Germans should (like to) have a say in all-German culture, critiquing the contemporary condition and adding an East German flavor (“mustard”) to life. These proposals to (re-)enact an East German past in the here

and now resonate particularly well with a progressive nostalgia mode, which sets the ground rules for the creation of (re-)enchantment by re-enacting a certain past way of “doing things.” In this vein, consumers now appreciate the “East package” as a special and fun experience that is rooted in previous GDR practices. For example, here a consumer describes the reception of an East package in the guest book of a mail order company:

Just ordered the “East package,” it arrived today. We haven’t laughed so hard in a long time, including the delivery woman. The package will be forwarded into the West as a birthday gift. When my son smells that good pudding, which he still raves about today—he will be beside himself with joy :-).

On the surface, consumers refer to the East package as a way to get hold of GDR consumption objects which are unavailable in many Western regions of Germany. On a deeper level, however, this inversion of the West package is a celebratory re-enactment of deprivation and scarcity as well as strong family ties. The East package thus represents not what [Hobsbawn and Ranger \(2012\)](#) call an invented tradition, but rather a re-invented tradition and a reflexive recovery of a sense of scarcity and specialness of consumption objects, which nests once important and cherished aspects of a previous cultural condition within contemporary consumer culture. Guided by progressive nostalgia, consumers can construct a sense of (pretend) scarcity—referring to a past sense of everyday life in the GDR—by keeping certain consumption objects for special occasions. Consider Anne’s reflection on the re-enactment of deprivation:

Motherhood has also played a pivotal role in my introspective journey and the reflection on my “previous” life in a different system of economic, political, and overall values, which resulted in the recognition that some aspects and values of the vanished society are worth preserving and recreating. Becoming a mother has evoked personal retrospection on my own childhood, which is reflected in the way I am trying to raise my daughter. For example, for most parents it is daily standard procedure to take their children for ice cream after daycare. But I don’t do that—never two days in a row—and that’s deliberate. I want her to really enjoy it when she has it. In a way I restrict access for her, not because I am against ice cream per se, but because, based on my experience of growing up in East Germany, I know that not being able to consume something all the time makes you not only appreciate it more, but moreover will make the ice cream taste better and the experience more special! This regularly gets me into arguments with my [Western] husband who argues that we don’t live in a deprived society behind the Iron Curtain any more. But I am refusing to let this go. My daughter is partly East German and although she will never live in that country, I want to share some experiences and practices that I think were very valuable, particularly in the current times of perceived entitlement, abundance and waste.

This excerpt illustrates how East Germans’ re-enactment of past scarcity-related consumption practices creates (re-)enchantment by translating and preserving scarcity-related aspects of their socialization in GDR consumer culture into today’s consumer culture. This reintegration also entails a mythic reformulation of previous scarcity-related practices, once necessity, into morally superior practices. Now, in the context of the current Western society of hyper-consumption and waste, these practices not only appear in a more positive light but also serve as a stark contradiction to the wholesale rejection of anything East German that occurred in the wake of the reunification. Although re-enactment generally embraces the new cultural sphere, it reflectively juxtaposes central facets of GDR and Western consumer culture, by, for example, pitting “scarcity” against “abundance and waste” as this netnography quote shows:

Back then we were always annoyed by the fact that everyone had the same; the same lunchbox, the same lighter etc. ... Today, as our throwaway society is destroying itself, this appears in a much more positive light.

[Netnography]

In summary, re-enactment is a route to (re-)enchantment which does not promote the wish to return to previous life. Rather, re-enactment builds on progressive nostalgia and entails the symbolic use and redemption of former practices and brands to shape a better, more exciting, and morally superior present and future, thereby establishing a renewed sense of belonging in a consumer culture that those with lived experience in the GDR find partially alienating. Re-enactment leverages valuable aspects of the past, such as a more social and sustainable society, and valorizes consumption practices and brands as vessels for recovering enchantment in these consumers’ relationship with the world.

5.3. Re-appropriation

Re-appropriation is the third way by which nostalgia marketing can create (re-)enchantment. Here, past-themed market resources render a past condition as a site for hedonic, ludic, playful, and ironic engagement and a creative patchwork. Consumers valorize past-themed brands purely as ironic, hipsterian, and quirky fashion items that enliven the present. Re-appropriation is rooted in a playful nostalgia mode that foregrounds the ironic and ludic dimensions of nostalgia as cultural style and retro markers of taste ([Grainge, 2002](#); [Pickering & Keightley, 2006](#)). Unlike reluctant nostalgia and progressive nostalgia, both of which involve a moralistic dislocation and melancholy to varying degrees, playful nostalgia is firmly anchored in the present and builds on what can be understood as a sense of hedonistic dislocation. From this perspective, the contemporary condition is, in terms of consumption, too bland, too uniform, too standardized, and simply not exciting enough to offer extravagant consumption experiences to consumers who have become numb, bored, and oversaturated. Consequently, playful nostalgia renders a past condition not as a site for retrieving morality or repairing the present and shaping the future, but as ludic spectacle—a utopia for fun-seekers, a

pool of exciting aesthetics, bizarre styles, and grotesque tastes into which consumers can tap to retrieve a sense of extravaganza. In contrast to reluctant nostalgia and progressive nostalgia, which re-instantiate and augment personal memory and experiences of the past condition, playful nostalgia opens engagement with a past to those who have no lived experiences of it.

By speaking to this playful nostalgia, marketing and the consumption of past-themed market resources can create enchantment by re-appropriating a past lifeworld that is sanitized, distilled and filtered purely in terms of style, fascination, romance, and entertainment. This enables consumers to engage with a past in a playful way, allowing those consumers who have no socialization in the GDR to symbolically peek behind the Iron Curtain.

Examples include GDR-style “retro” sneakers by Germina or Zeha “a line of athletic shoes from East Germany” that “are cool enough to earn praise from hardcore sneaker addicts” because “a pair of Zehas is unlikely to be quite like anything you’ve ever worn before” (Rail, 2009). Another example is the phenomenon of “the weird NVA-chic conquering pop culture,” whereby a whole range of international brands re-appropriate the uniforms of the GDR’s National People’s Army or NVA (Könau, 2016) like the “Shacket // Raindrop Camo” by rogueterritory.com, a “slim fit” military jacket in the NVA camouflage pattern now marketed as “Deadstock vintage East German raindrop camo” and “handmade in downtown Los Angeles, Calif.”; NVA-style Bermuda shorts by Finnish retailer varusteleva.fi; the East-German-style collection of “premium street wear” by Californian surf-fashion designer label Stüssy; and country-folk artist Smith wearing a GDR officer uniform in a music video. The GDR-style hotel “Ostel” promises an experience of “GDR Wohnkultur” (GDR home decor) by replicating bedrooms and interiors in GDR fashion, garnished with GDR decoration and furnishings including loud flowery wallpapers and pictures of former GDR heads of state. Designed to explore “the craziest aspects of East German interior design in our beautiful rooms,” the hotel was chosen as one of the quirkiest hotels on offer in a range of 2014 travel guides (<https://bit.ly/2Q0CiqR>). Consider the following netnography excerpts which exemplify this re-appropriation in the case of Ostel:

Me and my boyfriend ... are keen lovers of 60s/70s design and decor so we fell in love with the place straight away. You feel as if you are in a Wes Anderson movie. The attention to detail was nice, the pile of books and the hand wash was a nice touch. ... It definitely felt more like a quirky “basic” boutique hotel.

[Netnography]

I like the concept of a GDR-style hotel. However, I was not at all impressed. ... I am not sure I want that much authenticity! There is poor wifi in the reception but nowhere else. ... My DIY is better than their building work.

[Netnography]

These two passages exemplify how consumers appreciate a re-appropriation of the GDR purely in terms of style, consuming it as a source of vintage design and quirkiness that offers enchanting experiences of specialness and romance. The reference to Wes Anderson movies lacks an immediate connection to everyday life in the GDR. Instead, it suggests that the consumption experience of the GDR-style hotel is about the indulgence in what another study participant calls “communist kitsch.” The second netnography quote foregrounds the expectation that such an immersion into a GDR consumptionscape would create enchantment, which here comes to the fore as it is contrasted with the authenticity that is delivered instead. In our reading, Martin was looking for enchantment, not authenticity. Thus, Martin’s quote highlights how the fact that there is “poor wifi” and bad “building work” might well be authentic but is unpleasant. The statement, “I am not sure I want that much authenticity,” relates to the observation that authenticity is often conflated with the expectation of enchantment but authenticity may also be boring, dreadful, and dull (Hartmann & Östberg, 2013). Martin’s rhetorical move reveals his expectation of consuming GDR style—through re-appropriation—to recover a polished, iconic, Disneyfied, and quasi-authentic version of the East German past rather than the everyday reality achieved with re-instantiation and re-integration. In short, these consumers were not looking for time travel but excitement.

Re-appropriation offers consumers a sense-making frame in which the consumption of any past-themed market resource can be purely about style, fascination, romance, spectacle, and entertainment, thereby attempting to mitigate the political dimensions that feature so prominently in re-instantiation, for example. The playful nostalgia mode can also involve irony which, as Rethmann (2009, p. 23) notes, is central in the “transformation of history into consumer spectacle”—as can be witnessed with re-appropriation. Following Rethmann (2009), nostalgia can be framed as cultural irony, as a fun mobilizing force that subversively disrupts recent historical narratives—particularly when lived experiences have been devalued. Consequently, the playfulness inherent in this (re-)appropriation route is also actualized through a particular form of subversive irony. This means, on the one hand, that re-appropriation entails mostly irony specifically for those consumers with lived experience of the GDR. On the other hand, this (re-)enchantment route is more about play for those consumers without lived experience of that past.

However, there are also counter voices who react to the re-appropriation of a past as a ludic playground by rejecting this irony. For example, Theo Mitrup, head of a Berlin support group for victims of persecution by the GDR regime, cautioned that “it’s very difficult for some people to find that the GDR is being glorified in this kind of way. There’s nothing wrong with recalling the past ... but it’s a question of balance. This nostalgia seems to ignore the oppression, the secret police, the intimidation—history somehow is being rewritten” (Murphy, 2003). From this perspective, it is understandable that a number of our GDR-socialized study participants have strong reservations about the idea of walking the streets and nightclubs with GDR-style military outfits and staying in GDR hostels. While nostalgia almost always involves elements of both melancholy and utopia (Pickering & Keightley, 2006), and

thus involves, to a certain degree, some form of glorification by mythologization, the playful nostalgia mode and re-appropriation go further by dampening any political overtones and blurring references to facts.

In other words, neither reluctant nostalgia nor progressive nostalgia is a sober and earnest look back but both involve fantasy, feelings, and fun. Yet, the playful transformation of the past into spectacle that is inherent in re-appropriation clearly exposes the logic of contemporary Western consumer culture. This marketization agenda is off-putting even for some respondents who were socialized in West Germany, and triggers critical reflections on the current state of a consumer society and brand managers who commodify cultural history. Consider how Else, who is from West Germany, reacts to the quest for (re-)enchantment through re-appropriation in the interview excerpt below. Else talks about the Ampelmann brand universe (www.ampelmann.de), which was built around turning a once ordinary GDR pedestrian traffic light symbol "Ampelmännchen" into a design brand:

It just fascinates me. I always said that when we were in Las Vegas, when you saw what happened to the Coca-Cola brand. If you go to a department store where you can buy all sorts of products under this label. That's exactly how it is now with the Ampelmännchen too, to the extent I had not even seen that myself before. But it always makes me somehow, it somehow touches me. It always makes me, sad is too much said, but thoughtful, because I always think, "Man, how a society can develop from such a political process." To break it down that much, our society, into then such brand stories. It actually bothers me. I don't really have an answer. But it gives me fixed feelings.

In this excerpt, Else critically reflects on the transformation of history into spectacle, or as she puts it, breaking down society into brand stories. By rhetorically placing the Ampelmännchen close to Coca-Cola and Las Vegas, she nests it firmly and deeply inside global Western consumer culture. As Patton (1998) noted, "The little man with the old-fashioned hat has been reproduced on T-shirts, on key chains and on red or green light fixtures. Now, he has arrived in the United States, where the key chains are showing up at novelty stores and the light fixtures at design stores like Moss in SoHo." To Patton (1998), defending the Ampelmännchen "means to defend a wealth of variety against standardization. It is the same as defending local apples against the Euro fruit standard or regional dishes against McDonald's." We recall here how Ritzer's (1996, 2005) sociological analysis of (re-)enchantment informs us that the kind of standardization Patton (1998) mentions here is the antithesis of prolonged enchantment. From this perspective, the GDR Ampelmännchen becomes a means of de-standardization not only in terms of actually replacing Western traffic lights in various regions of Germany but also, as a brand, becoming an icon of re-appropriation as a pedestrian light transformed into fashion, decor, food, bags, and toys.

In summary, re-appropriation is a route to (re-)enchantment that builds on a playful nostalgia mode which turns to the past as a hipsterian utopia and consumer-cultural playground of extravaganza. By fostering purely ludic engagement with a past condition, past-themed market resources and their consumption can establish ease with the present and create enchantment because they act as de-politicized markers of cultural style and taste (Grainge, 2002; Pickering & Keightley, 2006) when they transform original meanings of the ordinary, outdated, and ugly into free-floating signifiers of coolness and a design aesthetic. In other words, re-appropriation facilitates the recovery of a sense of specialness in what was once ordinary. However, this ludic re-configuration of a past is not uncontested. When consumers begin to reflect on the neglect of historical fact and on consumer culture turning societal history into brand stories, new forms of dislocation can be triggered.

6. Concluding discussion and contributions

6.1. Managerial contributions

Our study shows how marketers can create (re-)enchantment for their consumers by pressing rewind in three ways. Through facilitating re-instantiation, re-enactment, and/or re-appropriation, marketers of past-themed brands can design and promote brands and products that matter to consumers. While each route offers a specific inner logic (a certain sense of dislocation/a certain dominant nostalgia mode/enchantment), the three routes we identified are not mutually exclusive but can be mobilized in parallel by catering to reluctant nostalgia, progressive nostalgia, and playful nostalgia. It is vital for marketing managers to understand the dominant nostalgia mode(s) of a brand's target group, which can strategically inform segmentation analytics. Brand managers should then cater to these different nostalgia modes by fully appreciating nostalgia as a multidimensional phenomenon and, consequently, animate a past-themed market resource in terms of re-instantiation, re-enactment, and/or re-appropriation.

Here, the composition of brands and their experiences in balancing melancholic and utopian elements becomes important. Following Heilbrunn (2006), brands can and do integrate these ostensibly conflicting elements. According to Heilbrunn (2006, p. 104-5), utopia can be understood as a "kind of nostalgic elsewhere" but also becomes a "metaphor whose aim is to convey across time some guiding principles of ideal societies through a criticism of existing political systems." While reluctant nostalgia calls for an emphasis on more melancholic dimensions and on utopias as nostalgic elsewhere, progressive nostalgia involves designing brand experiences around an understanding of utopia as a critique of the present condition and a recovery of past guiding principles (Heilbrunn, 2006). In this way, building marketing and branding activities on an understanding of the different nostalgia modes holds vital implications for marketing strategy, brand experience design, marketing communications, positioning, targeting, and segmentation, as well as several important challenges and risks. Table 3 below offers an overview of the managerial implications and guidelines for nostalgia marketing.

Brand managers and entrepreneurs have already browsed the archives of history searching for brands to re-launch. Our analysis shows that they should also browse cultural archives of the past for consumption practices that can be re-enacted. The

ultimate goal for marketers and brand managers concerned with past-themed brands is to understand the historicized sociocultural landscape against which their brand or product matters to consumers in the present. While a purely nostalgia-framed positioning might well attract a specific and confined target group of consumers who cherish a specific connection to a past, a more refined brand positioning that builds on an understanding of the (re-)enchanted role of nostalgic consumption through factual and symbolic dimensions is better equipped to cater to the demands of present-day complexity in consumer taste by embracing re-instantiation, re-enactment, and re-appropriation as vehicles that create enchantment in consumer culture.

The insight that the marketing and consumption of a past in the form of a brand serves to recover a sense of wonder, specialness, and romance in the here and now requires marketers and brand managers to understand their brands and products as liminal devices operating between a past and a present, betwixt and between a newer, more global cultural condition and an older, more local cultural condition which they simultaneously help to (re-)construct and re-imagine. Because consumers engage with past-themed brands and a re-envisioned past not only symbolically to heal supposed defects of the present condition (as with re-enacting) but also to engage with a re-envisioned past purely as an aestheticized consumption spectacle to create experiences of the exotic, special, and quirky (as with re-appropriating), marketing and brand management activities should i) be grounded in an understanding of the underlying cultural tensions, critiques, and mythological struggles of the past/present dialectics; ii) tailor

Table 3
Implications and guidelines for nostalgia marketing.

Guidelines	Re-instantiation	Re-enactment	Re-appropriation
Marketing strategy	Market past-themed brands as individual and collective identity salves by catering to and/or fashioning reluctant nostalgia among consumers.	Market past-themed brands as resources that can resolve a mythological contradiction between a past/present/future of a society by catering to and/or fashioning progressive nostalgia among consumers.	Market past-themed brands as exquisite, fun, quirky, retro-markers of style by catering to and/or fashioning playful nostalgia among consumers.
Key target and positioning	Consumers with lived experience in the referenced cultural sphere.	Consumers with lived experience in the referenced cultural sphere.	Consumers without lived experience in the referenced cultural sphere.
Brand experience design	Local positioning Designing past-themed brand experiences with an emphasis on a melancholic retrieval of a past condition, which renders a past condition as an idealized utopia that can be re-instantiated with the help of a past-themed brand.	Glocal positioning Designing past-themed brand experiences as both a melancholic return to a past condition and the means to shape a utopian (morally superior) present and future.	Global positioning Designing past-themed brand experiences with an emphasis on creating a hedonic, stylistic utopia, thereby depoliticizing both utopia and melancholy components.
	The factual connection of the brand to the past is a prerequisite for its effectiveness in identity politics.	A mythological link of the brand to the past needs to be established with regard to everyday life practices. The brand can have existed in the past, although this is not essential.	An aesthetic association of the brand with a past needs to be articulated, in which condensing of historical style overrules historical accuracy.
Marketing communication	Build on an emotional frame and romantic appeal by spotlighting individual and collective well-being, community, social linking value, imagined community. Underscore accuracy of re-designed key former brand features in terms of performance and perception.	Accentuate a moral-functional frame and romantic-gnostic appeal by underlining how a past-themed brand can act as a sensible tool in the quest to create a better present and future. Highlight how the superiority of a past-themed brand's properties is rooted in a past and what it can do today and for the future.	Establish a depoliticized, hedonic frame and a mythical, experiential appeal in terms of highlighting how a past-themed brand can act purely as a marker of differentiation and globalized fashion. Highlight the exotic and engage consumers in a playful relationship with the past.
Opportunities and risks	A highly engaged and loyal group of consumers must be traded-off against the fact that this group is local, aging, and diminishing over time.	Particular opportunities emerge around nesting a past-themed brand firmly inside re-enacted consumption practices. Past-themed brands can foster the re-enactment of consumption practices and vice versa.	Opportunities include the potentially very large customer base as well as the fact that brands only loosely connect to the past, allowing large re-positioning leaps and the reshaping of brand meaning.
	Opportunity to grow the market or revive brands if experience of displacement and related lack of belonging increases or if shifts in the broader macro-environment (e.g. globalization dynamics, hyperwesternization, border shifts, persecution of minorities, diasporic conditions) lead to new forms of displacement.	Opportunity for more genuine sustainable or socially responsible brand positioning along the lines of tradition, thereby reducing the risk of being perceived as greenwashing.	Risks emerge if the depoliticization of a past condition and its condensation into pure style is inconsequential and/or complicated by the highly political nature of a past condition, e.g., fashion retailers offering clothes that strongly resembled Nazi symbolism. Not all past conditions and/or facets thereof lend themselves to re-appropriation.
	Risk that the brand becomes irrelevant when experienced displacement ends.	Risk that brand positioning and communication can become irrelevant if they cannot keep up with a changing landscape of mythic tensions negotiated in consumer culture.	

market offerings to present social imaginaries vis-à-vis a present condition; and iii), be informed by an understanding of the enchantment desires of consumers and consumer collectives in the present condition. For example, our analysis reveals how the consumption of past-themed brands represents a form of glocalization in which consumers seek (re-)enchantment through revalorizing the local when the “local” does not necessarily refer purely to geographies but involves the revalorization of local customs, local taste regimes, and local practices as foregrounded in our analysis of re-enacting and re-appropriating.

The integration of these localized facets into a consumer culture operating alongside a more global panopticum constitutes, as Manning and Uplisashvili (2007, p. 637) note, a “dual lineage” representing both “indigenous tradition and European modernity.” In translating this dual-lineage thought into a marketized glocalization frame, it becomes apparent that the experiences of enchantment in nostalgic consumption are created in and by the intersection of i) the local cultural capital (indigenous tradition) expressed in nostalgic brands and ii) the products which compete on the global brand competition field (European modernity).

Consequently, marketing and brand management must, crucially, design and promote past-themed brands and products at this local-global intersection. This means, for example, adhering to a global competitive zeitgeist in marketing and branding practices while at the same time envisioning and promoting the value that can spring from the consumption of a localized past-themed brand within the context of these global taste structures. This particular issue is addressed by re-appropriation and in our discussion on the authenticity of the GDR-style hotel, where consumers valorize the consumption experience of the GDR-style hotel and its authenticity against the backdrop of a globalized consumptionscape of quirky boutique hotels. Authenticity can be paradoxical (Stern, 1994) and past-themed brands must balance a dual-lineage authenticity (Manning & Uplisashvili, 2007) by which we mean a claim to authenticity in both the past and present condition. With regard to glocal brand experiences, marketers should align their marketing and branding activities so as to foreground a specific nostalgia-framed brand promise and design consumption experiences that balance and communicate the nexus of local and global consumptionscapes.

Overall, our article suggests that, managerially, an understanding of and engagement with nostalgia as a multifaceted phenomenon creates specific nostalgia marketing opportunities by offering a tripartite route to creating consumer enchantment through re-instantiation, re-enactment, and re-appropriation. By catering to an underlying nostalgia (reluctant, progressive, playful), marketing and brand managers can tailor their past-themed brands as desirable market resources that can help consumers attain their identity/political goals (re-instantiation), a specific mythical tension in society (re-enactment), or the longing for extravaganza (re-appropriation). As outlined in Table 3 above, we suggest that each of these enchantment routes adds distinctive nostalgia-marketing approaches to the strategic arsenals of managers.

6.2. Theoretical contributions

Our study illuminates the theoretical linkages between and operation of nostalgia and (re-)enchantment, two central recurring themes in marketing literatures. Enchantment is neither entirely produced by marketers and their brands nor entirely created by consumers. While the enchanting, romanticizing, and almost therapeutic aspects of nostalgic consumption are implicit in previous studies on sacralized consumption (Brown et al., 2013), consumer fantasy enactments (Belk & Costa, 1998), retro-brands (Brown et al., 2003) and community-supported agriculture (Thompson & Coskuner-Balli, 2007), a differential understanding of how (re-)enchantment is created in the context of different nostalgia modes was hitherto lacking. Thus, we add theoretical fodder to understand the importance of retro branding as a consumer cultural process more broadly speaking (Brunk et al., 2018). Specifically, in this article we are re-orienting an essentialist interest in characterizing and typologizing retro brands, heritage brands, corporate heritage brands, repro brands, and so on and so forth towards an interest in how and why nostalgia marketing can create (re-)enchantment. Our work accentuates the ways in which past-themed market resources create enchantment value on the level of consumption by speaking to a specific mode of sociohistoric nostalgia which, in turn, is rooted in a particular sense of dislocation and lack of belonging.

While existing experimental research noted that nostalgia can foster feelings of social connectedness (Lasaleta et al., 2014), it has hitherto neither unfolded and explained the “specific process through which nostalgic products satisfy the need to belong” nor answered the question whether it is “necessary for there to be a tangible, almost Proustian, link to the past in the product consumed, or is a referential past or retro design (as in the case of the PT Cruiser) sufficient?” (Loveland et al., 2010, p. 405). This article archeologizes, maps, and specifies these consumer cultural processes rather than further typologizing the different natures of past-themed brands. In doing so, it offers a differential understanding of the factual, mythological, and aesthetic qualities of a link to the past called for by past research (Table 2). Here, our emphasis on the romantic ideologies of nostalgic enchantment, specifically re-instantiation and re-enactment, adds to the canon of past research on the relation of ideology, market mythology and romance (Brown et al., 2013; Canniford & Shankar, 2013; Kozinets, 2008; Thompson, 2004) and underscores the idea that the way in which something is consumed is more important than what is consumed (Holt, 1997). That is, our article highlights that it is more useful to investigate how enchantment value is created at the nexus of marketing and consumption than what kind of brand is consumed, as if a certain type of brand can only create certain types of value in a certain way, e.g. retro brands create value x but heritage brands create value z.

Consequently, our article contributes to existing marketing literatures on nostalgia by introducing an analysis of the different modalities of nostalgia highlighted by sociological research. By mobilizing these modes of nostalgia in the analysis of nostalgia marketing, our article creates a more nuanced understanding of nostalgia in marketing thought and, on these grounds, offers a theorization of how (re-)enchantment is created at the nexus of marketing and consumption of past-themed brands.

6.3. Conceptual contributions

This study adds to marketing literatures by conceptualizing different (re-)enchantment routes and their creation. The concepts of re-instantiation, re-enactment, and re-appropriation also transfer to contexts beyond the setting we studied and further reveal how and why pop culture generally seems to be obsessed with the past (Reynolds, 2011). For example, re-instantiation is evident in other contexts that involve some kind of ideological shift that often goes hand in hand with an institutional trajectory. While these shifts and trajectories are very evident in the post-communist bloc (Brunk et al., 2018; Holak, 2014; Kravets, 2013; Velikonja, 2009), other destabilizing trajectories and political shifts are ongoing elsewhere in the case of Brexit, Spain/Catalonia, Cuba, and Venezuela. To generalize beyond these and our context even further, re-instantiation can be induced by a certain realization that leads us to go back in time to relive a past. This might be the case when consumers feel (unpleasantly) aware of their age, looks, friendships, or health, and wish to re-instantiate a former self, identity, or social condition. The re-emergence of vinyl (Bartmanski & Woodward, 2015) might partly be explained by this idea for some consumers but not necessarily for all; likewise, the identity politics inherent in the mythological reconstruction of the American South could be seen as a form of re-instantiating a social condition (Thompson & Tian, 2008). As for re-enactment, we see that the rising interest in paleo-dieting, alternative medicine, community agriculture, and DIY links to our conceptualization of past-themed re-enactment. The moral overtones that Brown et al. (2003) noted in the marketing of retro brands are a prominent feature of re-enacting some facet of the past to enrich the present and future, which applies also beyond pure retro-branding contexts. For example, in the digital-age music industry, we are witnessing a rising interest in re-enacting audio recording and mixing techniques and practices from the analog era. When it comes to re-appropriation, we propose that our conceptualization resonates strongly with other phenomena of nostalgia purely as style, such as the re-appropriation of a Viking look by soccer fans, or the colonial-style interior designs in hotels and colonial design items offered by various retailers as a statement and performance of taste (Bach, 2002) rather than a political message.

We suggest that additional research is needed to further investigate how the re-instantiation, re-enactment, and re-appropriation strategies we delineate in this article play out in different contexts and historical settings. For example, by treating nostalgia as a multidimensional construct—reluctant, progressive, and playful—with a range of individual as well as sociohistoric antecedents, future research may i) empirically quantify the differential impact on consumer enchantment via re-instantiation, re-enactment, and re-appropriation; ii) measure its impact on traditional key marketing performance indicators such as brand attachment, brand loyalty, or purchase intention, and iii) establish and model nomological networks. Thus, our study offers a platform for the development of a multidimensional nostalgia scale and consequently, the conceptual and theoretical fodder for further methodological expansions useful for the investigation of nostalgia and enchantment in the context of marketing.

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