"A sense of who we are":
towards a better understanding of family identity negotiation through consumption

"Un sentiment de qui nous sommes" :
vers une meilleure compréhension de la négociation de l'identité familiale à travers la consommation

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RÉSUMÉ DE LA THÈSE EN FRANÇAIS

La famille est une unité de consommation clé qui façonne les comportements de consommation de ses membres, le sens qu'ils attribuent à leurs expériences de consommation et la manière dont ils apprennent à être des consommateurs. L'impact de la famille sur la consommation n'est égalé par aucun autre groupe. Bien que la consommation familiale ait fait l'objet d'un nombre croissant de recherches au cours de la dernière décennie, d'importantes questions de recherche demeurent. Par exemple, la manière dont les familles négocient « un sens de qui [elles] sont » (Epp & Price, 2008 : 50) par le biais de la consommation n'est pas encore pleinement comprise. En effet, si de nombreux auteurs s'y sont intéressés, il reste des zones d'ombre dans le processus de négociation de l'identité familiale à travers la consommation, auxquelles nous voulons contribuer. Plus précisément, la manière dont les familles utilisent la consommation pour gérer les tensions identitaires auxquelles elles sont confrontées au quotidien ou pour reconstruire leur identité collective déstabilisée après une perturbation majeure de la vie est encore peu connue. Ceci est problématique étant donné que définir « qui nous sommes en tant que famille » est une préoccupation au cœur d'un grand nombre de nos expériences de consommation quotidienne. De telles zones d'ombres empêchent donc de comprendre en profondeur toute une série de comportements de consommation. Aussi, nous consacrons cette thèse par article à éclairer le processus de négociation de l'identité familiale à travers la consommation et, ce faisant, à mettre en lumière la dynamique de consommation familiale.

1e article :

La recherche sur la consommation familiale est constituée de deux approches principales. La première se concentre sur le processus de décision d'achat dans la consommation, conceptualisant la consommation comme un processus de décision rationnel

mené par des membres individuels désireux de maximiser leur utilité. Cette approche considère la famille comme une somme d'agents individuels, rationnels et autonomes qui tentent de s'influencer mutuellement. La seconde approche s'intéresse à la dimension symbolique de la consommation, considérant la consommation comme un processus de négociation identitaire. Elle appréhende la famille comme une collectivité composée de multiples groupements identitaires en interaction et appelle à examiner la famille comme une unité d'analyse en soi.

Cette seconde approche découle de recherches montrant que la famille exerce une influence considérable sur la construction identitaire de ses membres, tant sur le plan individuel que collectif, et transmet un héritage symbolique qui influence, consciemment ou non, les décisions de consommation. L'identité familiale fournit ainsi des explications précieuses sur l'attachement de certains consommateurs à des rituels, des pratiques ou des objets spécifiques. Cette approche propose donc le prisme de l'identité familiale pour examiner comment les familles utilisent les ressources du marché pour négocier les identités individuelles et collectives de leurs membres, mettant ainsi en lumière les engagements identitaires qui sous-tendent la consommation familiale.

Bien que ce prisme de l'identité familiale soit de plus en plus utilisé pour éclairer les comportements de consommation des familles et de leurs membres, la littérature manque d'une vue d'ensemble de tout le champ de recherche qu'il a ouvert. Or, une bonne compréhension des apports théoriques que la littérature issue de ce prisme a permis jusqu'à présent est essentielle, non seulement pour mettre en évidence les résultats intéressants qu'elle a permis d'obtenir, mais aussi pour identifier des pistes intéressantes pour les recherches futures. À cet égard, toute une série de phénomènes de consommation sociétaux majeurs qui perturbent les modes de consommation, tels que la sustainability et la digitalisation, ne sont pas analysés sous l'angle de l'identité familiale. Pourtant, ce prisme fournit des ressources

précieuses qui pourraient contribuer à éclairer les dynamiques inhérentes à ces grandes tendances et, partant, à y répondre. En effet, la famille étant une unité de consommation majeure et le prisme de l'identité familiale permettant de mieux comprendre les processus qui sous-tendent sa consommation, utiliser le prisme de l'identité familiale pour examiner ces bouleversements semble très prometteur.

C'est tout l'objet du premier article (conceptuel) de cette thèse que de montrer que le prisme de l'identité familiale peut être très utile pour éclairer et répondre à de nombreuses tendances de consommation. Pour ce faire, cet article commence par mettre en lumière les origines et les spécificités du prisme de l'identité familiale, ainsi que ses principales logiques, définitions et composantes. De plus, il montre que ce prisme est de plus en plus utilisé pour comprendre la consommation familiale. Il fournit une vue d'ensemble de la fertilité de ce prisme en termes de sujets de recherche et de contributions théoriques à la recherche sur la consommation. Puis, dans un second temps, cet article développe d'importantes pistes de recherche montrant comment l'adoption du prisme de l'identité familiale peut offrir une compréhension concrète et des solutions aux tendances clés auxquelles les sociétés sont de plus en plus confrontées en termes de consommation. Il se focalise plus précisément sur les deux tendances majeures que sont la digitalisation et la sustainability, car ces deux tendances : (1) bouleversent considérablement les modes de consommation, (2) sont intrinsèquement liées à des questions d'identité ; (3) opèrent particulièrement au niveau familial ; et (4) sont complémentaires, si bien qu'il semble particulièrement intéressant de les étudier ensemble.

Cet article montre comment analyser les pratiques digitales et durables sous l'angle des composantes de l'identité familiale (caractère, orientation générationnelle et structure) et des formes de communication à travers lesquelles ces composantes sont négociées et mises en œuvre permet d'en dévoiler les dynamiques sous-jacentes. Il montre par exemple comment, en plaçant les récits sur les expériences familiales de consommation dans une sphère plus

publique, la digitalisation favorise la remise en question de certaines pratiques au cœur du caractère familial au profit d'autres plus conformes à ce à quoi les familles aspirent et à ce qui est socialement valorisé, perturbant ainsi les pratiques de consommation. Il montre également comment, en mettant en concurrence les logiques familiales avec les logiques amicales, la digitalisation rompt la continuité identitaire et remet en cause des pratiques au cœur de l'identité familiale. Il met aussi en évidence la manière dont, en bouleversant les formes d'interaction au sein de la famille, ainsi que la notion d'inclusion des membres dans les activités et rituels de consommation, la digitalisation transforme la notion d'appartenance familiale. De plus, cet article montre comment intégrer l'écologie dans le caractère familial et renforcer l'orientation générationnelle dans la façon dont nous construisons notre relation au monde peut aider à promouvoir des pratiques de consommation respectueuses de l'environnement. Il souligne également que la transition vers des comportements plus durables requiert de donner à chaque membre un rôle à jouer, ce qui nécessite un rôle plus important des jeunes dans les discussions et les décisions relatives à l'environnement, ainsi qu'un changement dans les rituels et les routines familiales. Enfin, il propose un agenda pour des recherches futures sur la sustainability et sur la digitalisation. Plus précisément, il identifie des questions de recherche qui pourraient conduire à des études intéressantes, mobilisant le prisme de l'identité familiale pour mieux comprendre comment encourager l'adoption de pratiques plus durables et comment accompagner la transition digitale.

Cet article conceptuel montre en outre comment le prisme de l'identité familiale peut offrir des pistes intéressantes aux acteurs de la sustainability et de la digitalisation, en faisant des suggestions concrètes basées sur les apports de ce prisme. Il invite par exemple les services publics à multiplier les actions de sensibilisation à l'écologie auprès des enfants, afin d'encourager les changements orientés vers la sustainability au sein des familles, dans une logique de socialisation inversée. Il invite aussi les institutions à chercher à renforcer

l'orientation générationnelle, afin d'encourager les consommateurs à intégrer les générations futures dans leurs pratiques et choix quotidiens, pour leur assurer un avenir décent. Cet article recommande également aux marques de concevoir des offres de challenges écologiques familiaux, afin d'intégrer de manière ludique les comportements respectueux de l'environnement dans les routines familiales. Il invite aussi les marques à cibler les familles en pleine transition de vie, ces périodes étant plus favorables aux changements de comportements.

En somme, cet article contribue de plusieurs façons à la littérature sur l'identité familiale. Premièrement, en éclairant les origines et spécificités du prisme de l'identité familiale, ainsi que ses principales logiques, définitions et composantes. Deuxièmement, en fournissant une vue d'ensemble de la fertilité de ce prisme en termes de sujets de recherche et de contributions théoriques à la recherche sur la consommation. Troisièmement, en développant d'importantes pistes de recherche montrant comment l'adoption du prisme de l'identité familiale peut offrir une compréhension et des solutions concrètes aux tendances clés auxquelles les sociétés sont de plus en plus confrontées en termes de consommation. Quatrièmement, en montrant comment le prisme de l'identité familiale peut fournir des pistes intéressantes à différentes parties prenantes, en leur faisant des suggestions concrètes basées sur les apports de ce prisme.

2ᵉ article :

Les familles subissent toutes, à un moment ou à un autre de leur vie, voire à plusieurs reprises, des perturbations majeures qui déstabilisent profondément leur identité collective, à l'image du diagnostic de maladie grave ou du décès d'un membre, ou encore d'une

catastrophe naturelle. Nous conceptualisons ces événements, qui empêchent les consommateurs de poursuivre leur vie normalement en interrompant des éléments essentiels de leur consommation, comme des perturbations majeures de la vie (PMVs). Compte tenu de l'impact considérable que de tels événements peuvent avoir sur le sens collectif d'une famille, le processus de reconstruction qui s'ensuit est un défi essentiel pour les familles, qui influe de manière significative sur l'identité familiale.

Si les recherches existantes répertorient l'impact des PMVs sur les consommateurs individuels, elles ont tendance à négliger leur impact au niveau collectif, et notamment au niveau familial. Nous connaissons particulièrement mal la manière dont les familles reconstruisent leur identité déstabilisée par une PMV exogène, c'est-à-dire une PMV dont la cause est extérieure à la famille (ex : attaque terroriste, pandémie, catastrophe naturelle, etc.). Plus encore, si la littérature met en évidence le rôle des marques dans le processus de reconstruction identitaire de consommateurs individuels et montre que les marques peuvent devenir des marqueurs clés dans la construction et l'affirmation d'identités collectives, nous savons peu de choses sur le rôle des marques dans le processus de reconstruction de l'identité familiale suite à une PMV exogène.

Afin d'éclairer l'influence spécifique des marques dans la reconfiguration des pratiques de consommation collective dans le cadre d'un processus de reconstruction d'identité collective suite à une PMV exogène, le second article de cette thèse utilise comme contexte le confinement du printemps 2020. Cet épisode constitue bien une PMV exogène : (1) son déclenchement est extérieur à la vie des consommateurs concernés, puisque le confinement découle d'une décision gouvernementale visant à défendre la santé publique face à une pandémie ; (2) il a commencé soudainement et la population n'a eu aucun contrôle sur lui ; (3) il a considérablement perturbé la vie quotidienne et l'identité des consommateurs. Le confinement a notamment profondément affecté la cellule familiale, comme aucun autre

événement d'une telle ampleur ne l'avait fait au cours des dernières décennies, représentant ainsi une opportunité de réapprendre à être une famille. Plus précisément, nous montrons qu'il a provoqué chez les familles que nous avons interrogées (1) un sentiment de distorsion du temps et de vide temporel, (2) une dépendance intra-groupe accrue et (3) une désorganisation des trajectoires de vie empêchant l'équilibrage harmonieux de l'orientation temporelle, déstabilisant ainsi fortement leur identité collective.

En s'appuyant sur une analyse thématique d'entretiens approfondis (43 entretiens individuels et 4 entretiens collectifs) et de journaux de bord collectés auprès de 22 familles durant et après le confinement, ce second article dévoile les trois stratégies utilisées par les consommateurs pour minimiser les tensions générées par les PMVs et le rôle joué par les marques dans chacune de ces stratégies. La première stratégie, la structuration ritualisée, consiste à ritualiser la consommation pour structurer le temps et recréer des rythmes quotidiens. La structuration ritualisée clarifie les limites et les hiérarchies des différents groupements identitaires au sein de la famille, que le confinement a brouillés. Dans le cadre de cette première stratégie, les marques agissent comme des délimiteurs des temps et activités individuels, relationnels et collectifs au sein d'une variété de pratiques de consommation telles que regarder la télévision, faire les courses et faire de l'exercice. La seconde stratégie, la revalorisation du partage, consiste à redéfinir et intensifier les pratiques familiales de consommation partagée afin de les revaloriser. La revalorisation du partage contribue à renforcer le caractère familial, qui a été affaibli et ébranlé par la PMV. Les marques favorisent l'implémentation de cette stratégie en agissant comme des créateurs d'occasions de rencontres familiales et comme des stimulateurs d'échanges. Enfin, la troisième stratégie, la romantisation intergénérationnelle, consiste à romantiser des pratiques de consommation héritées pour matérialiser l'histoire de la famille. La romantisation intergénérationnelle contribue à assurer la continuité intergénérationnelle, que le confinement a mise à mal. Elle

s'appuie notamment sur les marques, qui agissent comme des vecteurs de l'histoire et de l'héritage familiaux.

Ce faisant, cet article contribue à la littérature sur les identités collectives, et notamment sur l'identité familiale, en mettant en évidence un élément déclencheur de la déstabilisation de l'identité collective, les MLDs, et le processus de reconstruction de l'identité collective basé sur la consommation. Plus précisément, nous théorisons le processus par lequel l'adoption, l'abandon ou la reconfiguration des pratiques de consommation centrées sur la marque participent à la reconstruction de l'identité collective. En outre, nous montrons que la reconstruction de l'identité collective se fait en renforçant ou renouvelant chacune des composantes de l'identité collective, affaiblies par les MLDs. Deuxièmement, cet article contribue à la compréhension du rôle des marques dans la (re)construction de l'identité en montrant comment les marques, en tant que ressources symboliques basées sur le marché, interagissent avec les formes de communication pour mettre en œuvre l'identité collective. Plus précisément, nous montrons comment ce rôle diffère de celui joué par les marques dans la reconstruction de l'identité individuelle et du rôle généralement étudié de la marque en tant que marqueur d'identification de groupe et de catégorisation sociale.

3e article :

La famille est une collectivité composée de multiples groupements identitaires, c'est-à-dire de multiples niveaux de relations, chacun avec des identités, des rituels, des symboles et des expériences qui lui sont propres. Ces groupements identitaires comprennent (1) l'identité collective de la famille dans son ensemble ; (2) les identités individuelles de chaque membre de la famille ; et (3) les identités relationnelles des sous-groupes formés par plusieurs

membres de la famille, tels que le couple, la dyade père-fils, la fratrie, etc. Des tensions identitaires apparaissent lorsque les projets identitaires respectifs de ces groupements ne sont pas compatibles. Les familles cherchent alors à minimiser ces tensions en adaptant leurs pratiques de consommation.

Prendre en compte ces groupements identitaires est fondamental, car la nécessaire gestion de leur interaction est au cœur de la négociation de l'identité familiale à travers la consommation et oriente les pratiques familiales de consommation. Pourtant, si la littérature met en évidence l'existence de telles tensions et la nécessité pour les familles de les atténuer, elle n'identifie pas la nature précise de ces tensions, ni comment concrètement les familles les gèrent.

C'est l'objet du troisième article de cette thèse que d'éclairer ce processus de gestion, par la consommation quotidienne, des tensions identitaires qui émergent de l'interaction entre les multiples groupements identitaires au sein de la cellule familiale. Il se concentre pour cela sur le sous-groupe clé qu'est le couple et sur le contexte empirique du visionnage de séries télévisées. Le choix de ce contexte tient au fait que cette activité : (1) est pleinement intégrée dans tous les aspects de la vie quotidienne des consommateurs, de leurs routines quotidiennes à leurs rituels occasionnels significatifs ; (2) est au cœur de la négociation identitaire des consommateurs, influençant la manière dont ceux-ci se perçoivent, donnent un sens au monde et interagissent avec les autres ; (3) est fortement stigmatisée, si bien que les pratiques que les téléspectateurs mettent en place autour du visionnage de séries en disent long sur qui ils sont et veulent être en tant qu'individu et en tant que couple.

En s'appuyant sur des entretiens approfondis (6 collectifs et 22 individuels), menés auprès de 21 couples aux profils variés, cet article dévoile trois types de tensions identitaires expérimentées par les couples. Ces tensions découlent d'un désalignement entre les identités individuelles des partenaires, l'identité collective du couple et les normes sociales intériorisées

par les partenaires. Plus précisément, ces tensions surviennent lorsque les groupements identitaires au sein du couple exercent un poids déséquilibré sur le fonctionnement quotidien du couple (*déséquilibre identitaire*), manquent de convergence et de compatibilité l'un avec l'autre (*divergence identitaire*), ou diffèrent des normes sociales intériorisées par les partenaires (*disconformité sociale*). Cet article met également en lumière cinq stratégies de reconfiguration des pratiques auxquelles les partenaires ont recours pour minimiser ces tensions identitaires. Ces stratégies consistent à adapter la mise en œuvre de la configuration de la pratique ou la signification qui en découle, soit en encadrant la pratique par des règles plus strictes (*encadrer*), soit en ajustant la mesure dans laquelle la pratique est partagée avec le partenaire (*ajuster le partage*), soit en enrichissant la performance de la pratique (*enrichir*), soit en se distançant de la pratique (*distancer*), soit en trompant (soi-même ou les autres) sur les implications réelles de la performance de la pratique pour l'identité de l'individu ou du couple (*tromper*).

Cet article éclaire ainsi un processus au cœur de la négociation de l'identité familiale : le processus de gestion, par la consommation, des tensions identitaires au sein de la famille. Il montre comment un objet de consommation qui fait partie de la vie quotidienne peut contribuer à la négociation de l'identité de couple. Plus encore, il explique comment les comportements de consommation sont guidés par le désir de minimiser les tensions identitaires qui minent les projets d'identité collective et contribue, ce faisant, à une compréhension plus fine de la consommation des couples, et plus largement des familles. Il éclaire en effet la dynamique de nombreuses facettes de la consommation dans la vie familiale, telles que la décision commune, le partage, l'adoption des technologies numériques ou la réponse à l'influence sociale.

Contributions de cette thèse :

Cette thèse contribue à la littérature sur l'identité familiale de plusieurs manières. Tout d'abord, en éclairant les origines du prisme de l'identité familiale, sa différenciation par rapport au reste de la recherche sur la consommation familiale, ainsi que ses principales logiques et composantes. De plus, en montrant la fertilité de ce prisme en termes de sujets de recherche et de contributions théoriques, comblant ainsi le manque d'une vue d'ensemble de tout le champ de recherche que ce prisme a ouvert dans la recherche sur la consommation. Troisièmement, en montrant comment l'adoption de ce prisme peut offrir une compréhension concrète et des solutions aux principaux phénomènes de consommation et comment il peut fournir des pistes intéressantes pour différentes parties prenantes. Quatrièmement, en éclairant deux processus au cœur de la négociation de l'identité familiale : d'une part, la gestion par la consommation des tensions identitaires au sein de la famille, en dévoilant les tensions identitaires que connaissent les couples et les stratégies qu'ils mettent en œuvre pour atténuer ces tensions ; et d'autre part, la reconstruction par la consommation d'une identité familiale déstabilisée, en dévoilant les stratégies utilisées par les consommateurs pour minimiser les tensions identitaires générées par les PMVEs qui déstabilisent leur identité familiale. Ce faisant, cette thèse contribue à une meilleure compréhension du processus de négociation de l'identité familiale, tant dans des contextes de consommation quotidiens que dans des moments de consommation plus exceptionnels.

Cette thèse contribue également à la littérature sur le partage, notamment en dévoilant les enjeux identitaires qui motivent le partage de certaines pratiques et pas d'autres et en étendant les recherches antérieures sur les conditions nécessaires pour que la consommation partagée profite à la construction de l'identité collective. Elle contribue, de plus, à la littérature sur les technologies digitales. A ce titre, elle met en évidence le rôle facilitateur des outils digitaux dans la négociation de l'identité familiale, et notamment des séries télévisées, qui

offrent une grande flexibilité et ubiquité dans les pratiques de consommation qui permet d'adapter ces pratiques pour les rendre plus compatibles avec les projets identitaires. Cette recherche prolonge ainsi le débat concernant l'effet des technologies sur la famille. Enfin, cette thèse contribue aussi à la littérature sur les routines et rituels de consommation, en montrant comment ils jouent un rôle important aussi bien dans la gestion des tensions identitaires que dans la reconstruction d'une identité collective déstabilisée.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

J'ai un peu d'mal à imaginer la vie sans mes proches
Quand j'dis un peu d'mal en fait j'l'imagine pas du tout
Ils sont mes repères, mes bases, mes compliments, mes reproches
Sans eux j'suis pas entière, j'les veux pas loin souvent partout
[…]
Ils m'ont transmis tout c'que j'aimerais transmettre à mon tour
C'est grâce à eux si j'suis en paix et que j'pars pas en vrille
Leur humanité est sans trompette, leur bienveillance sans détour
C'que j'leur dois, je veux leur dire, j'crois qu'j'ai l'sens de la famille

(Le sens de la famille, Grand Corps Malade & Leïla Bekhti)[1]

Family is a key consumption unit (Netting, Wilk, & Arnould, 1984). It acts as a major organizing force that shapes its members' consumption behaviors (Kerrane & Hogg, 2011), as well as the meaning they attribute to their consumption experiences (Moore, Wilkie, & Lutz, 2002). It houses intergenerational influences and transmits a symbolic heritage that influences, consciously or not, individual and collective consumption decisions (Zouaghi & Darpy, 2003). "Family's collective sense of itself" (Epp, Price, & Kozinets, 2005: 155) provides valuable explanations as to why some consumers are attached to specific rituals, practices or objects (Connell, Schau, & Price, 2011).

Although family consumption has been the subject of an increasing amount of research in the last decade, important research questions remain. For instance, how families negotiate "a sense of who [they] are" (Epp & Price, 2008: 50) through consumption is not yet

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[1] It's a bit hard to imagine life without my loved ones
When I say a bit hard, in fact I can't imagine it at all
They're my reference points, my foundations, my compliments, my reproaches
Without them I'm not whole, I want them close by, often, everywhere
[…]
They've passed on to me everything I'd like to pass on to others
It's thanks to them that I'm at peace and don't spin,
Their humanity is without trumpet, their benevolence without detour
What I owe them, I want to tell them, I think I have the sense of family
(The sense of family, Grand Corps Malade & Leïla Bekhti)

fully understood. Indeed, while a number of authors have investigated it, there are still grey areas in the process of family identity negotiation, to which we want to contribute. More specifically, little is known about how families use consumption to manage the identity tensions they face on a daily basis or to reconstruct their destabilized collective identity after an exogeneous major life disruption. This prevents to deeply understand a whole host of consumption behaviors, the definition of "who we are as a family" being a concern at the heart of a lot of our daily consumption experiences (Belk, 1988; Epp & Price, 2005).

We thus dedicate this paper-based dissertation to enlightening the process of family identity negotiation through consumption and, in doing so, to shedding light on the dynamics of family consumption. In the view of the multiplicity of existing definitions of the family, we adopt in this dissertation the following definition: "Networks of people who share their lives over long periods of time bound by ties of marriage, blood, or commitment, legal or otherwise, who consider themselves as family and who share a significant history and anticipated future of functioning in a family relationship" (Galvin, Bylund, & Brommel, 2004: 6).

1. Personal motivations

Before getting to the heart of this dissertation, it seems important to me to briefly explain the motivations and personal background that led me to this research project.

First of all, I have always been fascinated by family, this dominant institution that spans the centuries, that undergoes major upheavals but remains one of people's main concerns (Ipsos, 2017, 2023). Coming myself from a large, close-knit household, family has always been very important to me. Furthermore, from an early age, when I visited friends, I was very intrigued to observe significant differences from one family to another. Indeed, the variations in family's culture, organization and functioning, activities and leisure, educational

styles, as well as in the relationships between sibling, and between children and parents, have always been of great interest to me. Later, as I traveled around the world, I was struck by the diversity of family forms and of relationships to family across countries and cultures. For example, during my two-month humanitarian stay in the Philippines, I observed in the village where I lived family relationships that were very different from those I am used to in France. Indeed, I had the impression that family was defined by belonging to the village more than by blood ties. I was also struck by the fact that children did not necessarily sleep in the same little house as their parents and seemed to raise each other… to the point where it was very difficult for me to identify the family ties between the inhabitants! I was also intrigued, during a trip to China, by the importance of filial piety, resulting in a much stronger relationship with elders and roots than in western countries.

This interest in family was reinforced throughout my studies. First, during my bachelor in sociology, where I studied the profound changes that family is undergoing today, which led me to ask myself many questions about what family really consists in, what defines it. Second, during my dissertation on the passage to adulthood, which was for me an opportunity to realize the importance of family in identity building and led me to introspect on the influence that my own family plays on my personality, my way of being, the life I aspire to, etc. Third, during my master thesis on the place of TV series in couples, where I realized that couples' TV series consumption raises very strong identity questions, much more so than I had imagined. I also discovered, on this occasion, the lens of family identity, which breaks with the stream of cognitive psychology with which I was more familiar. I found this approach very relevant, which made me want to delve deeper into the identity mechanisms at play in family consumption. And so, through my readings and contacts with the field, I gradually arrived at my current research topic.

Finally, to conclude this section with a little reflexivity, working on this topic has been all the more interesting for me as I myself am in the process of starting my own family, having married and had a child during my PhD. I am therefore at a stage in my life where I take part in laying the foundations of my new family's identity, which involves considering what I want to keep and reproduce or not in my family heritage, asking myself about other family models that perhaps correspond more closely to me, questioning myself about the values and practices I want to make central in my new family, and so on. Finally, the COVID lockdown (which came at the very beginning of my PhD) reinforced my belief in the importance of this research topic, both by challenging families and by making it a refuge value in a situation of great vulnerability.

2. Theoretical background

In this section, we present the five main themes that are central to this dissertation and that need to be explained to make the logic of our work fully understandable. These themes are: (1) family consumption, (2) family identity, (3) identity building through everyday versus exceptional consumption moments, (4) identity bundles within the family unit, and (5) digitalization of TV series consumption. These five themes guide the overall organization of this thesis as well as the specific research questions of each paper.

2. 1. *Family consumption*

Research on family consumption is divided into two main approaches. The first approach conceptualizes family consumption as a rational decision-making process carried out by members who want to maximize their utility (Burns, 1992) and seek to influence each other. It sees family as a sum of individual, rational and autonomous agents (Filiatrault &

Ritchie, 1980). It mainly seeks to understand how purchase decisions are taken: which member has the greatest influence on purchasing decisions (Davis & Rigaux, 1974) and how family members manage the conflicts that may emerge in the collective decision-making process (Seymour & Lessne, 1984).

The second approach focuses rather on the symbolic dimension of consumption (Belk, 1988). It conceptualizes family consumption as a collective identity enterprise (Epp & Price, 2008), through which members negotiate their individual and collective identities (Berger & Heath, 2007; Schau, 2018). It sees family as a unit per se, distinct from its members, with its own behavior and rules of operation.

If each of these two approaches contribute in its own way to a better understanding of family consumption, this thesis is anchored within the scope of the second approach of family consumption, which seeks to shed light on the identity dynamics at the heart of family consumption.

2. 2. Family identity

Family's identity provides valuable explanations as to why consumers are attached to specific rituals, prctices or objects (Moore, Wilkie, & Lutz, 2002). The lens of family identity has thus been proposed to shed light on how families use consumption to negotiate the individual and collective identities of their members (Epp & Price, 2008), shedding light on the identity undertakings that underly family consumption.

Family identity refers to what the family represents in the minds of its members and of its non-members (Epp & Price, 2008; Reiss, 1981). It is defined as "the family's subjective sense of its own continuity over time, its present situation, and its character (…) the gestalt of qualities and attributes that make it a particular family and that differentiate it from other families" (Bennett, Wolin, & McAvity, 1988: 212). Defining "who we are as a family" is a

preoccupation at the heart of many consumer activities. Grasping the process of family identity negotiation has therefore significant implications to understand consumption patterns (Finch & Mason, 2000; Moisio, Price, & Arnould, 2004).

The lens of family identity pays major attention to the "truly collective enterprises" within the family cell (Epp & Price, 2008: 51). It helps understand how consumers use symbolic market resources, through various communication forms (narratives, rituals, social drama, everyday interactions and intergenerational transfers), to negotiate and enact their family identity. It has opened up an entire field of research, in which this thesis is anchored, that investigates the process of family identity building that is at stake in consumption.

2.   3. Identity building through everyday versus exceptional consumption moments

Family identity is notably shaped by consumption choices and behaviours, both daily and more occasional (Epp & Price, 2008). For instance, everyday consumption patterns related to meals, food, or TV viewing, shape who we are as a family (Cappellini & Parsons, 2012). Consumption choices made at important moments of life transition which encourage to step back and reflect (Edirisingha, Ferguson, & Aitken, 2015; Huff & Cotte, 2011), such as the birth of a child or marriage, also contribute to influencing the subjective sense that a family has of itself. The same applies to consumption choices made at times when we encounter difficult events (Alhanouti, 2020), such as the death of a loved one or illness.

Most research on family identity focuses on family identity negotiation through everyday consumption, for example through meal consumption (Cappellini & Parsons, 2012). While these studies undeniably contribute to a better understanding of family identity, it is essential to also study family identity negotiation in more extraordinary consumption contexts, so as to fully understand the negotiation process at play. For example, it seems important to study the negotiation of family identity in the context of major life disruptions,

defined as sudden involuntary events that prevent consumers from continuing their life in a normal way. Indeed, such events strongly destabilize collective identities (Campbell, Inman, Kirmani, & Price, 2020), thus requiring families to embark on a reconstruction process at the heart of family identity negotiation.

We therefore examine in this dissertation family identity in these two consumption contexts: in exceptional moments in article 2 and in everyday consumption in article 3.

2. 4. Identity bundles within the family unit

Family is a collectivity made up of multiple bundles of identities, i.e., multiple levels of relationships, each with distinctive identities, rituals, symbols, and experiences (Epp, 2008). These identity bundles include: (1) the collective identity of the family as a whole (Edirisingha, Ferguson, & Aitken, 2015); (2) the individual identities of each family member (Ahuvia, 2005); and (3) the relational identities of subgroups formed by several family members, such as the couple, the father-son dyad, siblings, etc. (Diamond et al., 2009). Identity tensions emerge when the respective identity projects of these bundles are conflicting (Epp & Price, 2011). Families then seek to minimize these tensions by adapting their consumption practices (Scabini & Manzi, 2011). Taking these identity bundles into account is fundamental, as the necessary management of their interplay guides family consumption practices and is at the heart of family identity negotiation through consumption (Epp & Price, 2008).

We therefore examine the different identity bundles that make up the family: we unveil in article 2 the coping strategies implemented by the different bundles within the family and show how they collectively contribute to reconstruct the identity of the family as a whole, and we shed light in article 3 on the identity tensions couples experience and show how they result from identity bundles interplay.

2.   *5. Digitalization of TV series consumption*

TV viewing is at the heart of everyday family consumption. It determines the daily schedules and habits of family members (Jayasinghe & Ritson, 2013; Silverstone, 2003), structures relationships between members (Pasquier & Jouët, 1999) and creates the basis for a shared cultural experience within the family (Chitakunye & Mclaran, 2014). In addition, family viewing reinforces the sense of belonging to the family and fosters the creation of a collective sense of family identity around the programs watched together (Russell, Norman, & Heckler, 2004). TV series play a particularly significant role in identity building. The connectedness that viewers develop with their universes and characters (Russell & Puto, 1999; Russell & Schau, 2014) influences the way viewers and families see themselves, make sense of the world, and interact with others (de Campos Rezende & Gomide, 2017).

This role of TV series in family consumption and identity has been deeply affected by digitalization over the past decades (Gripsrud, 2010; Perticoz & Dessinges, 2015). Indeed, digitalization offers much greater flexibility to viewers, who can watch the TV series of their choice, anywhere, anytime, on any medium, and whether alone or with their partner, family or friends (Belk, 2013; Schweidel & Moe, 2016; Watkins, 2015). As a result, digitalization has fully integrated TV series into the everyday organization life of most consumers and families (Feiereisen & al., 2019; Panda & Pandey, 2017). In addition, TV series viewing has become particularly informative on who consumers want to be as individuals and as a family, as its flexibility allows consumers to adopt viewing practices that are even more representative of their intended identity and lifestyle (Feiereisen et al., 2021). This is especially true given that TV series viewing is highly stigmatized, being commonly perceived as a passive (Skeggs & Wood, 2011), socially isolating (Ahmed, 2017), and lowbrow cultural (Alasuutari, 1992) activity, so consumers tend to be particularly careful as to the practice configuration they

adopt. The way today families allocate their time to this activity is consequently a key component of their shared identity.

We therefore pay particular attention to TV series viewing in this thesis: we examine the role it can play in reconstructing a destabilized family identity (article 2) and in negotiating couple identity (article 3) through consumption.

3. Research methodology

We start with clarifying our epistemological position, which has determined the path our research has taken to produce scientifically valid knowledge (Gavard-Perret, Gotteland, Haon, & Jolibert, 2012), before detailing our choice of research design.

3. 1. Underlying epistemology and beliefs

The interpretivist paradigm appears the most suitable positioning in this research. Indeed, we investigate the practices that underlie the process of family identity negotiation through consumption and try to grasp how respondents make sense of them in a given context. We thus seek to understand the world from the perspective of those living in it (Schwandt, 1994), to explore the subjective meanings they develop in their practices and in their relationship to the world (Arnould & Wallendorf, 1994), rather than to explain a unique and objective reality that is independent of the observers who describe it (Bhaskar, 2013). We aim to identify and understand a phenomenon rather than measure it and determine its causes, to generalize our findings to theoretical propositions rather than populations (Carrigan, Moraes, & Leek, 2011).

Interpretivist researchers must immerse themselves in the context of their research to establish proximity with the actors in their field. Indeed, since the meaning that actors give to

their practices is strongly influenced by the socio-cultural context (Thompson, Locander, & Pollio, 1989), subjects' discourse must imperatively be contextualized (Girod-Séville & Perret, 1999). While some advocate pushing this closeness with the actors to the point where the researcher becomes one of them (Gadamer, 1996), others recommend that the researcher establishes a limited proximity with the actors, so as to be able to stand back from the phenomenon under study (Leca & Plé, 2013) and grasp actors' conceptions while comparing them with his/her own. Our research is based on this latter approach.

3. 2. Data collection and analysis methods

By adopting an interpretative approach, we consider that it is logical to opt for a qualitative approach (Hudson & Ozanne, 1988; Kaufmann & Denk, 2011), which allows for greater insight into the complexity of the phenomenon within its context.

We rely mainly on data from in-depth interviews (collective and individual), through which the process of family identity negotiation is generally studied in consumer research (Cappellini & Parsons, 2012; Epp & Price, 2011). In-depth interviews help us identify consumption practices, analyze how respondents carry them out and make sense of them (Belk, Fisher, & Kozinets, 2013), and understand how respondents perceive the world (McCracken, 1988; Thompson, Pollio, & Locander, 1994). They thus enable us to gain an emic understanding of the processes under study (Thompson, Locander, & Pollio, 1989), and thereby to propose abstract knowledge which we then generalize to other contexts.

For each family in our study, we try to interview as many members as possible, either collectively or separately. Interviewing members of a same family separately allows us to clearly identify the practices implemented in the family under study by triangulating between family members, to understand how each member makes sense of these practices and to compare members' respective discourses and interpretations so as to identify potential

discrepancies. Interviewing members of a same family together encourages collective reflection on their part on their practices and helps us understand the practices that they collectively consider central to defining their family (Epp, Schau, & Price, 2014). When we have the opportunity (this requires a high level of availability on the part of respondents that is not always easy to obtain), we interview the members together and then separately. This enables us to compare their discourse when they are with other family members versus by themselves, and thereby to identify potential discrepancies, which we seek to explore during individual interviews. This combination also allows us to combine the benefits of individual and group interviews and thereby helps us gain a particularly fine understanding of the identity issues and processes at play in these families. We then extend our sample to include families where we can only interview one member. This second phase enables us to identify any new processes that has not been observed in the other families and to confirm or refute the central concepts of our framework (Creswell, 2006).

In terms of analytical strategy, using the constant comparison method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), we explored the differences and similarities within and between the transcriptions to determine if data chunks represented common themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Spiggle, 1994). We proceeded in this way both within and across families (Mick & Fournier, 1998; Thompson, Locander, & Pollio, 1990). We more specifically started with families in which we had access to all members, then compared themes to agree on which ones best represented the data. We then extended to families in which we interviewed only a few members to refine and deepen the categorization of relevant themes (Miles and Huberman, 1994) and ensure that each was illustrated repeatedly in the dataset (Wallendorf & Belk, 1989). Then, we triangulated our emerging themes with families where only one member participated and, if we had any, with diaries. Here, we sought to identify any new theme not previously observed in the other families, as well as confirm or refute the central

concepts of our framework and the conditions under which the relationships between these concepts were maintained (Creswell, 2006). We proceeded iteratively as we refined and abstracted our frameworks until we reached theoretical saturation.

4. Thesis structure

This paper-based dissertation is structured around three articles which, together, contribute to a better understanding of the process of family identity negotiation through consumption. Each article has its own specific theoretical underpinning and empirical settings, which we develop in the following paragraphs.

The first article of this thesis, which is conceptual, demonstrates that the lens of family identity can be very useful to enlighten many consumer practices. In this end, we show that this lens is increasingly used to understand family consumption, as part of a conceptualization of family consumption as building a collective shared identity. We provide a comprehensive overview of the fertility of this lens in terms of topics and theoretical contributions to consumer research. Furthermore, we develop important avenues of research showing how adopting this lens can offer concrete understanding and solutions to key challenges that societies increasingly face in terms of consumption, such as sustainability and digitalization.

The second and third papers, which are empirical, examine two specific processes at the heart of family identity negotiation through consumption: respectively, (1) the reconstruction through consumption of a family identity destabilized by an exogenous major life disruption, and (2) the management through consumption of the identity tensions that emerge from the interplay between the multiple identity bundles within the family unit.

More specifically, the second article investigates the role of brands in the process of collective identity reconstruction implemented in response to an exogenous MLD. It unveils the three consumption-based strategies that consumers use to minimize the tensions generated by such events: *ritualized structuring*, *sharing revalorizing* and et *intergenerational romanticizing*. It shows that brands facilitate the implementation of these strategies by acting as delineators of individual, relational, and collective times and activities; creators of occasions for family gatherings and exchange stimulators; and vectors of family history and legacy. It focuses on the empirical context of the spring 2020 lockdown, which has profoundly disrupted families' life and identity by generating a sense of temporal emptiness, an increased intra-group dependence and a destabilization of temporal orientation. In this article, the research question has a wider scope than the family unit, since it questions collective identity in general: our data, although collected at the family level, give us access to the broader phenomenon of the reconstruction of a destabilized collective identity.

The third paper focuses on the key sub-group that is the couple. It reveals the three identity tensions that couples experience while negotiating their identities on a daily basis (*identity imbalance, identity divergence* and *social disconformity*), that stem from misalignments between the partners' individual identities, the couple's collective identity and internalized social norms. It also unveils the five coping strategies of practice reconfiguration that partners use to minimize these tensions (*framing, sharing adjustment, enriching, distancing* and *deceiving*). It focuses on the empirical context of TV series viewing and shows how a consumption object that is part of everyday life can contribute to couple identity negotiation.

Figure 1 below presents a visual representation of these three articles, linking the overall research topic of this thesis to the different research questions posed, the methods used to answer them, and the findings obtained.

Figure 1. Visual representation of the three articles of this thesis

	Article 1	Article 2	Article 3
Overall objective: Improving understanding of the process of family identity negotiation through consumption			
Title	Family Identity: an Essential Lens to Understand Consumption Practices	Reconstructing Collective Identity: The Role of brands after Major Life Disruptions	Couple Identity Negotiation: How Couples Manage Collective Identity Tensions Through Everyday Consumption Practices
Research objective	To demonstrate the relevance of the lens of family identity to enlighten consumption practices	To enlighten a process at the heart of family identity negotiation, the reconstruction through consumption of a family identity that is destabilized by an MLD, and the role of brands in this process	To enlighten a process at the heart of family identity negotiation: the management through mundane consumption of the identity tensions experienced.
RQ(s)	RQ1: How can the family identity lens help better understand and respond to the major societal issues linked to consumption?	RQ2: What role do brands play in the MLD-induced process of collective identity reconstruction?	RQ3a: What tensions arise from the way couples negotiate their couple identity through everyday consumption practices? RQ3b: What are the strategies that couples develop to ease the identity tensions they experience, and thereby negotiate their identities?
Type of article	Conceptual	Empirical	Empirical
Empirical context	N/A	The spring 2020 lockdown	TV series viewing
Method	Comprehensive thematic literature review and research agenda	Qualitative study of 22 families -> 45 individual & 4 collective depth interviews + 5 diaries	Qualitative study of 21 couples -> 22 individual & 6 couple depth interviews
Findings	Literature review of research on family consumption Comprehensive overview of the fertility of the family identity lens in terms of topics and theoretical contributions Research agenda that shows how adopting the lens of family identity can help understand and respond to key societal challenges related to consumption: sustainability & digitalization.	Market-based strategies used to reconstruct a destabilized family identity: *(1) ritualized structuring, (2) sharing revalorizing, (3) intergenerational romanticizing.* Role of brands in these strategies: *(1) delineating individual, relational vs collective times and activities; (2) creating occasions for family gatherings and stimulating exchange; (3) conveying family history and legacy.* Family identity outcomes: *(1) clarify the limits and hierarchies of family identity bundles, (2) strengthen family character, (3) ensure intergenerational continuity.*	Identity tensions that couples experience and that stem from misalignments between the partners' individual identities, the couple's collective identity, and internalized social norms: *identity imbalance, identity divergence & social disconformity.* Coping strategies of practice reconfiguration that partners use to minimize these tensions: *framing, sharing adjustment, enriching, distancing & deceiving.*

We end this general introduction by providing the abstracts of each of our three studies, before displaying these articles in their entirety in the rest of this dissertation.

5. Abstracts of articles 1, 2 and 3

5. 1. Abstract article 1 - Family identity: an essential lens to understand consumption practices

Research on family consumption consists of two main complementary approaches. The first approach focuses on the purchasing decision-making process, considering family consumption as a rational decision-making process collectively carried out by individual members, while the second approach investigates the symbolic dimension of consumption, conceptualizing family consumption as a collective identity negotiation process. This second approach increasingly examines consumption behaviors through the lens of family identity, which sheds light on the collective identity undertakings that underlie consumption practices. Yet, the literature misses a comprehensive overview of the entire field of research that this lens has opened up. In addition, while there are reasons to believe that the lens of family identity can help illuminate the dynamics inherent to a whole range of major trends that are disrupting family consumption, these societal trends are not analyzed through this lens, which limits their understanding. To contribute to filling these gaps, we provide a comprehensive overview of the fertility of the lens of family identity in terms of topics and theoretical contributions to consumer research. We show how the adoption of this lens can offer concrete understanding and solutions to major trends that societies are increasingly facing in terms of consumption, such as sustainability and digitalization. We identify emerging research questions that could give rise to research mobilizing the lens of family identity to better understand how to encourage more sustainable behaviors and to accompany the digital transition. And we make concrete suggestions for stakeholders in these fields, based on the contributions brought by the lens of family identity.

Keywords: Family identity, family consumption, sustainability, digitalization, research agenda.

5. 2. Abstract article 2 - Reconstructing Collective Identity: The Role of Brands After Major Life Disruptions

Consumer groups are frequently confronted with sudden involuntary events that significantly destabilize them, which we conceptualize as major life disruptions (MLDs). Yet, the implications of these events are usually studied at the individual level, leaving their impact on

collective identities poorly understood. Because MLDs represent turning points in groups' lives, they can shake up brand loyalties and consumption habits. It is therefore crucial for marketing managers to understand how their brand can take advantage of these transformative opportunities to achieve a place of choice in consumer groups' lives. Based on a thematic analysis of in-depth interviews and consumer diaries of 22 families, we provide a framework that explains how brands are integrated in the reconfiguration of collective consumption practices that nourish family identity reconstruction. Specifically, we unveil three main strategies (i.e., ritualized structuring, sharing revalorizing, and intergenerational romanticizing) that compose collective identity reconstruction and help consumers cope with the specific tensions generated by exogenous MLDs. And we show that brands facilitate the implementation of these strategies by acting as delineators of individual, relational, and collective times and activities; creators of occasions for family gatherings and exchange stimulators; and vectors of family history and legacy. In doing so, this research allows for a more detailed understanding of the neglected yet frequent phenomenon of MLD and of its significant consequences for consumers, as well as of the role of brands in identity (re)construction.

5. 3. Article 3 - Couple Identity Negotiation: How Couples Manage Collective Identity Tensions Through Everyday Consumption Practices

Throughout all the stages of their life cycle, couples strive to negotiate "who they are as a unit." Managing identity tensions through consumption is at the heart of this process of identity negotiation. Yet, while the literature highlights the existence of several identity bundles within a given couple, little is currently known about the identity tensions that may result from their interplay, nor about how couples navigate such tensions through consumption. This results in a limited understanding of the negotiating process of couple identity through consumption, and consequently of many facets of couple's consumption. Using individual and couple interviews that focus on the context of TV series viewing, this research identifies the identity tensions that couples experience while negotiating their identities, as well as the strategies that they implement when using consumption practices to navigate those tensions. This research contributes to the literature on collective identities by further elucidating the identity dynamics at the heart of their negotiation. It also enhances understanding of consumption behaviors by highlighting how consumption choices are guided by the desire to minimize the identity tensions that undermine collective identity projects.

Article 1

Family identity: an essential lens to understand consumption practices

Abstract

Research on family consumption consists of two main complementary approaches. The first approach focuses on the purchasing decision-making process, considering family consumption as a rational decision-making process collectively carried out by individual members, while the second approach investigates the symbolic dimension of consumption, conceptualizing family consumption as a collective identity negotiation process. This second approach increasingly examines consumption behaviors through the lens of family identity, which sheds light on the collective identity undertakings that underlie consumption practices. Yet, the literature misses a comprehensive overview of the entire field of research that this lens has opened up. In addition, while there are reasons to believe that the lens of family identity can help illuminate the dynamics inherent to a whole range of major trends that are disrupting family consumption, these societal trends are not analyzed through this lens, which limits their understanding. To contribute to filling these gaps, we provide a comprehensive overview of the fertility of the lens of family identity in terms of topics and theoretical contributions to consumer research. We show how the adoption of this lens can offer concrete understanding and solutions to major trends that societies are increasingly facing in terms of consumption, such as sustainability and digitalization. We identify emerging research questions that could give rise to research mobilizing the lens of family identity to better understand how to encourage more sustainable behaviors and to accompany the digital transition. And we make concrete suggestions for stakeholders in these fields, based on the contributions brought by the lens of family identity.

Keywords: Family identity, family consumption, sustainability, digitalization, research agenda.

1. Introduction

"If there is one universally recognized function of the family, it's that of consumption"

(Delphy, 1980: 214).

The impact of family on consumption is not matched by any other group (Netting, Wilk, & Arnould, 1984; Zouaghi & Darpy, 2003). Most of the time family members spend together "takes place in the marketplace, or at least involves market resources" (Epp & Thomas, 2018: 41). Going to the cinema or to restaurant, visiting a museum, going on vacation, cooking a meal, watching a movie, playing board games etc., are all examples of activities of family's daily life that involve market resources. As a result, family acts as a major organizing force, shaping the consumption behaviors of their members in the marketplace (Kerrane, Hogg, & Bettany, 2012), as well as the meaning they attribute to their consumption experiences (Moore, Wilkie, & Lutz, 2002). Family is at the heart of the way individuals learn to be consumers (Wilkie & Moore, 2006).

Research on family consumption consists of two main approaches. The first approach focuses on the purchasing decision-making process in consumption, conceptualizing consumption as a rational decision-making process carried out by individual members wanting to maximize their individual or collective utility. This approach considers family as a sum of individual, rational and autonomous agents who attempts to influence each other (Burns, 1992; Filiatrault & Ritchie, 1980). The second approach investigates the symbolic dimension of consumption, considering consumption as an identity negotiation process (Firat, Dholakia, & Venkatesh, 1995). It sees family as a collectivity made up of multiple interacting identity bundles, which should be examined as a unit of analysis per se. This second approach stems from research showing that family exerts a considerable influence on the identity building of its members (Price, Arnould, & Curasi, 2000), both individually and collectively,

and transmits a symbolic heritage that influences, consciously or not, consumption decisions (Zouaghi & Darpy, 2003). Family's identity consequently provides valuable explanations as to why some consumers are attached to specific rituals, practices or objects (Moore, Wilkie, & Lutz, 2002). The lens of family identity has thus been proposed to examine how families use market resources to negotiate the individual and collective identities of their members (Epp & Price, 2008), shedding light on the identity undertakings that underly family consumption.

While this *identity approach* is increasingly used to illuminate the consumption behaviors of families and their members, the literature misses a comprehensive overview of the entire field of research that the lens of family identity has opened up. Yet, a good understanding of the theoretical contributions that the literature arising from this lens has enabled so far is essential, not only to highlight the interesting findings it has allowed, but also to identify interesting avenues for future research. In this regard, a whole range of major societal consumption phenomena that disrupt consumption patterns, such as sustainability and digitalization, are not analyzed through the lens of family identity. Yet, we believe that this lens provides valuable resources that could help illuminate the dynamics inherent to these major trends, that are still too little understood, and thereby help respond to them. We therefore ask the following question: how can the family identity lens help better understand and respond to the major societal issues linked to consumption?

To answer this question, we start this paper with an extensive thematic literature review of marketing literature on family consumption, in which we distinguish and analyze the different approaches that make up this literature, the theoretical assumptions underpinning each of these approaches and the research topics addressed by each. In doing so, we shed light on the origins and specificities of the family identity lens, as well as its main logics, definitions and components. In addition, we provide a comprehensive overview of the fertility

of this lens in terms of topics and theoretical contributions to consumer research. In the second part of this paper, we develop important avenues of research showing how the adoption of the lens of family identity can offer concrete understanding and solutions to key trends that societies are increasingly facing in terms of consumption. We more specifically show how analyzing sustainable and digital consumption from the angle of the components of family identity (character, generational orientation, and structure) and of the communication forms through with these components are negotiated and enacted helps unveil the underlying dynamics. We furthermore show how the lens of family identity can provide interesting avenues for stakeholders in sustainability and digitalization, making concrete suggestions for them based on the contributions brought by this lens.

2. **Conceptualization of family consumption: from a collective decision-making process to the building of a collective shared identity**

The two approaches that study family consumption in marketing research are complementary. In the decision-making approach, scholars follow the classical economic principles considering that rational agents seek to maximize their utility (Howard & Sheth, 1969). They consider family consumption as a collective decision-making process by members with specific roles trying to influence each other. The second approach considers consumption as a symbolic process (Belk, 1988) consisting in the negotiation and enactment of consumers' identity. It therefore sees family consumption as a collective identity negotiation process (Firat, Dholakia, & Venkatesh, 1995). In this section, we analyze the differences in the theoretical assumptions underlying these two approaches and in the research topics addressed by each. Table 1 illustrates this distinction between these two approaches to family consumption.

Table 1. Division of family consumption research between a rational decision-making

perspective and a collective identity negotiation perspective

	Family decision-making	**Family identity building**
Logic	*Individual*	*Collective*
Unit of analysis	*Family as a sum of members with well-defined roles*	*Family as a unit of analysis per se*
Vision of family consumption	*Collective purchasing decision-making by individuals*	*Collective identity enterprise, management of idnetity bundles interplay*
Interaction between members	*Mutual influence*	*Collective identity negotiation & enactment*
Research topics	*Members' relative influence & conflicts resolution in decision-making*	*Family identity negotiation through consumption practices*

2. *1. Explanation of our literature review methodology*

This section does not aim to provide a systematic and exhaustive review of the literature on family consumption, but rather a thematic review, identifying the major themes that make up this literature. In this aim, we began by looking for articles on consumption within the family unit using broad keywords, such as "family consumption", "family consumption behavior", "family purchase decision making", "family joint consumption decisions" and "family practices". We tried to identify the key articles on these themes, i.e., the articles most closely related to family consumption, frequently cited (as far as possible, we have selected articles cited more than 100 times) and published, for articles in management, in journals with a rank of at least C. A limited number of articles did not meet these criteria, but we felt that they were important for a good understanding of current research on family consumption. The results of this research gradually led us to the fields of decision-making, identity and consumer culture. We have thus progressively broadened our keywords, including for example keywords such as « family conflict management », « family decision roles », « family food consumption », « family everyday consumption », « family and brands » and « family identity negotiation ».

We mainly looked at marketing journals (e.g., *Journal of Marketing, Journal of Consumer Research, Journal of Business research)*, but also at family (e.g., *Childhood, Journal of Family Psychology)*, psychology (e.g., *Psychology & Marketing, Journal of Family Psychology, Journal of Economic Psychology)* and sociology (e.g., *The Sociological Review)* journals. Indeed, as family consumption has been the subject of research in many disciplines, it seemed essential to us, in order to have a good overview of the variety of themes covered by research on family consumption, not to limit ourselves to marketing journals.

2. 2. Literature based on a vision of family as a set of individuals making collective decisions

A whole field of research on family consumption focuses on the purchase decision-making process in consumption. This stream considers family as a sum of individual, rational and autonomous agents (Burns, 1992; Filiatrault & Ritchie, 1980) who attempts to influence each other. It mainly seeks to understand how purchase decisions are taken: which member has the greatest influence on purchasing decisions (Davis & Rigaux, 1974) and how family members manage the conflicts that may emerge in the collective decision-making process (Seymour & Lessne, 1984).

2. 2. 1. Literature investigating members' relative influence in family decision making

To investigate members' respective roles in the collective decision-making process, many studies rely on the four types of decision-making identified by Wolfe (1959) in couple consumption: husband dominated, wife-dominated, autonomous and syncretic decision making.

Spouses' relative influence in the decision-making varies considerably from one consumption category to another (Cunningham & Green, 1974; Davis, 1970). For instance, women tend to dominate decision making regarding the purchase of groceries (Barlés-Arizón et al., 2013b), kitchen utensils (Khemakhem, 2005) and cleaning products (Davis & Rigaux, 1974); husbands, as for them, are reported to have more influence on decisions about cars (Davis & Rigaux, 1974), television (Belch et al., 1985) and finances (Kirchler, 1989). Nevertheless, some consumption categories resist marital roles, being traditionally subject to syncretic decision making. This is notably the case for housing (Mottiar & Quinn, 2004), major capital goods (Khemakhem, 2005) and leisure (Myers & Moncrief, 1978).

Spouses' respective roles in the decision-making process also vary across the stage of the decision-making process (Ford, LaTour, & Henthorne, 1995) and the specific characteristics of the focal good (Khemakhem, 2005). More specifically, scholars distinguish between two main types of decision-making roles: (1) the instrumental role (Davis, 1970), which involves being in charge of the sub-decisions that affect the final buying decision stages (e.g., the timing and place of a purchase, the amount to spend); and (2) the expressive role (Davis, 1970), which involves being in charge of the sub-decisions related to intrinsic product characteristics (e.g., a product's style, color or brand). Consistently with the dominant traditional family model of the 1950s/70s in which they take place, those initial studies agree that the husband fulfills the instrumental role within the family, while the wife fulfills the expressive role (Blood & Wolfe, 1960). With societal evolutions occurring from the 80's, the role distribution between men and women becomes more flexible (Pearl, 1995), which leads to a rebalancing of the relative influences of spouses (Shoham & Dalakas, 2005). Wives become just as likely to fulfill certain instrumental roles (e.g., paying bills, keeping track of expenses, determining the use of leftover money) as their husbands (Lackman & Lanasa, 1993).

Numerous other factors affect members' role in decision-making (Commuri & Gentry, 2005). This is notably the case for partners' sex-role attitude and wife's working status (Rosen & Granbois, 1983): autonomic and wife-dominated decisions predominate in traditional partnerships, while wives' dominance is higher in egalitarian partnerships (Meier, Kirchler, & Hubert, 1999). The affective dimension is not without consequences either, with members' relative influence depending on love, affection, and intimacy (Park, Tansuhaj, & Kolbe, 1991). Culture has an impact too (Ford et al., 1995), as do partners' respective involvement in decision-making (Burns & Granbois, 1977), the intensity of relative preferences (Corfman & Lehmann, 1987), the expertise differential between spouses (Meier, Kirchler, & Hubert, 1999) and the family life cycle (Rosen & Granbois, 1983).

While early research on family decision-making has primarily focused on the couple, over time, children and teenagers have increasingly been taken into consideration (Götze, Prange, & Uhrovska, 2009; Shoham & Dalakas, 2005). Indeed, at first considered as mere observers, they have gradually been perceived as full-fledged actors in the family decision (Larsson, Andresson, & Osbeck, 2010). Their influence (direct or indirect) on family purchasing decisions – sometimes referred to as "pester power " (McNeal & Mindy, 2003) – is thus the subject of a growing body of research (Foxman, Tansuhaj, & Ekstrom, 1989; Wang et al., 2007). Their relative influence is moderated by various factors, such as their gender (Beatty & Talpade, 1994), assertiveness (Berey & Pollay, 1968), age (Ward & Wackman, 1972) and nationality (Shoham & Dalakas, 2005), as well as their family's sex-role orientation (Kim & Lee, 1989).

Table 2 provides an overview of the key literature investigating family members' role in family decision-making.

Table 2. Key literature on members' relative influence in family decision-making

Research topic	Unit of focus	Studies	Main findings
Family members' relative influence depending on product category	Couple	Barlés-Arizon, Fraj-Andrés, & Martinez-Salinas (2013b); Belch, Belch, & Ceresino (1985); Burns & Ortinac (1979); Cunningham & Green (1974); Davis (1970); Ford, LaTour, & Henthorne (1995); Khemakhem (2005); Sharp & Mott (1955); Shuptrine & Samuelson (1976)	Wives exert a predominant influence in categories such as groceries, kitchen utensils & cleaning products; husbands in categories such as cars, TV and finance; wives and husbands exert equal influence in housing, leisure, etc.
	Family	Carrero & Aleti (2017)	
	Children	Foxman, Tansuhaj, & Ekstrom (1989)	
Family members' relative influence depending on the stage in the decision-making process and the characteristics of the good	Couple	Burns & Granbois (1977); Davis (1970, 1971); Davis & Rigaux (1974); Ford, LaTour, & Henthorne (1995); Khemakhem (2005); Mottiar & Quinn (2004); Munsinger, Weber, & Hansen (1975); Myers & Moncrief (1978); Rudd & Koehler (1990); Shuptrine & Samuelson (1976); Zalatan (1998)	Husbands generally fulfill an instrumental role & wives an expressive role.
	Family	Belch, Belch, & Ceresino (1985); Filiatrault & Ritchie (1980)	
	Children	Foxman, Tansuhaj, & Ekstrom (1989); Götze, Prange, & Uhrovska (2009); Wang, Holloway, Beatty, & Hill (2007); Ward & Wackman (1972)	
Factors affecting the relative influence of family members in the decision-making process	Couple	*Sex-role attitude*: Meier, Kirchler, & Hubert (1999); Rosen & Granbois (1983); Rudd & Koehler (1990) *Love, affection, and intimacy*: Park, Tansuhaj, & Kolbe (1991); Park, Tansuhaj, Spangenberg, & McCullough (1995) *Partners' relative expertise*: Meier, Kirchler, & Hubert (1999) *Intensity of relative preferences*: Corfman & Lehmann (1987) *Marital satisfaction*: Meier, Kirchler, & Hubert (1999) *Results of previous joint decisions*: Corfman & Lehmann (1987) *Culture*: Ford, LaTour, & Henthorne (1995) *Wife's working status and educational level*: Rosen & Granbois (1983)	Factors such as partners' sex-role attitude, affect, relative expertise, educational level, as well as intensity of relative preferences, marital satisfaction, culture, etc. influence partners' roles in decision-making
	Family	*Household structure:* Carrero & Aleti (2017); Filiatrault & Ritchie (1980); Lee & Collins (2000) *Parents' resources*: Carrero & Aleti (2017) *The Internet:* Belch, Krentler, & Willis-Flurry (2005) *Family communication styles:* Carrero & Aleti (2017)	Factors such as the household structure, parents' resources, family communication styles, etc. influence members' decision-making roles.
	Children	*Child's age:* Ward & Wackman (1972) *Child's nationality:* Shoham & Dalakas (2005); Wang, Holloway, Beatty, & Hill (2007) *Child's gender:* Beatty & Talpade (1994); Wang, Holloway, Beatty, & Hill (2007) *Parental employment status:* Beatty & Talpade (1994); Kim & Lee (1989) *Product importance and usage:* Beatty & Talpade (1994) *Families' sex-role orientation:* Kim & Lee (1989) *Child's assertiveness:* Berey & Pollay (1968)	Factors such as the child's age, assertiveness, nationality and gender, as well as parental employment status, family' sex-role orientation and product importance etc. influence the child's role in family decision-making

2. 2. 2. Literature investigating conflict resolution in family decision making

The conflicts emerging in the collective decision-making process also represent an important question of interest for the decision-making stream (Seymour & Lessne, 1984). Indeed, partners often disagree on consumption choices (Lee & Collins, 2000). They may notably disagree on who should make the purchasing decision, how the decision should be made and who should implement the decision (Doyle & Hutchinson, 1973). Each then seeks to influence the other's point of view through various influence strategies (Perreault & Miles, 1978), to satisfy their own needs, while ensuring that the relationship does not suffer (Corfman & Lehmann, 1987).

In the event of a conflict, family members employ a variety of tactics, among which concession, negotiation, persuasion, compromise, intimidation, sacrifice, manipulation, disengagement, supplication, expertise, reason and emotion (Bronner & de Hoog, 2008; Kozak, 2010). These strategies vary in their frequency of use and effectiveness (Su, Fern, & Ye, 2003). While spouses' influence strategies are well documented, more and more studies examine the range of sophisticated tactics used by children and adolescents (Kerrane, Hogg, & Bettany, 2012; Palan & Wilkes, 1997).

Various factors moderate the likelihood that conflicts arise in decision-making, the frequency of such conflicts, as well as how members manage them (Burns & Granbois, 1977). For instance, marital relationship quality tends to lower conflicts frequency (Kirchler & Wagner, 1987). Furthermore, the conflict type strongly impacts spouses' influence tactics in purchasing situations: spouses tend to implement role-separation strategies or to rely on reason in case of probability disagreements, while they tend to favor persuasive strategies or integrative bargaining in case of value conflicts (Kirchler, 1990). Culture also plays a decisive role in the choice of influence strategies: for instance, British White husbands tend to use bargaining more than Indian husbands, who favor assertiveness, playing on emotion and

disengagement (Makgosa & Kang, 2009). Demographic and attitude variables, such as

traditional family ideology, avoidance of conflict, income, gender, education and wife's

working status, are also particularly important discriminators among the influence strategy

mixes. For instance, people who are more traditional in their lifestyles and attitudes tend to be

more likely to use persuasive influence than others (Spiro, 1983).

Table 3 provides an overview of the key literature investigating conflict resolution in

family decision-making.

Table 3. Key literature on conflict resolution in family decision-making

Research topic	Unit of focus	Studies	Main findings
Areas of conflict in family decision-making	Couple	Burns & Granbois (1977) ; Doyle & Hutchinson (1973)	There are potential disagreements on who should make the purchasing decision, how the decision should be made and who should implement the decision
Influence strategies, their incidence & effectiveness	Couple	Barlés-Arizon, Fraj-Andrés, & Martinez-Salinas (2013b) ; Bronner & de Hoog (2008); Corfman & Lehmann (1987); Kozak (2010); Spiro (1983); Su, Fern, & Ye (2003)	Members use strategies such as concession, negotiation, persuasion, compromise, intimidation, sacrifice, manipulation, disengagement, supplication, expertise and reason to influence each other
	Family	Belch, Belch, & Sciglimpaglia (1980); Lee & Collins (2000)	
	Children	Kerrane, Hogg, & Bettany (2012); Palan & Wilkes (1997); Thomson, Laing, & McKee (2007)	
Factors affecting conflict resolution in joint purchase decisions	Couple	*Ethnicity/culture:* Makgosa & Kang (2009) *Involvement:* Burns & Granbois (1977) *Gender:* Kirchler (1990); Spiro (1983) *Marital happiness:* Kirchler (1990); Kirchler & Wagner (1987) *Frequency of conflict:* Kirchler & Wagner (1987) *Conflict type:* Kirchler (1990) *Power patterns:* Burns & Granbois (1977); Kirchler (1990); Spiro (1983)	Factors such as members' culture, involvement, gender, as well as marital happiness, power patterns, & the frequency and type of conflict influence conflict management

2. 3. *Family as a collectivity made of interplaying identity bundles*

The identity approach to family consumption investigates the symbolic dimension in

family consumption. It considers family a collectivity made up of multiple identity bundles,

which interaction can create tensions that families seek to minimize by adapting their

consumption practices (Epp & Price, 2011; Scabini & Manzi, 2011). It calls for examining

family as a unit of analysis per se and for considering the multiple identity bundles within the family.

2. 3. 1. Theoretical assumptions underpinning the identity approach

First, proponents of the identity stream call to analyze family as a global system (Zouaghi & Darpy, 2003), with its own behavior and rules of operation, made up of motivations, discourses, practices and temporal interactions that are collectively shaped and enacted (Price, 2012). They indeed consider that a fragmented conceptualization of family as an aggregate of distinct individuals risks leading to a limited understanding of family consumption practices (Epp & Price, 2011).

In addition, they call to take into account the symbolic dimension of consumption, i.e., the fact that consumers negotiate their self-concept through consumption (Schau, 2018). They argue that consumers engage in specific consumer practices notably to get closer to what they want to be (Escalas & Bettman, 2005; 2013), as well as to communicate who they are as individuals (Aaker, 1999; Belk, 1988) and group members (Kleine III, Kleine, & Kernan, 1993); and that, conversely, identity goals and needs influence consumption choices (Berger & Heath, 2007). They state that defining "who we are as a family" is a preoccupation at the heart of many consumer activities, and one that is important to take into account.

Third, they draw attention to the fact that family's collective decisions are influenced not only by members' individual identities, but also by the relational (e.g., that of the couple, of parent(s)-child(ren), of brothers and sisters) and collective (that of the family as a whole) identities within the family. As a result, in their view, designing offers solely on the basis of members' individual identity projects leads brands to neglect the truly collective identity commitments that underpin family consumption (Thomas, Epp, & Price, 2020). What's more, they argue that family consumption is notably driven by the need to manage the interplay

between these multiple identity bundles. Indeed, the identity projects specific to each of these identity bundles are sometimes conflicting, generating identity tensions that an adaptation of family consumption practices can help to minimize. They therefore call on brands to take into account this necessary management through consumption of identity interplay, so as to design offers adapted to consumers' identity needs (Epp & Price, 2011).

2. *3. 2. The lens of family identity proposed as a reading grid of family consumption practices*

The identity approach proposes the lens of family identity as a reading grid of family consumption practices that integrates the points developed above. This lens takes family as the unit of observation and pays major attention to the "truly collective enterprises" within the family cell (Epp & Price, 2008: 51). Family identity refers to "the family's subjective sense of its own continuity over time, its present situation, and its character (…) the gestalt of qualities and attributes that make it a particular family and that differentiate it from other families" (Bennett, Wolin, & McAvity, 1988: 212). It represents "a co-constructed, collective identity that exists in action" (Price, 2008: 189). This mutual construction is forged both internally, among family members, and externally, with respect to the perceptions that external members have of the family (Reiss, 1981).

Epp and Price (2008) seek to clarify the very concept of family identity which, although already used in several disciplines (Bielby & Bielby, 1989; Wolin & Bennett, 1984), suffers from a lack of clear definition and development. In this end, they identity some of its components. First, the structure, which consists in the limits of family membership, as well as in the hierarchy and roles of different family members. Second, the character, which refers to the characteristics of the family daily life, such as common tastes, shared traits, common values and shared activities. Third, the generational orientation, which describes the links

between generations and how the family preserves and transmits its identity from generation to generation. Common to all families, these three components are jointly constructed in family interactions among family members. They are also valid for relational identities. Table 4 provides further information on these three components of family identity.

Table 4. Presentation of components of family identity

Components	Definition	How is it negotiated	Examples
Structure	Consists in the limits of family membership, as well as in the hierarchy and roles of different family members. It indicates "who is in and who is out, both now and in the past" (Bennett et al., 1988: 213).	It is notably negotiated through consumption activities, routines and rituals.	The extent of inclusion in the family reunion at Christmas or Thanksgiving (Wallendorf & Arnould, 1991), as well as the extent of presence in family photos (Bates & Gentry, 1994), reflect the limits of family belonging. Boundaries of family membership can change after marriage, birth, divorce, family recomposition, etc. Roles and hierarchies may change as children grow up, after a divorce, in response to a member's illness, with social mores evolution, etc.
Character	Refers to the characteristics of the family daily life, such as common tastes, shared traits, common values and shared activities.	It is notably linked to consumption activities, routines and rituals, family narratives, as well as everyday interactions.	A family may, for example, define itself as adventurous or athletic. It might also describe itself as sharing the same humor, or being very committed to humanitarian work, since solidarity and altruism are essential values in the eyes of all members.
Generational orientation	Describes the links between generations and how the family preserves and transmits its identity from generation to generation. In other words, it depicts "the extent to which a family understands its present condition as a part of a continuum over time" (Bennett et al. 1988: 214). Families differ in their degree of attachment to family traditions and in their commitment to keeping them alive.	It is linked notably to consumption habits and rituals, as well as to narratives and to intergenerational transfers and influence.	Telling stories that anchor the family in its past contributes to shaping family generational (Epp & Price, 2008), as well as passing from one generation to the next cherished possessions that become inalienable property of the family (Epp & Price, 2008)

Epp and Price (2008) propose a conceptual framework that helps examine the processes of construction, negotiation and enactment of family identity that are at stake in family consumption. More specifically, this framework helps construct explanations of how families use symbolic market resources (brands, products, services and activities) to manage the interplay between their different identity bundles (individual, relational and collective). This

framework thus proposes a "new way of conceiving the family as a community of actors who use brands, products, services, etc. to invent and define themselves, both individually and collectively" (Ezan & Mazarguil, 2014: 30). It is represented by Epp and Price (2008) in Figure 2:

Figure 2. Figure representing Epp and Price (2008)'s framework
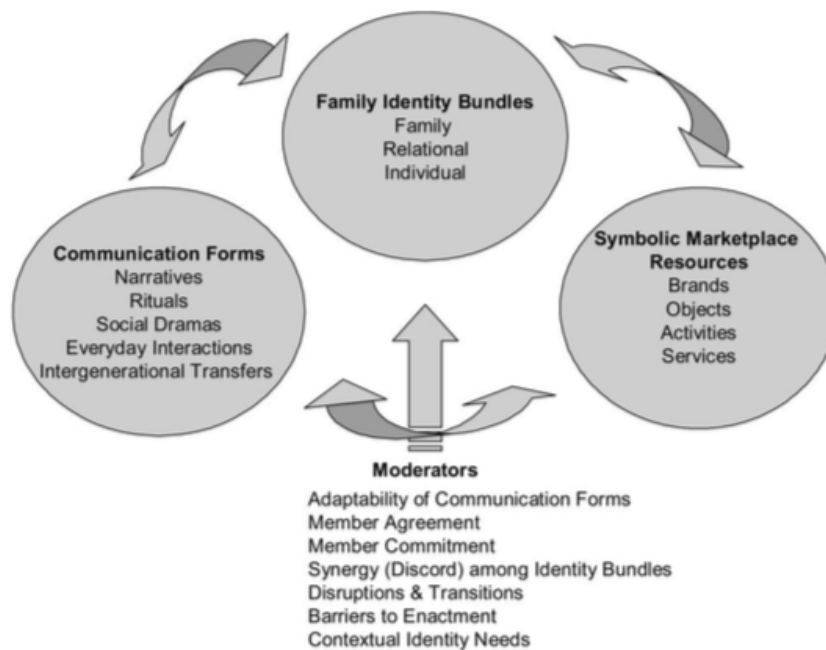
In addition, the framework described by Figure 2 identifies five communication forms in which symbolic market resources are embedded and through which "families perform themselves to themselves and to others" (Langellier & Peterson, 2004: 112). First, narratives, which consist in "stories that are coherent accounts of particular experiences, temporally structured, and context sensitive" (Epp & Price, 2008: 63). Second, rituals, which refer to "voluntary performance of appropriately patterned symbolic behavior" (Epp & Price, 2008: 63). Third, social dramas, which correspond to "public responses to violations that motivate discourse and redressive action such as public admonishment or affirmation" (Epp & Price, 2008: 63). Fourth, everyday interactions, which refer to "collective mundane communication events in shared time-space, including consumption activities" (Epp & Price, 2008: 63). Lastly, intergenerational transfers (of objects, practices, goods, etc.), which consists in

"exchange of tangibles and intangibles from one generation to another" (Epp & Price, 2008:

63). Table 5 provides further information on each of these communication forms.

Table 5. Presentation of Epp and Price's (2008) communication forms

Communication form	Definition	Examples	Role in family identity negotiation
Narratives	"Stories that are coherent accounts of particular experiences, temporally structured, and context sensitive" (Epp & Price, 2008: 63)	Stories in which family members tell of a family vacation, a family camping expedition in the forest, parachute jumps together, or a collective participation in an escape game	Narratives are particularly informative of family identity, as they expose interactions between the various identities that make up the family (Bennett et al., 1988; Bolea, 2000) and provide valuable information about the family's higher-order identity goals (Escalas & Bettman, 2000). Members collectively give meaning to consumption events through them.
Rituals	"Voluntary performance of appropriately patterned symbolic behavior" (Epp & Price, 2008: 63)	Sister shopping on Saturday afternoon, pizza with the family on Saturday night, specific type of cake on birthdays, etc.	Rituals are essential for creating, revising, strengthening and transmitting family identity (Epp & Price, 2008). They are unvaluable to better understand family consumption. They include defining family boundaries, as invitation and participation in family rituals are indicators of family belonging.
Social dramas	"Public responses to violations that motivate discourse and redressive action such as public admonishment or affirmation" (Epp & Price, 2008: 63)	Social dramas between different generations of the same family about clothing fashions, eco-unfriendly practices, or musical tastes	Social dramas incite remedial discourse and action, allowing identities to emerge and change according to each person's response to a disruption (Carbaugh, 1996; Epp & Price, 2008). They thus have considerable consequences for identities negotiation within the family (Epp & Price, 2008).
Everyday interactions	"Collective mundane communication events in shared time-space, including consumption activities" (Epp & Price, 2008: 63)	Integrated into the elements and activities of everyday consumption: discussions in the kitchen during the preparation and consumption of meals, interactions around games or television, etc.	Everyday interactions are mainly managed through various routines and communicative acts unique to each family (Whitchurch & Dickson, 1999). They contribute to modifying and strengthening family identity.
Intergenerational transfers	"Exchange of tangibles and intangibles from one generation to another" (Epp & Price, 2008: 63)	Family objects passed down from generation to generation, that carry part of the family history.	Intergeneration transfers indicate the nature of some family relationships and shape collective, relational and individual identities (Epp & Price, 2008).

Epp and Price (2008)'s framework also highlights the existence of various factors that

moderate the relationship between family identity and its enactment. First, the degree of

member agreement, which refers to the degree of consensus among members regarding their collective identity. Second, the degree of synergy/discord among identity bundles, which designates the degree of compatibility between, on the one hand, the individual and relational identities of family members and, on the other hand, the collective performances of family identity. Third, the degree of member commitment, which consists in the degree of commitment that family members demonstrate to preserve family identity and maintain its enactments. Fourth, the degree of adaptability of communication forms and symbols, which is the degree of flexibility that families show with respect to the different symbols and communication forms that constitute family identity. Fifth, the barriers to enactment, which refer to a lack of access to resources that disrupts identity projects. Sixth, the contextual identity needs of the family, which consist in a collective desire to reconstruct or change identity, to maintain or reinforce the current conception of identity. And, finally, the disruptions and transitions the family meets, that is the changes in status that affect family life. Table 6 provides further information on each of these moderators.

Table 6. Presentation of Epp and Price's (2008) moderators

Moderators	Definition	Impact on family identity negotiation
Member agreement	The degree of consensus among members regarding their collective identity (Epp & Price, 2008) Indeed, family members may differ in their visions of what constitutes their family's collective identity and how this collective identity relates to symbols and consumption activities.	This degree of agreement influences the adoption of family identity.
Synergy/ discord among identity bundles	The degree of compatibility of family members' individual and relational identities with the collective performances of family identity (Epp & Price, 2008). Indeed, individual and relational identities within the family may overlap with, or diverge from, the collective performance of the family identity. Family members may thus adopt or reject certain aspects of their family identity to a greater or lesser extent.	The tensions, or on the contrary the synergies, between individual, relational and family identities affect members' consumption choices and the extent to which they face constraints in their choices for enacting family.
Member commitment to identity practices	The degree of commitment that family members demonstrate to preserve family identity and maintain its enactments (Epp & Price, 2008). For instance, family members may be more or less attached to certain family rituals and stories	The existence within the family of kin-keeper(s) responsible for keeping family members in touch with each other may impact the preservation of forms and

		symbols of family identity enactment (Curasi, Arnould, & Price, 2004).
Adaptability of communicati on forms and symbols	The degree of flexibility that families show with respect to the symbols and communication forms that constitute family identity (Epp & Price, 2008) Indeed, families can be more or less rigid when it comes to the various symbols and forms of communication that make up family identity, such as family narratives or rituals, displaying different levels of attachment to them.	Families' ability to adapt seems to impact the likelihood of maintaining the consumption of market resources, as well as to influence the way families define their identities (Epp & Price, 2008).
Disruptions and transitions to identity practices	Voluntary or involuntary changes in status that interrupt family life (Epp & Price, 2008) Indeed, families experience potentially transformative events, whether accidental disruptions (such as job loss, illness, bereavement) or natural transitions in the family life cycle (such as marriage, childbirth or retirement).	The events families face and the way they respond to them to ensure family survival become a key element of that family's identity. Ruptures and transitions can lead to a change in family relationships and to a restructuring of the family unit's functioning, as the family's previous mode of operation is no longer adapted to its current objectives and purpose. This results in immediate changes in family identity and in the way a family enacts its identity.
Barriers to enactment	A lack of access to resources -due to physical distance, time constraints, financial constraints, etc.- which disrupts identity projects (Epp & Price, 2008).	Barriers to enactment hamper the performance of some family identity practices. Families may then have to review their identity practices to continue nurturing and enacting their identity.
Family's identity needs	"A collective desire to reconstruct or change identity, to maintain or reinforce the current conception of identity, or generate a different response" (Epp & Price, 2008: 64)	Changes in a family's identity needs may disrupt family identity.

2. 3. 3. The lens of family identity, at the root of a prolific literature

By changing how to study the goals underlying collective consumption, Epp and Price (2008)'s framework has opened up an entire field of research that studies family consumption through the lens of family identity. In contrast to the decision-making literature, these studies do not seek to determine which member has the greatest influence on purchasing decisions, nor to assess which influencing tactics are the most widely used and the most effective when conflict arises. Instead, they generally use the family identity lens to examine how families rely on consumption practices to negotiate their family identity, but also more rarely to enlighten specific consumption phenomena.

Investigating family identity negotiation through everyday consumption contexts.

Most of the studies that use the lens of family identity to examine family identity negotiation through consumption focus on consumption contexts of the everyday life (Gillison et al., 2015), as identity negotiations in the family unit occur mostly in the mundanity of the everyday life (Valentine, 1999).

In this respect, a vast body of research use the lens of family identity to examine family identity negotiation through ordinary meals consumption (Chitakunye & Maclaran, 2014). Family meals are indeed a place where family identity is continuously negotiated (DeVault, 1991; Moore, Wilkie, & Desrochers, 2017), as essential to establishing and maintaining family relationships (Cappellini & Parsons, 2012), as well as to determining family boundaries (Moisio, Arnould, & Price, 2004). Cappellini and Parsons (2012) enlighten how sharing meals routine forges and perpetuates the sense of 'being a family' as a collective identity rather than an ensemble of individual identities. They show that sharing frugal meals is a sign of family belonging. Cross & Gilly (2014) show how, through food choices, partners in bicultural households relinquish part of their personal cultural identities to gain a synergistic family identity. Yu, Veeck, & Yu (2015) show how, within China's dynamic environment of changing family values, reinforcing the ritualistic characteristics of daily family meals can help increase the collective sense of family.

Family identity negotiation is also examined through the materiality of the everyday life (Epp & Price, 2010). Indeed, family objects reveal a material culture of family life that has the potential to intensify, limit, and transform family identity (Belk, 1988; Mehta & Belk, 1991). Price and Epp (2015) highlight the particular roles of materiality as a force modulating family identity. They show that materiality is a driver of experimentation, innovation and change in the open-ended project of assembling family. Price (2012) enlightens the interactions of individual, relational and collective identities in the practices and meanings

surrounding "family stuff" (i.e., the fluid materiality of everyday life). She investigates how the evolution of materiality affects the relationship between objects consumption and family identity. Technologies also appear to play a significant role in family identity negotiation (Marchant & O'Donohoe, 2014). In this regard, Chitakunye and Maclaran (2014) show that television is a site of identity negotiation within the family, and reflects the struggles between individual, relational, and family identities that characterize everyday family life.

Family identity negotiation is also studied through the consumption of brands (Limerat, 2013). Indeed, brands are considered as identity and cultural resources, not only for individuals, but also for groups (Schouten & McAlexander, 1995), in particular the family (Epp & Price, 2008). Ezan and Mazarguil (2014) reveal that the attachment to a brand is the result of a family history and culture, and that brands are resources that allow families to define themselves socially by comparison with other families. Through a "market-oriented autoethnography", Billon (2017) examines the Apple brand as a resource in the construction of his family identity. He enlightens how family members use the resources made available by brands to construct their individual identity within the family and to participate in the construction of their family identity. And he shows how the integration of a specific brand in family rituals contributes to reinforcing the feeling of family belonging.

Investigating family identity negotiation through occasional consumption contexts and consumption contexts associated with major life events.

Family identity negotiation is also examined through more occasional consumption contexts. For instance, Epp, Schau and Price (2014) unveil how and under what conditions long-distance families reconfigure, through technology, consumption practices that contribute to defining their identities. They show how tech mediation allows family consumption practices to morph across time and place to retain family bonds and nurture family identity. Epp and Price (2011) examine vacations, which "provide a collective experience that helps

families develop a sense of identity" (Epp & Price, 2011: 38). They show that vacations are often seen by families as a way of reasserting a family identity that is not easy to enact in everyday life, as well as of trying out new identities, or building collective identities while preserving existing relational ones within the family unit.

Family identity negotiation is also investigated through consumption contexts associated to major life events or transitions, family identity being particularly salient in such times (Bolea, 2000). In this regard, Alhanouti (2020) examines the experience of refugee families in the "transition phases" associated with forced migration. She examines the consumption strategies they develop to deal with identity threats to the family. Edirisingha and her colleagues focus on the context of formation of a new family. More specifically, Edirisingha, Ferguson and Aitken (2015) explore how contemporary Asian consumers negotiate a new family identity through meal consumption. They propose filial piety as a fundamental construct of Asian family identity and highlight the importance of collective layer over individual and relational identity layers. Edirisingha, Aitken and Ferguson (2022) examine how materiality helps solve the tensions that extended family members experience during new family formation and how it contributes to negotiating a new shared identity. Pavia and Mason (2012) focus on families that include a child with a disability. They show how decisions regarding the inclusion/exclusion of certain members in consumer activities are particularly informative about family identity and tend to reinforce family's collective sense of itself. Besides, Huff and Cotte (2011, 2016) investigate family decisions regarding care for elderly parents. They examine how adult siblings reconcile discrepancies between their individual preferences and those of the group when making choices about elder care for their ageing parents. They unveil how family identity shapes and is shaped by elder care consumption for senior family members and how families "do family" at this complicated stage of the family life cycle.

Using the family identity lens to investigate to enlighten some social issues.

While the family identity lens is primarily used to examine family identity negotiation through consumption, it is sometimes employed to shed a new light on various social issues. For instance, Westberg, Beverland and Thomas (2017) use it to enlighten the adoption of harmful consumption practices. They identify how the pursuit of specific family identity goals (membership and bonding, coming-of-age, emotional sustenance, and communing) plays a role in the normalization of gambling in childhood. Parkinson, Gallegos and Russell-Bennett (2016) study decisions regarding infant feeding. They investigate how the transitioning between self, couple and family identities influences such decision-making. Lastly, Moore, Wilkie, & Desrochers (2016) use the lens of family identity to enlighten how, through food consumption, a family socializes a child toward or away from obesity.

Table 7 provides more details on key studies that use the lens of family identity.

Table 7. Key literature using the family identity lens to investigate consumption.

Consumption context	Studies	Main findings
Use of the family identity lens to examine family identity negotiation through daily life consumption	*Meals/food:* Cappellini & Parsons (2012); Cross & Gilly (2014); Yu, Veeck, & Yu (2015) *Objects/technologies:* Epp & Price (2010); Price (2012); Price & Epp (2015); Chitakunye & Maclaran (2014); Marchant & O'Donohoe (2014) *Brands:* Billon (2017); Limerat (2013)	Family identity is negotiated through everyday meals, materiality and brands
Use of the family identity lens to examine family identity negotiation through occasional consumption or consumption associated to major life events/transitions	*Vacations:* Epp & Price (2011) *Geographical separation:* Epp, Schau, & Price (2014) *New family formation:* Edirisingha, Aitken, & Ferguson (2022); Edirisingha, Ferguson, & Aitken (2015) *Forced migration:* Alhanouti (2020) *Care choices for elderly parents:* Huff & Cotte (2011); Huff & Cotte (2016) *Families with a disabled child:* Pavia & Mason (2012)	Family identity is negotiated through consumption in a context of vacations, geographical separation, new family formation, forced migration, handicap, care choices for elderly parents, etc.
Use of the family identity lens to enlighten consumption phenomena	*Obesity:* Moore, Wilkie, & Desrochers (2016) *Infant feeding:* Parkinson, Gallegos, & Russell-Bennett (2016) *Gambling normalization:* Westberg, Beverland, & Thomas (2017)	The family identity lens helps enlighten consumption phenomena such as obesity, infant feeding and gambling normalization

3. The lens of family identity, a valuable resource to enlighten and contribute to consumer trends

We are nowadays witnessing major societal and technological upheavals that significantly disrupt consumption patterns and are therefore the focus of extensive consumer research. Given that family is a major consumption unit and that the lens of family identity helps better understand the processes underlying its consumption, adopting a family identity perspective to examine these upheavals seems very promising. More specifically, we believe that it can make interesting theoretical contributions, notably by shedding light on consumption behaviors otherwise poorly understood. In addition, we believe that it can help identify valuable managerial opportunities for various stakeholders, such as brands and public services.

3. *1. Justification for focusing on sustainability and digitalization to show how the family identity lens can help enlighten and contribute to major consumption trends*

Sustainability and digitalization are part of these major trends that societies increasingly face in terms of consumption. Sustainability refers to a global process that aims at maintaining the conditions in which people and nature can exist in productive harmony to sustain present and future generations (NEPA, 1969; WCED, 1987). It implies radical changes in the way we produce and consume (Peattie & Belz, 2010; Thøgersen & Schrader, 2012). As for digitalization, it is an ongoing process notably characterized by dematerialization, ubiquity of consumption, convergence of devices, "mere access" and active participation of consumers (Belk, 2013; Jenkins, 2006).

Focusing on these two major trends to show how the lens of family identity can help better understand major consumption phenomena seems relevant to us for several reasons. First, because these two major trends both drastically disrupt in their own way consumption

patterns (Peattie & Belz, 2010; Sörum & Gianneschi, 2023), notably by fostering the advent of new consumption patterns, such as access-based consumption. Second, because they are both intrinsically linked to identity issues (Belk, 2013; Dalampira et al., 2020). Indeed, whether in terms of digital or sustainable consumption, choices and behaviors have been shown to be closely linked to identity considerations. Third, because the two trends operate particularly at the family level (Chitakunye & Maclaran, 2014; Matthies & Wallis, 2015). Indeed, omnipresent in the family space, digitalization disrupts many aspects of family life; likewise, by pushing families to review many of their daily routines to make them more compatible with the climate emergency, sustainability revolutionizes family consumption patterns. Lastly, because these are two complementary phenomena: digitalization is an underlying trend that de facto disrupts many aspects of our daily and social life (Combes, 2015), while sustainability is an objective to be achieved for the survival of our planet and species. It therefore seems particularly interesting to study them together.

Below, we explain how the lens of family identity can contribute to enlighten these two major consumption trends. Table 8 provides an overview of the reasoning that we deepen in the following sub-sections.

Table 8. How the lens of family identity can help enlighten and contribute to major consumption trends

Major trend	Sustainability	Digitalization
How is this trend closely linked to questions of identity?	* Sustainable consumption is closely related to how we make sense of ourselves and of the world we live in, how we perceive our role in society and in its future, how we see ourselves in relation to nature, etc. * Our consumption patterns with regard to sustainability shape our identity.	* Choices and behaviors when it comes to digital practices are closely linked to identity considerations, both on an individual and collective level. * Digitalization strongly affects individual and collective identity.

	* Collective identity seems particularly important in the adoption of eco-friendly practices	
Why is it relevant to study this trend through the lens of family identity?	* Many transformations in terms of sustainable consumption take place at the family level -> family identity is especially important in the adoption of environmentally oriented consumption behaviors * Analyzing the adoption of sustainable practices from the angle of family identity components helps better understand the identity dynamics at play in sustainable consumption, so as to promote more sustainable practices: > *Integrating ecology into the family character promotes eco-friendly consumption practices. It includes changes in routines and rituals, to make them more compatible with sustainable values; the raise of social dramas that call into question practices that are no longer in line with the new family norms; and the emergence of new family discussions and activities related to sustainability.* > *Reinforcing generational orientation into the way we build our relationship to the world promotes eco-friendly consumption practices. It involves changes in family narratives, which further emphasize the identity continuity between generations, and the strengthening of intergenerational transfers.* > *The transition to more sustainable behaviors requires a rebalancing of roles, to give every member a role to play. This implies a change in daily interactions between members, with a greater role of young people in discussions and decisions about the environment, and a change in rituals and routines, with the adoption of new ones driven by young people.*	* Being omnipresent in the family space, digitalization disrupts many aspects of family and plays a significant role in family identity negotiation. * Analyzing digital practices from the angle of family identity components helps better understand how digitalization affects consumption patterns: > *Digitalization generates changes in family character: by putting the narrative of family consumption experience in a more public sphere, it fosters the questioning of certain practices at the heart of one's family character in favor of others that are more in line with what families aspire to and what is socially valued, thereby disrupting consumption practices. This notably goes through an increase in social dramas and a review of family narratives.* > *Digitalization tends to weaken generational orientation, by amplifying a generational culture which favors ties between people of the same age and puts family logic in competition with friendly logic and calling into question practices at the heart of family identity, thereby breaking family identity continuity. This notably takes place through a decrease in intergenerational transfers and everyday interactions within the family, and a weakening of the continuity of family routines, rituals and narratives.* > *Digitalization transforms family structure, by disrupting the forms of interaction within the family, as well as the notion of members' inclusion in consumption activities and rituals, and thereby the notion of family belonging.*
How the prism of family identity can provide interesting avenues for stakeholders in the field?	* Recommendations for institutions: > *Multiply actions to raise environmental awareness among children, so as to encourage sustainability-oriented changes within families in a logic of reverse socialization. School seems to be a privileged place for this.* > *Reinforce generational orientation, so as to encourage consumers to integrate future generations into their everyday choices and practices, to ensure a decent future for them.* * Recommendations for brands: > *Design offers of family ecological challenges, so as to integrate eco-friendly behaviors into family routines in a playful way.* > *Particularly target families at times of life transitions, as these are more favorable to the adoption of sustainable behaviors.*	* Recommendations for public services: > *Facilitating access to digital.* > *Securing the use of digital technology.* * Recommendations for brands: > *Developing digital offers tailored to families' actual identity needs (e.g., offers that help families maintain a link between generations at a time when they feel increasingly distant, and help families nurture their shared identity and preserve their identity continuity).* > *Shaping communication about digital offers so that it echoes families' identity needs.*

3. 2. Family identity and sustainability

3. 2. 1. The transition to sustainable consumption is closely linked to identity issues

"The environmental crisis that we are currently experiencing requires the biggest change in consumer behavior in modern history" (Fernandes & Saraiva, 2022: 279). Indeed, the current high levels of production, consumption and exploitation of natural resources are seriously endangering our environment (Fernandes & Saraiva, 2022; Gordon et al., 2011). This goes to the point that scientists call for an immediate and radical response that is considered as critical to maintain a "liveable" world (2022 IPCC report). Such changes in consumption (Peattie & Belz, 2010; Thøgersen & Schrader, 2012) include the adoption of conservation behavior (Kunchamboo, Lee & Brace-Govan, 2021), such as re-using commodities to extend their lifespan. In concrete terms, this means buying second-hand goods rather than new ones, repairing damaged goods, recycling waste, etc. (Borusiak, Szymkowiak, Horska, Raszka, & Żelichowska, 2020; Ritch & Brownlie, 2016). Consumption changes also include the integration in daily household life of a wide range of sustainable practices such as composting (Kunchamboo et al., 2021), saving water or energy (Kunchamboo et al., 2021), consuming organic food (Fernandes & Saraiva, 2022), adopting a vegetarian diet (Salonen & Helne, 2012), or reducing the purchasing of material goods in favor of access-based consumption (Bardhi, Eckhardt, & Arnould, 2012; Sörum & Gianneschi, 2023). It also implies rethinking our needs, in favor of a logic of sobriety (McDonald, Oates, Young, & Hwang, 2006).

Identity has been shown to be a key-conceptual tool to explore, predict and deepen the understanding of pro-environmental and sustainable behaviors (Dalampira et al., 2020; Pinto et al., 2014; Udall et al., 2020), both at the individual and collective level. A good understanding of consumer identities thus appears essential to strengthen the commitment of societies towards sustainable behaviors (Dermody et al., 2015). Environmental concern and sustainable consumption are indeed closely related to how we make sense of ourselves and of

the world we live in, how we perceive our role in society and in its future, how we see ourselves in relation to nature, etc. (Brough, Wilkie, Ma, Isaac, & Gal, 2016; Kunchamboo et al., 2021). Thus, adhering to a worldview that encourages humans to perceive themselves as a part of nature encourages sustainable practices (Perera, 2014; Schultz, 2000). Likewise, identifying as belonging to a family that considers itself as "sustainable" encourages the adherence to sustainable norms (Goldstein & al., 2008). Similarly, recognizing that our destinies are linked, that we all have a role to play in managing the environmental crisis, and that we have a responsibility for the world we leave to future generations is a significant incentive in favor of more sustainable practices.

Moreover, our consumption patterns with regard to sustainability shape our identity (Hinds & Sparks, 2008). For instance, access-based consumption participates in the construction of a sustainable identity (Sörum & Gianneschi, 2021). The same applies to the regular consumption of organic food, which acts as a self- transformative catalyst to voluntary simplification, anti-consumption, and political agency (Fernandes & Saraiva, 2022). Organic consumers furthermore share common interests and values that contribute to shaping a collective identity project (Fernandes & Saraiva, 2022; Lockie et al., 2004). Alternative consumption practices thus help consumers construct their consumer identities, both individual and collective, against conventional consumers (Perera et al., 2018).

Collective identity seems particularly important in the adoption of eco-friendly practices (Lockie et al., 2004). Indeed, "strengthening the ties between individuals and their communities" (Lee, Yap, & Levy, 2016: 587) has been shown to help promote sustainable consumption. For instance, people who feel that their neighborhoods and homes are part of their identity are more motivated to consume in a sustainable manner (Lee et al., 2016). Fostering a shared identity "among those who feel a sense of environmental responsibility but are otherwise confused and ambivalent about their own capacity to produce meaningful

change" (Soron, 2010: 180) can notably help them overcome the feeling of powerlessness as individual consumers.

3. 2. 2. The lens of family identity helps enlighten the identity dynamics underlying the transition to sustainable consumption

Among the different collective identities, family identity seems especially important in the adoption of environmentally oriented consumption behaviors (Barreto et al., 2014; Collins, 2015). Indeed, many transformations in terms of sustainable consumption take place at the family level (Aberg, 2000; Matthies & Wallis, 2015). Recent research thus argues that the household is the scale at which interventions to encourage the adoption of environmentally oriented consumption practices can be most effectively targeted (Carrigan, Wells, & Athwal, 2023; Klocker, Gibson, & Borger, 2012). Yet, research on the impact of the family dynamics on sustainable behaviors remains limited, and even more so when it comes to using the lens of family identity in this end (Grønhøj, 2006). In the rest of this section, we show how adopting a family identity perspective can help better understand the identity dynamics at play in sustainable consumption. We more specifically analyze the development of sustainable practices from the angle of the components of family identity (character, generational orientation, and structure) and of the communication forms through with these components are negotiated and enacted.

Sustainability and character. One important way to promote eco-friendly consumption practices is to integrate ecology into the family character. Indeed, being part of a family that places environmental protection values and norms at the heart of its identity pushes to review one's consumption practices accordingly (Barreto et al., 2014; Collins, 2015). For instance, this may encourage certain families to abandon supermarket for organic stores and local distribution channel, buy bulk products only, or cut food of animal original from their diet. Some may also reconsider their idea of fulfilling vacation, from a logic consisting in

multiplying activities in distant exotic destinations, to a logic favoring reconnection with nature not far from home.

In concrete terms, several communication forms need to be studied to understand changes in family character in favor of more sustainable behaviors. First, the adoption of ecological values can call into question some routines and rituals, when they are deemed inconsistent with these new norms (Ritch & Brownlie, 2016). For example, the desire to stop flying in order to reduce one's carbon footprint disrupts the family ritual of going to a sunny destination during the winter, and the transition to a vegetarian diet calls into question the traditional turkey with chestnuts menu of the Christmas meal. It is also important to look at the social dramas that arise when a family's practices are no longer in line with its shared values and norms, and that cause practices to evolve accordingly. For example, children may reject some family practices that are not in line with their ecologically minded family values according to what they have learned at school (Ritch & Brownlie, 2016). The same applies to adults, whose perception of their family practices at home may be challenged by what they learn during green trainings at work (Usman et al., 2023). Finally, everyday interactions are also an important point to examine in the evolution of family character, with new discussions and activities appearing in daily family life as a family integrates sustainability into its character (Thøgersen & Ölander, 2003). For instance, Grønhøj (2006) shows that families who are concerned about preserving the environment talk a lot about how to consume an 'appropriate' or reduced amount of energy in the household.

Sustainability and generational orientation. Another important way to promote sustainable consumption practices is to reinforce generational orientation into the way we build our relationship to the world, so as to more concretely integrate the influence of our present consumption behavior on the future generations' existence (Bauman, 2000). Indeed, as everything we do is embedded and extended in time across the modalities of past, present

and future (Shirani, Butler, Henwood, Parkhill, & Pidgeon, 2013), the living conditions of future generations depend on our present behaviors (FitzPatrick, 2016). Being fully aware of this and integrating this in our everyday consumption choices pushes to adopt less polluting behaviors so that our children and grandchildren can live in a decent world (Emina, 2021). This notably encourages conservative behaviors, such as second-hand purchases or energy saving. Thus, social justice motivations (Beekman, 2004) can add to financial motivations (Padmavathy, Swapana, & Paul, 2019), among others, in consumption choices, and thereby significantly influence consumption patterns in favor of more sustainable practices.

To understand changes in generational orientation in favor of more sustainable behaviors, several communication forms must be examined. First, an increased awareness of our responsibility for the world we leave to future generations is reflected in family narratives, which further emphasize the identity continuity between generations and concerns with regard to them (Shirani, Butler, Henwood, Parkhill, & Pidgeon, 2013). In addition, generational orientation reinforcement is closely linked to intergenerational transfers strengthening (Carrigan, Wells, & Athwal, 2023), both descending and ascending. Indeed, parents fully aware of their responsibility for the future of the next generations tend to redouble their efforts, not only in their day-to-day actions, but also in passing on ecological values and practices to their children (Verachtert, 2023). They for instance teach them recycling and reuse behaviors (Matthies, Selge, & Klöckner, 2012), as well as energy-saving behaviors (Wallis & Klöckner, 2020). Moreover, these parents tend to be more receptive to children's comments and advice in favor of sustainable behaviors, and more willing to integrate them into their daily consumption practices (Ritch & Brownlie, 2016). Research indeed evidences a growing influence of children and teenagers on their parents when it comes to sustainable beliefs, and practices (Essiz & Mandrik, 2021; Singh,

Sahadev, Oates, & Alevizou, 2020), in a reverse socialization logic (Grodzinska-Jurczak et al., 2003; Liu, Chen, & Dang, 2022).

Sustainability and structure. Another way to promote family sustainable consumption is to understand how family structure can rebalance the roles within the group, so as to give everyone a role to play in the transition to more sustainable practices. Family is composed of multiple interacting identity bundles, each with its own values, preferences and priorities. This complex structure engenders "competing beliefs about the 'right' way of going about everyday consumption practices" (Collins, 2015: 24; Klocker, Gibson, & Borger, 2012). Yet, if some members feel that their opinion is not taken into account in the adoption of a consumption practice, or that the practice in question is incompatible with their identity projects, they may implement subversive tactics to undermine the performance of this practice (Collins, 2015). This might then hinder the adoption by families of more eco-friendly practices. It is therefore primordial not to neglect the voice of any member, starting with children, who are considered as "capable of sowing seeds of positive change within networks of family and friends" (Collins & Hitchings, 2012: 3).

Rituals and everyday interactions are at the heart of these changes in family structure. Indeed, the rebalancing of roles within the family, particularly in favor of young people, is accompanied by a change in everyday interactions between family members. Children become more involved in discussions about the environment and their opinions are more taken into account when it comes to deciding which good to purchase and which practice to implement (Essiz & Mandrik, 2021). For instance, children talk at the dinner table about what they have learned at school about sustainable practices, initiating family discussions on whether or not to adopt these practices (Carlsson & Williams, 2008; Liu, Chen, & Dang, 2022). This rebalancing of roles also affects family rituals and routines. For example, giving children a greater voice can

foster the adoption of new routines that they have learned at school and that they particularly

enjoy, such as producing their own fruits and vegetables in the family garden.

3. 2. 3. The lens of family identity provides interesting avenues to promote more sustainable behaviors

We now analyze how the lens of family identity provides valuable avenues for

sustainability players. We argue that a better comprehension of the identity dynamics at the

heart of sustainable consumption enables to better grasp how to encourage a transition to

more eco-friendly practices. Thus, based on the contributions brought by the lens of family

identity, we make concrete suggestions to help institutions and brands promote more

sustainable behaviors.

Recommendations for institutions. We believe that governments have several levers of

action to encourage behaviors that better respond to the current environmental crisis. First, we

call governments to multiply actions to raise environmental awareness among children, so as

to encourage sustainability-oriented changes within families in a logic of reverse

socialization. Indeed, given children's power to influence family consumption, increasing

children's knowledge of current environmental issues and of the practices to be implemented

to address these issues can spark family discussions in favor of concrete eco-friendly changes.

It can also lead children to question family practices that do not conform to the ecological

standards they have learned about. As the first place of socialization with family, school

seems to be a privileged place for this. School environmental awareness programs have

indeed proven to improve knowledge of environmental issues (Higgs & McMillan, 2006) and

to foster a change in family attitudes and waste practices. For example, three-quarters of the

students that Grodzinska-Jurczak, Bartosiewicz, Twardowska and Ballantyne (2003)

interviewed shared with their parents the knowledge they had gained from School Waste

Education Programmes; and a third attempted to improve waste practices at home. We

therefore call on schools to multiply this type of awareness-raising program. In the same vein,

governments should offer such training courses for free to companies, in order to generate

concrete pro-environmental changes within employees' families. Green training provided by

companies have indeed been shown to promote eco-friendly behaviors at home (Usman,

Rofcanin, Ali, Ogbonnaya, & Babalola, 2022), and thereby to foster virtuous changes at the

family level.

Second, we recommend that governments seek to reinforce generational orientation, so

as to encourage consumers to integrate future generations into their everyday choices and

practices, to ensure a decent future for them. This implies communicating on the fact that

what our children and grandchildren will experience depends directly on our current response

to environmental challenges. Indeed, getting people to think about the direct consequences of

their actions on people they love seems more effective than impersonal speeches about the

impact of polluting practices on the future of the planet. Nevertheless, we advise governments

not to overuse negative emotions such as guilt in their communications, as these can be

counterproductive (Chapman, Lickel, & Markowitz, 2017).

Recommendations for brands. Brands can also play an important role in the transition

to more sustainable behaviors. First, we invite brands to design offers of family ecological

challenges, so as to integrate eco-friendly behaviors into family routines in a playful way.

Indeed, games have been shown to be invaluable for facilitating sustainability transition

(Dieleman & Huisingh, 2006; Stanitsas, Kirytopoulos, & Vareilles, 2019). We therefore invite

brands to sensitize family members to the externalities of consumption practices (Prothero &

Fitchett, 2000) through visual imagery or interactive games (Ritch & Brownlie, 2016), and to

encourage them to become agents of change through playful concrete actions. Furthermore,

research shows that it is through repeated performance of practices that the latter become routines (Schäfer & Bamberg, 2008). Thus, by encouraging families to repeatedly perform sustainable practices, such challenges encourage lasting changes in favor of ecology. In addition, by integrating all family members, these family challenges generate virtuous family emulation, by encouraging discussions on which family practices need to be changed to respond to the climate emergency. Such family challenges also allow all members to feel involved in the adoption of new practices. This is particularly important given that, for sustainable family practices to be maintained over time, all members need to feel taken into consideration in their design and implementation (Collins, 2015). We therefore encourage brands to follow the example of *Ma Petite Planète*, who offers concrete environmental challenges to be carried out over several weeks by group, including family.

Second, we advise brands with sustainable offers to particularly target families at times of life transitions, as these are more favorable to the adoption of sustainable behaviors (Schäfer, Herde, & Kropp, 2017). Such times are indeed appropriate to switch to more sustainable practices, as they turn daily lives upside down and take family members out of their usual comfort zone, and thus force them to change their organization and practices (Carey, Shaw, & Shiu, 2008). It is therefore less costly to switch habits in this context than in normal times, when family members are well settled in a comfortable routine that any change risks jeopardizing. In this respect, the birth of a child, and in particular of the first child, seems to be a particularly interesting time to encourage the adoption of more sustainable behaviors within a family (Brunner et al., 2006; Herde, 2007), given the upheaval it represents in the family daily life (Thomas & Epp, 2019). These periods are conducive to identity changes that can lead to integrate sustainability not only into personal identities, but also into family character. Herde (2007) thus shows that parents are more open for information about

sustainable nutrition (e.g., organic, seasonal, fresh and regional products) during the period of pregnancy and the first months after childbirth.

3. 3. Family identity and digitalization

3. 3. 1. The digitalization of consumption is closely linked to identity issues

Choices and behaviors regarding digital consumption are particularly closely linked to identity considerations (Schau, 2018), both on an individual and collective level. For instance, the fact of always wanting to be at the cutting edge of technology, or, on the contrary, of shunning technology, says a lot about someone's identity. It reflects the relationships that individuals and groups develop with the world and with objects, what they want to live and how they want others to see them. In that regards, consumers' perception of digital devices is not neutral but varies between fear and fascination depending on individuals and consumption contexts (Aagaard & Madsen, 2022).

Digitalization strongly affects individual (Belk, 2013) and collective (Epp, Schau & Price, 2014) identity. First, digitalization disrupts the way individuals present themselves, interact with others and express themselves (Belk, 2016; Llamas & Belk, 2013). In this regard, instant messaging alters notions of absence and presence (Danet, Martel & Miljkovitch, 2017); it allows the co-presence of friends, with whom consumers can stay in perpetual contact via messages, while weakening the notion of presence, with the physical presence of other family members being sometimes only apparent. Second, digitalization affects the way consumers make sense of their practices (Feiereisen et al., 2019). For instance, digitalization may challenge consumers' vision of TV viewing as a structuring agent of daily life and as a factor of social cohesion (Gripsrud, 2010).

Digitalization has consequently brought significant changes to the extended self (Belk, 2013). Indeed, virtual goods become part of our extended self, in the same way as their material counterpart. Moreover, it seems that, as well as being able to extend their self through objects and places (virtual or real), consumers can now extend it through other people, whom they consider part of their aggregated self (Belk, 2013). Indeed, by encouraging interactivity and the sharing of their passions with a much larger imaginary community than before (Born, 2011), digitalization tends to reinforce the co-construction of the self (Belk, 2013). For example, friends help each other co-construct and reaffirm their respective feelings of identity through their digital messages and tags on social networks. Besides, consumers can incarnate themselves online through avatars with a myriad of possible personalities and appearances (Belk, 2013; Schau, 2018). These avatars enable consumers, within social media, to create and enact identities unmoored from their physical bodies, unimpeded by resources constraints (Schau, 2018). They substantially change the ways in which consumers may assert their identities and perceive those of others (Cool, 2012). Thus, the work of identity building now takes place partly online (Saker & Frith, 2022), both at individual (Schau & Gilly, 2003) and collective (Gerbaudo & Treré, 2015; Topalian, 2003) levels.

3. 3. 2. The family identity lens helps enlighten the identity dynamics underlying digital consumption.

Family identity seems particularly linked to the major upheavals in consumption patterns brought about by digitalization (Hoffman, Novak, & Venkatesh, 2004; Price, 2008). Indeed, digitalization being omnipresent in the family space (Jackson, 2002), it disrupts interactions between members, creates new activities to the detriment of others that used to be important in family life, challenges the form of family evenings, and transforms family daily

organization (Balleys, Martin, & Jochems, 2018; Combes, 2015). It challenges the traditional temporal and spatial boundaries between work life, home life and leisure in myriad ways (Jackson, 2002). It changes popular conceptions of home and family (Venkatesh, Stolzkoff, Shih, & Mazumdar, 2001). Digitalization thus plays a significant role in family identity negotiation (Chitakunye & Maclaran, 2014; Epp, Schau, & Price, 2014; Marchant & O'Donohoe, 2014). In the rest of this section, we show how adopting a family identity perspective can help better understand the effects of digitalization on consumption patterns. We more specifically show that changes in consumption practices are closely linked to transformations brought about by digitalization in the components of family identity and in the communication forms through with these components are negotiated and enacted.

Digitalization and character. First, digitalization generates changes in family character that are reflected in consumption patterns. These changes notably come from the fact that digitalization puts the narrative of family consumption experience in a more public sphere (Bochner, 2002). There is no need to visit other families anymore to get a glimpse of their family life: consumers can now surf through social networks, blogs and digital forums to be constantly confronted with other practices. This leads to question certain practices at the heart of one's family character in favor of others that are more in line with what families aspire to and what is socially valued, thereby disrupting consumption practices.

Concretely, these changes in family character brought about by digitalization go through the following communication forms: (1) an increase in social dramas favoring the rejection of certain routines and rituals that strongly contribute to defining one's family, and (2) a revision of online narratives about family practices to co-construct new ones that better suit consumers, involving changes in family practices. Indeed, the constant exposure to the practices of other families encourages the comparison with one's own family consumption patterns (Appel, Gerlach, & Crusius, 2016). This encourages consumers to question some of their family

routines and rituals, especially as narratives on social networks are often idealized (Lee, 2014; Vogel et al., 2015), making others' family practices more attractive. A teenager may for instance realize that eating in front of the television is allowed in other families, while it is strictly forbidden in his own, and thus question this rule. Moreover, as a significant part of the work of identity building now takes place online (Belk, 2013; Turkle, 2012), consumers tend to seek to get closer to the normative ideas they have concerning what an ideal family should be and do through their self-narration on social media. This encourages people to review their family narratives so that they reflect family values and character traits that are socially more valued (ecology, solidarity, sport, etc.), requiring in this end significant changes in family practices.

Digitalization and generational orientation. The profound changes in consumption patterns are also linked to the weakening of generational orientation and of family identity continuity caused by digitalization (Attias-Donfut & Segalen, 2020). Indeed, digitalization amplifies a generational culture which favors ties between people of the same age and puts family logic in competition with friendly logic (de Singly, 2017; Tapscott, 1998), generating a break in consumption patterns between generations (Attias-Donfut & Segalen, 2020). Furthermore, digitalization disturbs the continuity of family consumption patterns over generations, by calling into question practices at the heart of family identity, as discussed earlier.

This weakening of generational orientation by digitalization takes place concretely through: 1) a decrease in intergenerational transfers and everyday interactions within the family, and 2) a weakening of the continuity of family routines, rituals and narratives. Indeed, by attributing to each generation its own consumption practices and norms (de Singly, 2017), digitalization weakens transfers, discussions and shared references between the different generations of the family. In addition, the transfer of goods and practices inherited from seniors is made more difficult by the competition from new digital practices, the development

of "simple access" and a more "liquid" relationship between consumers and their possessions (Bardhi, Eckhardt, & Arnould, 2012; Feiereisen et al., 2019). For example, the transfer of cooking recipes between generations is seen as losing its usefulness due to instant access to a very large number of recipes. Likewise, the intergenerational transfer of brands is restricted by a relationship between younger generations and brands that is modified by the constant emergence of new brands and by the major role of social networks (Ioañas & Stoica, 2014; Ramaswamy & Ozcan, 2016). Furthermore, by favoring online co-construction of the self with peers (Belk, 2013), digitalization diminishes the importance of elders in the consumer socialization of children and adolescents, and consequently disrupts consumption patterns within the family. Indeed, with social networks, peers contribute more to the construction of our individual and collective extended sense of self (Belk, 2013; Zhao, 2005), which reduces intergenerational transfers and interactions within the family. In addition, by challenging key family practices and norms due to constant comparison with those of others, digitization weakens the perpetuation of family routines and rituals. It thus disrupts the continuity of family narratives and limits members' commitment to integrating new generations into their identity practices.

Digitalization and structure. The upheavals in consumption practices brought about by digitalization are also closely linked to the way digitalization transforms families' structure and its implications in terms of consumption. These changes in family structure translate a disruption of the notion of family members' inclusion in consumption activities and rituals. The dematerialization of products and the ubiquity of media content indeed allow the maintenance of some family bonding rituals and interactions, despite geographic distance (Cheong & Mitchell, 2016; Epp, Schau, & Price 2014). For instance, while the ritual of watching TV content together used to gather family members around the TV set (Appadurai, 1986; Jayasinghe & Ritson, 2013; Silverstone, 2003), the increasing flexibility offered by

digitalization (Gripsrud, 2010; Glevarec, 2012; Katz, 2009) now allows this family ritual to be carried out remotely. In this regard, the extension Teleparty allows family members to simultaneously watch the same TV content and chat together, while they are thousands of kilometers away from each other. Thus, with digitalization, we can take part in a family ritual without being physically present, which modifies of the boundaries of family routines and rituals. As a result, digitalization disrupts family belonging, of which inclusion in family rituals and routines is a strong marker (Epp & Price, 2008).

The changes in family structure brought about by digitalization also translate a disruption of the forms of interaction within the family. Indeed, family conversations can now be carried out between members who are thousands of kilometers away from each other, thanks to digital applications like WhatsApp, which alter the notions of absence and presence (Danet, Martel, and Miljkovitch 2017). In addition, digitalization's disruption of power relations between members is reflected in daily interactions and routines (Turkle, 2011). Indeed, generally at ease with technology and aware of the latest innovations, young people often help their elders to use digital tools (Le Douarin & Caradec, 2009), in a logic of reverse socialization (Gollety, 1999). This generates new forms of interaction between family generations.

3. 3. 3. The lens of family identity provides interesting avenues for digital actors

We now analyze how the lens of family identity provides valuable avenues for digital actors. We argue that a better comprehension of the identity dynamics at the heart of family consumption enables to grasp how digital tools can play an important role in family identity building. Based on the contributions brought by the lens of family identity, we make concrete suggestions to help brands and public services take advantage of the opportunities offered by digitalization and support consumers facing the challenges raised by digitalization.

Recommendations for brands - Developing digital offers tailored to families' actual identity needs. First, there is room for digital offers that help families maintain a link between generations, at a time when they feel increasingly distant. In this end, brands should seek to provide a fertile ground for intergenerational transfers, family narratives and everyday family interactions. This is for instance what Papoti does, by offering a privileged space where grandchildren and grandparents can chat, exchange photos, nurture their complicity and play, despite the miles that separate them. Brands should also leverage digitalization to help families reconnect younger generations with their not very "digitally connected" grandparents. Apps such as Parlapapi, MyTribuNews and Famileo provide good examples in this regard. They enable children and grandchildren, by simply sending messages, to have delivered directly to their grandparents' mailbox a paper diary of their lives, which they usually share on social networks from which their forebears are absent. In doing so, they help preserve, or even recreate, intergenerational ties, and reinforce a threatened generational orientation.

Another marketing opportunity for brands consists in taking advantage of digitalization to meet families' need to nurture and enact their shared identity and preserve their identity continuity. In this end, brands should, among others, design offers that facilitate the maintenance of family rituals and routines in case of geographical separation (a challenge that families are increasingly facing, as Epp, Schau and Price (2014) point out). They can, in this regard, draw inspiration from applications like Draw Something or Scrabble, which allow to maintain the rituals of family game nights when members are far apart. We advise brands to seek to make the ritual as in keeping with its "physical" version as possible, so that families can continue, through its performance, to nurture their family identity in the same way as in its physical version. For instance, in the case of the Teleparty extension, we believe that consumers' sense of closeness to the rest of their family could be further strengthened to

preserve even further the ritual of family TV series viewing evenings. To do this, Netflix could notably allow users to see other family members watching the TV series, so that they can see their reactions and expressions live, thus replicating the family viewing experience as closely as possible.

Recommendations for brands - Shaping communication about digital offers so that it echoes families' identity needs. We advise brands to focus their communication on arguments that show that digital tools can play an important role in family identity building. A good example in this area is Meta which, by pointing out that "thanks to Portal, my children and their grandparents create shared memories despite the distance", wisely draws consumers' attention to the fact that Portal puts technology at the service of family identity building. Some brands would benefit from changing their communication arguments according to this logic. For instance, while Teleparty currently bases all its communication on sharing with friends and on functional and rational arguments, we advise Netflix to highlight the fact that this extension promotes the maintenance of family rituals, the sharing of common references between generations, as well as family cohesion. Similarly, ready-to-eat delivery apps like Deliveroo could focus some of their advertising on the family benefits they provide. Indeed, being able to eat a good meal with the family on a Saturday evening, without necessarily needing to go out or take the time to cook, can contribute to family cohesion and dialogue, as well as to family rituals establishment.

Recommendations for public services - Facilitating access to digital. Given the importance of digital technology in the negotiation of family identity (Epp, Schau, & Price, 2014; Marchant & O'Donohoe, 2014), digital inclusion is a major issue for families. We argue that public services have a role to play in supporting families, particularly the most vulnerable, in the digital transition, both in terms of access to and mastery of digital

technology. A number of initiatives are underway in France to this end. For example, a free digital solidarity training course is being run in Bordeaux. While we welcome this initiative, we regret that it is offered only to the city's public and associative social actors. We call to extend such type of training to all citizens who feel the need (even if we are aware of the cost involved). In addition, as part of its "Promoting digital inclusion" plan, the city of Rennes helps all residents who so wish to access digital equipment and gradually acquire digital autonomy. We encourage other cities to follow suit. We also applaud the efforts of the Pyrénées Atlantique department, which has set itself the ambitious goal of connecting 100% of its households to ultra-high-speed broadband. To achieve this, the department is working to improve infrastructures and to empower local players to facilitate access for all and help citizens become more independent in their use of digital technology. We call for generalizing this type of initiative across the territory, and in other countries.

Recommendations for public services - Securing the use of digital technology. The State should also help families manage the security issues related to digital technologies, so as to enable them to securely negotiate their identities through digital devices. Indeed, we believe that public services have a role to play in preventing and supporting families against the risks that digital tools confront them with. In particular, we advise them to take steps to help families secure their data and to prevent children from being exposed to inappropriate or even dangerous content. For example, public services can draw inspiration from *Luxchat*, a free, secure instant messaging service developed by Luxembourg's Ministry of Digitization for the general public and businesses. This messaging system enables families to communicate in complete confidence, while respecting their privacy and personal data.

3. 4. Conclusion of part 3- Proposal for a research agenda

To conclude the third part of this paper, after having shown how the lens of family identity can offer concrete understanding and solutions to sustainability and digitalization, we propose an agenda for future research on these two key trends. More specifically, we identify in Table 9 a number of research questions that we believe could give rise to interesting studies mobilizing this lens to better understand how to encourage the adoption of more sustainable behaviors (research questions A) and accompany the digital transition (research questions B). We draw in this end on elements developed previously.

Table 9. Emerging research questions on sustainability and digitalization mobilizing the

family identity lens

Encouraging the adoption of more sustainable behaviors
RQA1: How to reduce the psychological distance between current and future generations?
RQA2: How to get all family members on board and involved in adopting more sustainable practices?
RQA3: How to take advantage of periods of life transition to foster changes towards more sustainable consumption?
RQA4: How to use environmental awareness programs at school and at work to encourage more sustainable behaviors at a family level?
RQA5: How to use playfulness to encourage more sustainable practices at a collective level?
RQA6: How to change narratives to place the ecological dimension at the heart of the character of collectivities, such as companies, families or cities, to promote sustainable consumption practices on a large scale?
Accompanying the transition to digital
RQB1: How can brands help strengthen family ties?
RQB2: How can brands design offers that meet families' current identity needs?
RQB3: How can brands integrate families' current identity needs into their communication?
RQB4: How can government and companies improve digital inclusion for families?
RQB5: How can government and companies ensure a secure use of digital tools by family?
RQB6: How does digitalization disrupt the character, structure and generational orientation of large collectivities, such as nations?

4. Conclusion

In this article, we provide an extensive thematic literature review of marketing literature on family consumption. We show how marketing research on family consumption is divided between a conceptualization of family consumption as a rational decision-making process carried out by individual members wanting to maximize their utility, and an approach of family consumption as a collective identity negotiation process (Firat, Dholakia, & Venkatesh, 1995). We highlight the significant implications of this differences in terms of theoretical assumptions underpinning this literature as well as in terms of research topics addressed, and we review the main studies in each of these approaches. In so doing, we provide an overview of the research field that the lens of family identity has opened. Finally, we call for the use of this lens to examine major consumption phenomena. We more specifically show how adopting a family identity perspective can help better understand the dynamics that underlie major trends that societies are increasingly facing in terms of consumption, such as sustainability and digitalization, and thus better respond to the major challenges they pose. On this basis, we propose an agenda for future research that aims at encouraging the adoption of more sustainable behaviors or at accompanying the digital transition, as well as managerial recommendations for various stakeholders, such as brands and public services.

Future research directions

As openings on future research areas, we suggest that future research should not limit to the family unit. For instance, scholars should investigate how to make ecology a core value of various collectivities, such as companies or cities, to promote sustainable consumption practices on a larger scale. They could also seek how to foster a sense of belonging to a geographic community to encourage local consumption, given that a sense of belonging to a geographical space with its own identity, of which some are part and some are not, seems to foster to consume

local. Future research should furthermore explore shared rituals, everyday interactions, social dramas, narratives, and intergenerational transfers as concrete ways to encourage a strong generational orientation, a specific character and a sense of belonging to a collective identity with a clear structure within targeted groups.

Article 2

Reconstructing Collective Identity: The Role of Brands After Major Life Disruptions

Abstract

Consumer groups are frequently confronted with sudden involuntary events that significantly destabilize them, which we conceptualize as major life disruptions (MLDs). Yet, the implications of these events are usually studied at the individual level, leaving their impact on collective identities poorly understood. Because MLDs represent turning points in groups' lives, they can shake up brand loyalties and consumption habits. It is therefore crucial for marketing managers to understand how their brand can take advantage of these transformative opportunities to achieve a place of choice in consumer groups' lives. Based on a thematic analysis of in-depth interviews and consumer diaries of 22 families, we provide a framework that explains how brands are integrated in the reconfiguration of collective consumption practices that nourish family identity reconstruction. Specifically, we unveil three main strategies (i.e., ritualized structuring, sharing revalorizing, and intergenerational romanticizing) that compose collective identity reconstruction and help consumers cope with the specific tensions generated by exogenous MLDs. And we show that brands facilitate the implementation of these strategies by acting as delineators of individual, relational, and collective times and activities; creators of occasions for family gatherings and exchange stimulators; and vectors of family history and legacy. In doing so, this research allows for a more detailed understanding of the neglected yet frequent phenomenon of MLD and of its significant consequences for consumers, as well as of the role of brands in identity (re)construction.

Keywords: collective identity, identity reconstruction, family identity, major life disruptions, brands.

1. **Introduction**

Consumers' lives are scattered with sudden and involuntary events that disrupt their existence and prevent them from continuing their life in a normal way. This is for instance the case of the death of a loved one or the experience of natural disasters. Such major life events (MLEs) do not only shake up consumers' needs and purchase behavior (Galoni, Carpenter, & Rao, 2020; Su, Monga, & Jiang, 2021) or drastically transform their daily routines and practices (Campbell, Inman, Kirmani, & Price, 2020; Phipps & Ozanne, 2017), they also trigger profound renegotiations of consumers' identity, which then need to be reconstructed (Fuschillo, Cayla, & Cova, 2022). When experienced at a collective level (e.g., national lockdowns during the Covid-19 pandemic), MLEs have the potential to affect collective identities, defined as the shared sense that people form of "who they are as a group" (Acero et al., 2017).

Despite an abundant literature on MLEs, past research does not directly examine how MLEs affect collective identities. First, the very concept of MLE needs clarification. Past studies investigate a large scope of events of different nature, from sudden and unexpected major life disruptions (MLDs) such as major illness diagnoses (Cardoso, Rojas-Gaviria, & Scaraboto, 2020) or earthquakes (Ozanne & Ozanne, 2021), to progressive and awaited major life transitions (MLTs) from one social role to another, such as transition to parenthood (Thomas & Epp, 2019) or divorce (Thompson, Henry, & Bardhi, 2018). While these types of events can be intertwined, with MLDs sometimes triggering MLTs (Van Gennep, 1909), existing research mainly focuses on MLTs and does not explicitly conceptualize the specifics of MLDs and their implications for consumer behavior research. Second, past literature mostly investigates the impact of MLEs on individual consumer identities and overlooks their impact on the collective identities of groups of consumers (Barnhart & Peñaloza, 2013; Epp & Price, 2008). Therefore, overall, while the process through which individual consumers

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reconstruct their identity during life transitions is documented (e.g., Schau, Gilly, & Wolfinbarger, 2009), we know little about the process through which collective identities are reconstructed after MLDs.

This phenomenon is of tremendous interest for brands. First, MLDs impacting collective identities are frequent in consumers' lives and occur at a global (e.g., economic crisis, pandemic), national (e.g., war, Brexit), regional (e.g., natural disaster), and intimate level (e.g., family member's severe illness diagnosis). Second, MLDs shake up brand loyalties and consumption habits (Kerrane, Lindridge, & Dibb, 2021), which can therefore destabilize consumer relationships with even their most favored brands (Fournier, 1998). Third, research has shown that brands play an important role in reconstructing consumers' individual identity when coping with personal crises (Fuschillo et al., 2022). This renders crucial for marketing managers to understand how their brand can take advantage of the transformative opportunities offered by MLDs to achieve a place of choice in consumer lives. However, we know little about the specific influence that brands can acquire in the reconfiguration of collective consumption practices in a process of collective identity reconstruction during or after MLDs. Therefore, we ask: What role do brands play in the MLD-induced process of collective identity reconstruction?

To answer this research question, we first rely on past literature to develop a clear conceptualization of MLDs and their impact on collective identity. Then, to study the process of collective identity reconstruction, we focus on family as a unit of analysis and type of collective identity, and on the spring 2020 lockdown during the COVID-19 pandemic as an MLD. We use family as a prototypical research context because it is an essential consumer decision unit that plays a significant role in the consumption (Epp & Price, 2008), identity and well-being of its members (Moore, Wilkie, & Deschrochers, 2017). This makes family identity a crucial concept in consumer research (Fournier & Yao, 1997). Further, many MLDs

are experienced at the family level –such as a family member's diagnosis of a severe illness or home loss due to a natural disaster. Therefore, MLDs have the potential to significantly destabilize family identity.

Based on a thematic analysis of in-depth interviews and consumer diaries of 22 families, we provide a framework that explains how brands are integrated in the reconfiguration of collective consumption practices that nourish family identity reconstruction. We unveil three main strategies (i.e., ritualized structuring, sharing revalorizing, and intergenerational romanticizing) that compose collective identity reconstruction and help consumers cope with the specific tensions induced by MLDs. First, to cope with the sense of temporal emptiness generated by MLDs, consumers mobilize consumption rituals to structure time and recreate daily rhythms in order to clarify family identity bundles and hierarchies, using brands as delineators of individual, relational, and collective times. Second, to cope with increased intra-group dependence caused by MLDs, consumers redefine and intensify family shared consumption practices to revalorize them in order to strengthen family character, using brands as creators of occasions for family gatherings and as exchange stimulators. Third, to compensate for the disorganization of consumer life trajectories by MLDs, consumers romanticize legacy consumption practices in order to ensure intergenerational continuity, using brands as vectors of family history and legacy.

Our work contributes to marketing research in three ways. First, we contribute to the literature on collective consumer identities by evidencing one trigger –i.e., MLDs– of collective identity destabilization and a market-based process of collective identity reconstruction. Specifically, we theorize the process through which the adoption, abandonment, or reconfiguration of brand-centric consumption practices participate in collective identity reconstruction. Further, we show that collective identity reconstruction is achieved by addressing each of the components of a collective identity which have been

weakened by the MLD. Second, we contribute to the understanding of the role of brands in identity (re)construction by showing how brands as symbolic market-based resources interact with communications forms to enact the collective identity. Specifically, we show how this role differs from the one played by brands in the reconstruction of individual identity demonstrated by past research, and from the usually investigated role of brand as marker of group identification and social categorization. Finally, we contribute to past research on MLEs by proposing a differentiating framework which categorizes MLEs impacting consumers' lives. Our framework aims to create parsimony by synthesizing the findings from this heterogeneous field of research around two dimensions: the temporality of the event and the locus of the event cause.

2. Theoretical foundations

2. 1. Impact of major life events on consumers

MLEs (e.g., getting married or divorced, losing one's job, experiencing a natural disaster) are frequent and significant turning points in consumers' lives (Phipps & Ozanne, 2017; Thompson et al., 2018). An extensive literature has shown that MLEs impact consumer identities, practices, and resources in three main ways. First, MLEs can change who we are by impacting consumers' identities, roles, statuses, and values (Appau et al., 2020; Mimoun & Bardhi, 2022). Second, they can change what we consume by impacting consumers' everyday consumption routines and practices (Ozanne & Ozanne, 2021; Thomas & Epp, 2019), product choices and shopping habits (Galoni et al., 2020; Su et al., 2021), and consumption traits (e.g., attachment to special possessions, materialism) (Kennet-Hensel, 2012). Finally, they can change how we attain our consumption goals by impacting consumers' reliance on, allocation

of, and investment in material and economic resources (e.g., time, money, space), social support, and practical and emotional help (Kerrane et al., 2021; Schau et al., 2009).

While this field of research is rich, it is difficult to make sense of its overall conclusions as most papers tend to be attached to a specific case of MLE (e.g., birth, job loss, flood). This field of research thus lacks differentiation, which "adds precision to thinking, making it easier to compare findings across papers [and]…helps identify novel contingencies" (MacInnis, 2011: 146). To address this limitation, we advance a differentiating framework (see Table 10) to categorize MLEs impacting consumers' lives according to two dimensions: the temporality of the event and the locus of the event cause.

Temporality refers to whether the MLE occurs suddenly in consumer life or is awaited. We label sudden events a major life disruption (MLD) as in the case of unpredictable and unexpected events like natural disasters and accidental deaths. We label awaited events a major life transition (MLT) as in the case of socially appointed transitions determined by custom, tradition, and biology (Van Gennep, 1909), like growing up or giving birth, or slow-building transitions to which consumers have the time to get used, like neighborhood gentrification or climate change. We note that an MLE can first impact consumers' lives as an MLD, then as an MLT. For example, applying our framework to the case of the Brexit vote in the UK (Kerrane et al., 2021), the announcement of the referendum results on June 23, 2016 can be conceptualized as an MLD, and its implementation up to the UK exiting the EU on February 1, 2020 as an MLT.

Locus of cause refers to whether the cause of the MLE is exogenous or endogenous. Exogenous versus endogenous causes respectively qualify events whose main trigger is external to versus part of the life of the focal consumer (Campbell et al., 2020). For instance, we consider that suddenly losing one's home due to wild forest fires is an MLD with an

exogenous cause while losing one's home due to an electric fire is an MLD with an endogenous cause.

Table 10. A Typology of MLEs Affecting Consumer Identities

	Major life disruption (sudden event, unexpected or unpredictable)	**Major life transition** (awaited event socially determined or slow-building)
Exogenous cause (trigger is external to the focal consumer's life*)	Natural disaster New pandemic Civil unrest/Revolution Terrorist attack Forced displacement (e.g., refugees) Brexit (vote)	Euro adoption Neighborhood gentrification Adoption of gay marriage Climate change Country independence Brexit (implementation)
Endogeneous cause (trigger is part of the focal consumer's life*)	Home fire Family member's death (accident) Illness diagnosis Unexpected pregnancy /Pregnancy denial Job loss Affair revelation Winning the lottery Unexpected family inheritance	Mariage Transition to adulthood Getting old Retirement Desired parenthood Religious conversion Family member's death (old age, terminally ill) Divorce Planned immigration Empty nesting Midlife crisis

*Due to the paper's positioning, the family was chosen as the unit of analysis to examine locus of cause.

First, we note that the vast majority of papers has focused on endogenous MLTs, in particular on lifecycle transitions such as growing up, getting married/divorced, having a child and retiring (Su et al., 2021; Thompson et al., 2018). This may be explained by the tendency of this literature to look at MLTs through the lens of liminality (Mimoun & Bardhi, 2022), which focuses on socially appointed transitions that facilitate role changes within a structured society (Van Gennep, 1909). From that viewpoint, MLDs are conceptualized as a first step that triggers the upheavals initiating the life transition process (e.g., Kennett-Hensel, Sneath, & Lacey, 2012). Yet, by subsuming MLDs in the process of life transitions, consumer research misses the specific impact of sudden and unexpected MLEs, especially when they are not followed by a transition.

Second, concurring with Campbell et al. (2020), we observe that exogenous life events have received limited attention. In their conceptual paper, Campbell et al. (2020) suggest that it is linked to a tendency of consumer research to focus on small-scale threats affecting one consumer at a time rather than large-scale threats that may affect whole populations simultaneously. We nonetheless identify some studies of exogenous MLDs, in particular of natural disasters (Ozanne & Ozanne, 2021) and terrorist attacks (Herzenstein, Horsky, & Posavac, 2015), but they usually conceptualize these MLDs as the triggers of longer-term transitions leading to a new social role or identity (i.e., MLTs). We see this as an indicator of the confusion within the field that we hope to remedy with our proposed framework.

Finally, we note the literature tendency to adopt an individual unit of analysis to study MLEs. Indeed, prior literature on MLEs tends to focus on the experience and impact of MLEs on an individual consumer. The few exceptions which considered collective responses tend to adopt a pragmatic approach to practice reconstruction, rather than an identity angle (Cardoso et al., 2020; Ozanne & Ozanne, 2021). For example, there is an extensive literature on the many roles of brands in individual consumer identity reconstruction (for a review, Fuschillo et al., 2022). Because looking at the impact of exogenous life events on individuals might seem to parcel out their overall consequences, exogenous MLEs may have received less attention. As a result, consumer research has largely overlooked the impact of MLEs on groups of consumers and their identities. Nonetheless, MLEs generally affect simultaneously a large number of consumers. For example, natural disasters simultaneously rock a whole region; lockdowns impact an entire city or country; accidental deaths or job losses affect a whole family. A collective perspective thus appears highly necessary to fully understand MLEs and their impact. Although several calls have been made in this direction (Barnhart & Peñaloza, 2013), the literature on MLEs has yet to investigate their collective consequences and the role of brands in dealing with them.

2. *2. Understanding exogenous major life disruptions*

To address these limitations, we chose to explore how exogenous MLDs affect collective consumer identities. Existing research has shown that MLDs significantly destabilize the way consumers live collectively and perceive themselves as a group. Integrating past literature, we find that exogenous MLDs affect consumer collectives in four ways.

First, exogenous MLDs disrupt installed consumption routines and schedules that help daily functioning and affect consumers' scope of possibilities and ability for action (Cardoso et al., 2020; Weinberger & Wallendorf, 2012). MLDs thereby alter consumption practices (Campbell et al., 2020). As an example, the severe 2007 drought in Australia deeply disturbed a wide range of consumption routines, forcing residents, for instance, to wear their clothes longer before washing them and to wash dishes less often and by hand only (Phipps & Ozanne, 2017).

Second, exogenous MLDs disrupt collective and individual access to social, financial, and market resources. Exogenous MLDs are likely to cause resource scarcity and impede consumers' goal attainment (Hosany & Hamilton, 2022). For example, natural disasters and health crises may limit consumers' access to resources by creating financial scarcity (e.g., business closures, loss of income) and scarcity of essentials (e.g., disruption of supply chain) (Das et al. 2021; Phipps & Ozanne, 2017). These exogenous MLDs may also prevent access to social support (e.g., limited interaction between friends and family due to road closures) and identity supporting possessions (e.g., destruction of home and prized possessions) (Das et al. 2021; Kennett-Hensel et al., 2012). Even the anticipation of exogenous MLDs (e.g., fear of repeated terrorist attack or of Brexit consequences) can produce time, money, and space scarcity due to stockpiling and avoidance practices (Kerrane et al., 2021; Kennett-Hensel et al., 2012).

Third, exogenous MLDs cause heightened mortality salience, defined as the awareness that one's death is inevitable, impacting consumers' temporal orientation. Specifically, exogenous MLDs can shake consumers certainties and plunge them into a state of ontological insecurity, thus leading to increased disorientation, anxiety, and suffering (Campbell et al., 2020; Phipps & Ozanne, 2017). Consequently, consumers affected by heightened mortality salience tend to adopt a backward-looking temporal orientation, associated with a preference for nostalgic, own culture products and brands while avoiding exciting, innovative, and foreign products and brands (Kennett-Hensel et al., 2012; Landgraf, Stamatogiannakis, & Yang, 2023).

Finally, exogenous MLDs disrupt collective and individual consumer identities. Indeed, consumption routines and schedules, social, financial, and market resources, as well as temporal orientation, constitute consumer identities (Campbell et al., 2020). As a result, exogenous MLDs muddle the social roles by which consumers define themselves, the meaning they attribute to their existence, as well as the identity that others project on them (Weinberger & Wallendorf, 2012). Exogenous MLDs also disrupt established social norms, values, and beliefs. For example, exogenous shocks such as natural disasters lead to the adoption of a hedonic, escapist, or risk-taking orientation (Kennett-Hensel et al., 2012). Likewise, wars and terrorism greatly increase the awareness of being part of a united nation, by disrupting everyday life and landmarks and creating a common enemy. They thereby make regional and national identities more salient, as seen in Russia's annexations of Ukraine (Sasse & Lackner, 2018), often leading to an increase in nationalism and preference for country of origin's products (Friese & Hofmann, 2008).

Surprisingly, despite these various studies on exogenous MLDs, little is known about how consumers reconstruct their collective identities after experiencing them. We conceptualize here reconstructing as either repairing the destabilized collective identity back to

the pre-disruption one, or in constructing a new collective identity distinct from the original. We know that after endogenous MLTs, consumers often engage in an extensive identity rebuilding process which may rely on symbolic consumption and often involves gifts (Mick, DeMoss, & Faber, 1992), consumer experiences (McAlexander & Schouten, 1989), and special possessions (Mehta & Belk, 1991). Yet, the collective process has yet to receive significant attention from consumer researchers. To answer this research gap, we chose the family as a prototypical collective unit of consumption.

2. 3. Family identity, consumption, and major life disruptions

Family identity refers to what the family represents in the minds of its members and of its non-members (Reiss, 1981), i.e., the answer that people give to the question 'who are we/they as a family?' This subjective sense that a family has of itself shapes the consumption preferences and practices (Moisio, Arnould, & Price, 2004), and the individual identities (Scabini & Manzi, 2011) of its members. Family identity shapes the meanings that members attribute to their consumption experiences, as well as the way they learn to be consumers (Fournier & Yao, 1997). To understand how exogenous MLDs affect family identity, we need to look at the three components –family structure, family character and family generational orientation– that together characterize family identity (Epp & Price, 2008). We briefly review how family identity and consumption are codetermined across each of these components.

First, family structure refers to the limits of family membership, as well as the hierarchy and roles of different family members (Bennett, Wolin, & McAvity, 1988). Family structure finds its roots in sharing a meaningful history, collective identity and consumption practices, as well as in anticipating a future of functioning in a family relationship (Galvin, Bylund, & Brommel, 2004). Family structure shapes consumer decision making by determining the roles of different family members in the decision-making process (Moore et

al., 2017). Roles and hierarchies as well as the equilibrium between different identity bundles will also shape shared practices and norms, such as meal or spending rules (Marchant & O'Donohoe 2014). Reciprocally, consumption practices shape family structure. For instance, by allowing contact and virtual participation into shared activities, family members' use of technologies affects family structure by ensuring the inclusion (or exclusion) of selected members (Marchant & O'Donohoe, 2014). Brands can also shape family structure by helping distinguish family members from outsiders, according to their shared interest in and use of a specific brand (Billon, 2017).

Second, family character refers to the characteristics of the family daily life, such as common tastes, shared traits, and common values (Epp & Price, 2008). Family character is determined, maintained, and strengthened by shared activities, both everyday and exceptional (Epp & Price, 2011). For instance, sharing family meals (e.g., formal vs. non formal, homemade meal vs. takeaway) and holidays (e.g., sustainable vs. exotic destination) in a way that reflects the family character establishes and strengthens a family's collective sense of itself, and its values and norms (Edirisingha, Ferguson, & Aitken, 2015). Further, sharing consumption activities strengthens family character by bringing family members together in collective participatory projects which expresses their unity and the reciprocal connection among family members (Moisio et al., 2004). Brands can also shape family character, by influencing shared values and references, as well as interactions between members (Epp & Price, 2011).

Third, family generational orientation refers to the links between generations and how the family preserves and transmits its identity from generation to generation (Bennett et al., 1988; Epp & Price, 2008). Family generational orientations affect brand choices, consumption patterns, traits such as materialism, as well as consumption rituals. For instance, a strong generational orientation can lead to preference for brands with strong connection to family

history (Fournier & Yao, 1997). It also facilitates the creation and maintenance of inalienable wealth across generations by encouraging the material and financial transfers across generations (Curasi, Price, & Arnould, 2004). Generational orientation is also particularly strong in certain domains of consumption such as diet and food choices, with significant consequences for consumer wellbeing and health (Moore et al., 2017). Reciprocally, prized possessions, special foods, favored brands, and consumption rituals strengthen family identity continuity and its generational orientation (Yu et al., 2015). For instance, brands can be the object of important intergenerational transfers that help ensure family identity continuity across generations (Diamond et al., 2009).

Finally, we advance that the family is an appropriate unit of analysis to study exogenous MLDs because they are significantly experienced at a family level, both in terms of frequency and impact. Indeed, MLDs are not only likely to disturb the family's daily functioning and routines (thus affecting its character and generational orientation) but also to muddle its members' roles and relationships (thus impacting its structure) (Newman, Simonds, & Billing, 2011). Further, MLDs may affect family identity in complex fashion because they are likely to affect any of the identity bundles that compose the family. Indeed, the family identity is made up of three types of identity bundles: (1) the collective identity of the family as a whole (Edirisingha et al., 2015); (2) the individual identities of each family member (Ahuvia, 2005); and (3) the relational identities of subgroups formed by several family members, such as the couple and siblings (Diamond et al., 2009). MLDs thus disrupt the family identity both directly by affecting the collective bundle, but also indirectly as a consequence of the individual and relational bundles being impacted. Family identity is therefore particularly sensitive to MLDs.

3. Method

3. 1. Research context

To study the impact of MLDs on collective identities, we collect data on the spring 2020 lockdown in France (March 17-May 11, 2020) during which a state of health emergency was declared. As in most countries around the world, the French government implemented a set of restrictions to curb the spread of the deadly COVID-19 epidemic: it closed universities, schools, and non-essential shops, canceled public events, imposed remote work on all non-essential workers, and prohibited out-of-home movements except for a very limited number of reasons.

We argue that this episode of lockdown represents an exogenous MLD. First, its trigger is external to the focal consumers' lives as the lockdown derives from a governmental decision to defend public health in front of a pandemic. Second, it started suddenly (announced on March 16, 2020, with an effective start the next day), and the population did have no control over it. Finally, it significantly disrupted consumers' daily lives. The lockdown shocked consumers lives and identities by preventing people from living their home, going to work, having leisure, and visiting non-essential shops, and reduced consumers' scope of possibilities (Pailhé, Panico, & Solaz, 2022). Even with the social support put in place by the government, the lockdown disrupted consumers' access to social, financial, and market resources: most people saw their income decrease, it was more difficult to benefit from social support, and the treatment of most non-urgent social and health needs had to be postponed (Maligorne, 2020).

We believe that the spring 2020 lockdown offers a very suitable empirical context for studying collective identity destabilization. By impacting the whole country simultaneously, it unquestionably affected consumers collectively. It deeply affected the family unit, disturbing

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its daily life, organization, and relationships (Pailhé et al., 2022) like no other event on such a scale in recent decades, thus representing an opportunity to relearn how to be a family.

3. 2. Participants

We collected data from 47 informants (29 women and 18 men, from 12 to 79 years old), from 22 different families, recruited through convenience sampling and snowballing. We selected participants on the basis of two sampling criteria: they needed to be (1) quarantined with family members (i.e., not alone or with friends) and (2) more than 10 years old (to ensure that they were able to express themselves clearly and show reflexivity on their practices).

These 22 families had varied profiles, allowing us to capture the diversity of family experiences of lockdown (Huberman & Miles, 1994). In particular, they differed in their stage in the family life cycle (e.g., young couples, families with young children or teenagers, families with adult children who had left the nest but returned to their parents for the lockdown, families with adult children who spent the lockdown elsewhere). They also differed in size (i.e., from couples to large families), quarantine environment (e.g., quarantined in a small flat in a large city vs. in a large house in the countryside), conjugal situation (e.g., nuclear, divorced, blended) and professional situation (e.g., schoolchildren, students, working, partially unemployed, unemployed, retired). Table 11 provides additional data about these 22 families.

Table 11. Informants' profiles

Family	Informant	Sex	Age	In quarantine with	Indiv./coll. Interview	Format	Date of interview
Langlois ***	Lucie	F	26	Partner	Indiv.	Online	April 2020
	Raphaël	M	27	Partner	Indiv.	Online	April 2020
Alaoui ***	Latifa	F	63	Partner	Coll.	Online	April 2020
	Salim	M	65	Partner	Coll.	Online	April 2020
Lefèvre ***	Sofia	F	39	Partner	Indiv.	Online	April 2020
	Simon	M	40	Partner	Indiv.	Online	April 2020

Family	Name	Sex	Age	Cohabiting with	Interview type	Mode	Dates
Morel ***	Bernard	M	79	Partner	2 Coll.	Online & Offline	May 2020, May 2021
	Geneviève	F	77	Partner	2 Coll.	Online & Offline	May 2020, May 2021
Chevet ***	Maëlys	M	26	Brother	Indiv.	Online	April 2020
	Pierre	F	26	Parents, siblings	Indiv.	Online	April 2020
Girard **	Emma	F	25	Siblings, parents, partner	Indiv.	Online	April 2020
	Constance	F	22	Siblings, parents	Indiv.	Online	May 2020
	Daniel	M	55	Children, partner, children's partners	Indiv.	Online	April 2020
	Victor	M	20	Siblings, parents, partner	Indiv.	Online	April 2020
Roux **	Arthur	M	22	Parents, sister	Indiv.	Online	April 2020
	Mégane	F	25	Parents, brother	Indiv.	Online	April 2020
	Alison	F	60	Partner, children	Indiv.	Online	April 2020
Moreau ***	Jean [i]	M	65	Partner, daughter, son, daughter in law	Coll.+ 2 Indiv.	Online & Offline	April 2020, May 2020, January 2022
	Sabine [i]	F	68	Partner, daughter, son, daughter in law	Coll.+ 3 Indiv	Online & Offline	Apr, May 20 Jan., June 22
	Marion [i]	F	25	Parents, brother, sister-in-law	Indiv	Online	May 2020
	Jérémy	M	31	Partner, parents, sister	Indiv	Online	April 2020
	Lara	F	30	Parents, parents-in-law & sister-in-law	Indiv	Online	May 2020
Garnier **	Margaux	F	16	Siblings, parents	Indiv.	Online	April 2020
	Pauline [i]	F	12	Siblings, parents	Indiv.	Offline	June 2021
	Jacques [i]	M	40	Partner, children	None		
Legrand **	Adèle	F	26	Parents, sister	Indiv.	Online	April 2020
	Chloé	F	30	Parents, sister	Indiv.	Online	April 2020
	Agnès	F	57	Partner, daughters	Indiv.	Online	April 2020
Roussel ***	Amélie	F	26	Parents	Indiv.	Online	April 2020
	Florence	F	56	Partner, daughter	Indiv.	Online	April 2020
	François	M	57	Partner, daughter	Indiv.	Online	April 2020
Lemaire **	Sophie	F	21	Parents, siblings	Indiv.	Online	April 2020
	Émilie	F	30	Parents, siblings	Indiv.	Online	April 2020
	Simon	M	35	Parents, siblings	Indiv.	Online	April 2020
Dufour **	Antoine	M	26	Parents, siblings	Indiv.	Online	April 2020
	Estelle	F	16	Parents, siblings	Indiv.	Online	April 2020
	Bertille	F	22	Parents, siblings	Indiv.	Online	April 2020
Chagal ***	Neïla	F	25	Brother	Indiv.	Online	April 2020
	Thomas	M	28	Sister	Indiv.	Online	April 2020
Vasseur *	Anaïs	F	26	Partner	Indiv.	Online	May 2020
Perrier *	Julien	M	28	Parents	Indiv.	Online	May 2020
Prévost *	Apolline	F	20	Parents, sister	Indiv.	Online	May 2020
Jacquet *	Delphine	F	17	Parents, sister	Indiv.	Online	May 2020
Brunet *	Martin	M	25	Mother, stepfather	Indiv.	Online	May 2020
Guillot *	Lou	F	15	Parents, siblings	Indiv.	Online	May 2020
Vidal *	Théo	M	18	Parents, siblings	Indiv.	Online	May 2020
Millet *	Clémence	F	24	Parents, sister	Indiv.	Online	May 2020

Legend: [i] completed a diary.
         * families in which we interviewed all the family members (to the exception of children below 10 year-old)
        ** families in which we interviewed most of the family members, including at least one head of family and several dependants
        *** families in which we interviewed only one member.

3. 3. Data collection methods

To address our research questions, we mobilized different data collection methods to increase the trustworthiness of our findings – individual interviews, collective interviews, and diaries. This enabled us to gain an emic understanding of the processes of destabilization and reconstruction of family identity from multiple perspectives (Epp & Price, 2011).

We conducted 45 individual interviews. For eight families (out 22) of our sample, identifiable in the table 11 by the presence of three asterisks next to their family name, we were able to interview individually all the family members (to the exception of children below 10 year-old). For six families, identifiable in table 11 by the two asterisks, we interviewed most of the family members, including at least one head of family and several dependants. For the eight remaining families, identifiable in table 11 by a single asterisk, because of material constraints, only one member was interviewed. This approach is consistent with existing literature on family consumption. Most studies do not interview all family members because of availability or answering ability issues (Crowley & Miller, 2020; Miller & Caughlin, 2013), but only the responsible adults (Edirisingha, Aitken, & Ferguson, 2022; Hosany & Hamilton, 2022) or the family members having a role of specific interest (Karanika & Hogg, 2016). We also note that the large size of many families in our sample (up to 12 members confined together) made interviewing all members harder. Children under 11 year-old are also usually excluded (Hamilton & Catterall, 2006; Pavia & Mason, 2012).

Additionally, we conducted four collective interviews: three with all members of the concerned families and one with some children missing (who were nonetheless interviewed individually). We limited ourselves to four families due to the difficulty of gathering all members at once and the risk of some members feeling inhibited when all the family is present, a trend already identified in past research (Hamilton & Catterall, 2006). This dataset allowed us to reach theoretical saturation, as no new insights emerged from additional interviews.

All 47 interviews, individual and collective, lasted between 45 and 120 minutes, with an average length of 70 minutes. We recorded and transcribed them, generating a total of 743 single-spaced pages of transcripts. We conducted 44 of these interviews during the lockdown, to explore the immediate impact of the MLD on family identity, seeking participants' direct observation of their family experiences. During these interviews, all conducted online due to the restrictions in force, we asked our respondents about their lockdown situation, their daily life (e.g., activities, schedule, routines) during the lockdown and that of other members with whom they were in quarantine. We also asked them about the changes in their family life, the difficulties encountered, and how they imagined their family life after lockdown. We conducted the remaining five interviews offline, one to two years after the lockdown, at a time when informants had begun to return to a more "normal" social and daily life. These follow-up interviews allowed us to deepen some topics addressed with the participants during the lockdown, and thereby use the distance these informants had gained since their first interview to investigate the medium/long term impact of the lockdown on family identity.

We also asked 5 informants to keep a diary during the lockdown. They were required to write down everyday the activities, routines, schedule, and organization in their home, as well as their feelings, thoughts and observations. It helped them reflexively distance themselves from and make sense of their practices, and allowed us to identify certain routines that informants had not verbalized during interviews (Epp, Schau, & Price, 2014). Furthermore, the diaries helped us triangulate the interview data, and thus enhance the credibility and confirmability of our findings (Wallendorf & Belk, 1989). We asked three of the five informants about the content of their diary in a follow-up interview. Being very chronophage and requiring a high amount of efforts to generate rich data, the diaries were limited to the most motivated informants.

3. 4. Data analysis

In terms of analytical strategy, we read each transcribed interview, noting specific themes we could infer from the data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Using the constant comparison method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), we explored differences and similarities within and between the transcriptions to determine if data chunks represented common themes. Initially, authors coded a few transcriptions independently, starting with the families in which we had access to all members, then compared themes to agree on which ones best represented the data. Once this consensus reached, we extended to other families to refine and deepen the categorization of relevant themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994) and ensure that each was illustrated repeatedly in the dataset (Wallendorf & Belk, 1989). Then, we triangulated emerging themes with the collective interviews and diaries member check interviews (Wallendorf & Belk, 1989). Here, we sought to identify any new theme not previously observed in the other families, and to confirm or refute the central concepts of our framework and the conditions under which the relationships between these concepts were maintained (Creswell, 2006). We proceeded iteratively as we refined and abstracted our framework until we reached theoretical saturation.

In a first cycle of coding, we analyzed each family's experience of the lockdown, paying particular attention to the challenges they faced and how it affected their individual and collective identities, consumption practices, and relationship with brands. In a second cycle, we identified themes related to family identity and how it has been disrupted by the lockdown. Applying our theory-infused understanding of the impact of MLDs, we identified three MLD-induced tensions faced by our informants. We looked for negative cases but did not find any family who did not faced these tensions. Further, we focused on how informants experienced the tensions and attempted to handle them. This led us to identify the many consumption practices used by informants to reconstruct their family identities. We paid

attention to which elements of family identity (structure, character, and generational orientation) benefited from these reconstructive practices. For analytical simplicity, we focus on the main elements of family identity affected, even if all three are interrelated. We also noted which brands were used in the different practices and identified their common characteristics. Finally, in a third cycle of coding, we abstracted these practices into three market-based strategies by grouping these reconstructive practices around the tension they addressed. This led us to the framework we present next.

4. Findings

We propose a theoretical framework that shows how consumers mobilize brands through three strategies to reconstruct their collective identity following MLD-induced destabilizations (see Table 12). We first characterize the three ways in which the 2020 lockdown destabilizes family identity before demonstrating three market-based coping strategies developed by consumers to reconstruct their family identity.

Table 12. Market-based Strategies of Collective Identity Reconstruction

Market-based Coping Strategy	Ritualized Structuring	Sharing Revalorizing	Intergenerational Romanticizing
MLD-Induced Tension Addressed	Disruption of family and individual daily consumption routines and schedules	Disruption of family and individual social and market resource supply	Heightened mortality salience
Lockdown Operationalization of the Tension Addressed	Sense of temporal emptiness	Increased intra-group dependence	Destabilized temporal orientation

Strategy Definition	Ritualize consumption to structure time and recreate daily rhythms in order to clarify family structure	Redefine and intensify family shared consumption practices to revalorize them in order to strengthen family character	Romanticize legacy consumption practices to materialize family history in order to ensure intergenerational continuity
Role of Brands in the Strategy	Brands as delineators of individual, relational, and collective times and activities	Brands as creators of occasions for family gatherings and as exchange stimulators	Brands as vectors of family history and legacy
Supporting Consumption Practices	Consumption rituals and routines (e.g. routine grocery shopping, family meals) Leisure consumption (e.g., TV series, sport apps) Educational consumption (e.g., educational content and apps)	Effortful sharing (e.g., timeblocking together, renouncing preferred activities in favor of group activities) Collective play and shared leisure (e.g., playing board games, doing crafts, and watching TV together)	Nostalgic consumption Narrating family stories (e.g., picture albums) Homemaking activities (e.g., gardening, home decor) Legacy consumption (e.g., family recipes, saga movies)
Family Identity Outcome	Clarify the limits and hierarchies of family identity bundles, which have been muddled by the MLD	Strengthen family character, which has been weakened and shaken by the MLD	Ensure intergenerational continuity, which has been halted by the MLD

4. 1. MLD-induced tensions

In our review of prior literature, we identify three main ways through which MLDs destabilize consumer collective identities. MLDs disturb consumption routines and schedules (Weinberger & Wallendorf, 2012), upset collective and individual access to social, financial, and market resources (Hosany & Hamilton, 2022), and heighten mortality salience and ontological insecurity (Phipps & Ozanne, 2017). We find that, in the context of the 2020 lockdown, these translate into three specific tensions respectively: a sense of temporal emptiness, an increased intra-group dependence, and a disorganization of consumer life trajectory. Below, we describe these tensions and how they destabilize family identity.

First, in the context of the lockdown, the disruption of daily consumption routines and schedules that is typically engendered by MLDs provokes a feeling of time distortion and temporal emptiness among the interviewed families. For example, Jean, a 65-years-old quarantined with his extended family, explains: "We're in a floating period." As the way a family organizes and structures its days is closely linked to its collective sense of self (Epp & Price, 2008), the wiping out of the temporal markers that normally punctuate daily lives deprives the family of crucial elements that make up its identity. More specifically, habitual social rhythms serve as a clear delineation between the consumption activities that nurture the different identity bundles within the family (i.e., individual, relational and collective bundles). As a result, this feeling of temporal emptiness creates an unbalance that prevents some identity bundles to fully enact in favor of others. Lou (15), confined to her rural home with her parents, older brother, and younger sister, illustrates the resulting disruption of identity balance within her family:

> At the beginning of the lockdown, as all our activities stopped, we didn't really have a rhythm anymore, so we all ended up hanging around the house all day long. So we encroached on each other's space, suffocating each other, which generated conflicts.

The sense of temporal emptiness generated by the lockdown thus tends to blur family identity bundles and their hierarchies, and consequently breaks the identity balance and harmony within the family unit and weakens family structure.

Second, the lockdown creates an increased intra-group dependence. That is, because the lockdown disrupts family members' access to their usual social, financial, and market resources, they must rely only on other family members to address their needs. This limited access to external resources is well expressed by Delphine (17) who states "we are a bit cut off from the world!" This leads family members that are quarantined together to exert a disproportionate influence on elements that have important repercussions on each other's

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identity building. Indeed, deprived of various resources that normally come from outside the family circle, individuals seek to meet their heightened needs for organizational and emotional support from the family members with whom they are in quarantine. This confers new essential roles to family members toward each other, such as parents becoming teachers (Salin, Kaittila, Hakovirta, & Anttila, 2020). In addition, it tends to disrupt family activities and family interaction modes. For example, by denying Jacquet family members access to outside resources, the lockdown makes it impossible for them to carry out activities at the heart of their family character, as Julien (28) evidences: "In my family, we are all entrepreneurs at heart, hyper-connected, always on the lookout for novelties. We always look for new experiences to live, innovations to test […] the lockdown disrupts our usual activities, as it prevents us from going out, from testing brand new experiences or concepts". They are thus forced to carry out activities based on the resources still available, namely that provided by the other members of their family, which leads them to invest in new types of activities, such as card games. As a result, the increased intra-group dependence generated by the lockdown destabilizes core elements of family character.

Third, increased mortality salience translates during the lockdown into a disorganization of life trajectories that prevents the smooth balancing of temporal orientation. The life-threatening nature of the COVID-19 pandemic (Evers, Greenfield, & Evers, 2021) creates an anxiety-inducing atmosphere, as Agnès (57) evidences: "It's very anxiety-provoking, you feel like your life is hanging by a thread." By making the future particularly uncertain, the lockdown prevents from smoothly projecting oneself and one's family into the future. In this regard, our informants report that they no longer dare to plan consumption events that project the family over time and ensure the continuity and transmission of its

value. For example, for fear of not being able to enjoy it, Maëlys and Pierre are reluctant to renew their cinema subscription, even though they both attach great importance to this activity, and the Rouxs do not dare to plan a family summer vacation, as they do every year. Similarly, family events at the heart of the family's evolution and progression are also aborted, or at least put on hold for a while, as in the case of Sofia and Simon's wedding, of Victor Girard's project to move in with his girlfriend, of the Legrand sisters' plan to find an apartment to share together, and of Salim and Latifa's plan to come to France to be there for the birth of their first grandchild. The disorganization of life trajectories engendered by the lockdown thus disrupts the planning of family rituals and activities, as well as the transmission of family values. As a result, it threatens members' perception of their family's identity continuity and thereby weakens family generational orientation.

4. 2. Collective identity reconstruction strategies

To cope with the tensions we just described, consumers deploy three market-based strategies (see Table 12) to reconstruct their collective identities: ritualized structuring, sharing revalorization, and intergenerational romanticizing.

4. 2. 1. Ritualized structuring

To counter the sense of temporal emptiness generated by the lockdown, the families we interviewed engage in ritualized structuring, defined as ritualizing consumption to structure time and recreate daily rhythms. Within this strategy, brands act as delineators of individual, relational, and collective times and activities within a variety of consumption practices such as TV watching, grocery shopping, and exercising. Ritualized structuring

clarifies the limits and hierarchies of family identity bundles, which have been muddled by the lockdown, thus reinforcing family structure.

For example, we observe that families reconfigure the temporal and spatial organization of their daily life through the implementation of new routines and rituals, and the readjustment of old ones, so as to re-establish temporal markers that punctuate their days. Jean Moreau (65), quarantined at his suburban home with his wife, as well as with his daughter, son, and daughter-in-law who came back to the family home for the lockdown, evidences:

> We tried to recreate a rhythm, whereas, by nature, the lockdown broke all rhythms. We really had a concern to restructure our time, not to wait idly. So, we created rituals, like doing our gym in the morning, watching TV series in the evening during the week and at the end of the afternoon on weekends, clapping [caregivers] at 8 p.m. then watching the news, going shopping in the middle of the afternoon on Wednesdays […] Insofar as there were no events organized by the outside world, it was the events that we organized that became the elements that structured our days.

The Moreaus organize their days around different ritualized consumption moments, most collectively performed: e.g., a morning gym session around sport training videos on YouTube, a time at the end of the day dedicated to TV series such as around *Borgen* or *Designated Survivor*, a news time at 8 p.m. around the TV channel France 2, as well as shopping sessions at Carrefour grocery store on Wednesday afternoons and at the local greengrocer on Saturday mornings. Ritually mapping out specific brands on times of the day and days of the week (e.g., Youtube for the morning gym, Carrefour Market for the mid-week shopping) thereby helps consumers restructure their days and weeks and recreate the temporal rhythms necessary for mental health (McKee-Ryan, Song, Wanberg, & Kinicki, 2005) that the lockdown had disrupted.

To give more structure to their days, the families we interviewed used brands to clearly delineate individual versus shared times. They clearly frame who participates in each ritualized consumption time throughout the day. For instance, the Garnier family, a large family of ten children, all confined together, structures their days around an alternation between individual, relational, and family consumption moments. Each of these moments has its own consumption rituals (Otnes & Lowrey, 2004), subject to clear rules regarding their performance, and associated with distinct brands. Margaux (17), the eldest, describes:

> Every lunchtime, the youngest have a picnic outside while we eat on the terrace. Afterwards, there is a quiet time when some play Hotel Empire Tycoon [board game] while others work. Around 8pm, there is a disco in the games room for those who want, usually the youngest, while others play Colon de Catane [board game]. From 9pm onwards, the youngest are in bed or watching a film while the grown-ups eat and chat. And every Saturday night we have a theme night, where the children dress up.

Scheduling the day around a repeated and formalized sequence of consumption moments (Wang, Sun, & Kramer, 2021) to which different sets of members are allocated helps families clarify bundle limits and hierarchies within the family unit, which have been muddled by the lockdown. Ritualizing consumption recreates predictable temporal sequences which replace the lacking usual temporal markers and social rhythms. Because rituals, in contrast to simple routines, imbue meanings into consumption (Rook, 1985), ritualizing consumption helps clarify the boundaries between individual and collective domains and thereby contributes to reconstructing identity balance and harmony within the family unit. Lou (15), confined to her rural home with her parents, older brother, and younger sister, explains:

> With the lockdown, we learned to have our own space, to have our own moments, otherwise we would have killed each other. For example, from such time to such time, my brother would go in that room, then it was me, etc. It allowed us all to have

our own space. And from such time to such time, everyone was in their own corner watching at their own thing, whereas in certain slots we were all together. We alternated between moments together and individual moments. Before the lockdown, we didn't manage to have this balance, everyone encroached on each other's space, so it created tensions... Setting up these rules really helped us a lot. In the end, I really loved this lockdown from a family point of view, everyone had a good time, there were really very few arguments.

Ritualizing their days around clear times dedicated to individual versus collective consumption allows each identity bundle within the family to be nurtured at certain times of the day through specific practices, while enabling the other bundles to be negotiated and enacted through other rituals at other times of the day. It thus helps preserve each identity bundle within the family unit. In this respect, TV brands play a particularly valuable role in the Guillot family. Indeed, by allowing each member to have their own consumption moments (e.g., around TV series like *Peaking Blinders* for Lou or *Black Baron* for her parents and educational videos for her brother), ritualizing consumption helps them not feel their identity crushed under an invasive collectivity. This strategy thereby helps them better enjoy collective moments (e.g., manual activities, walks, and discussions), which then become more beneficial.

4. 2. 2. Sharing revalorizing

To cope with increased intra-group dependence caused by the lockdown, the families we interviewed deploy sharing revalorizing, defined as redefining and intensifying family shared consumption practices to revalorize them. Within this strategy, brands act as creators of occasions for family gatherings and as exchange stimulators. Sharing revalorizing helps strengthen family character, which has been weakened and shaken by the MLD.

During the lockdown, consumers become more dependent on the other family members with whom they are quarantined for their identity building than they would usually be when able to access a larger array of social, professional, and market resources. To answer this chronic scarcity (Hosany & Hamilton, 2022) in social support, they seek to make the most of the resources that these members can provide them. Shared moments become essential, and consequently much more precious in their eyes, as evidenced by Delphine (17), quarantined at home with her parents and sister:

> It's obvious to each of us that it's more valuable to spend our evenings together than to each be doing our own thing in our own corner, because we are a bit cut off from the world, we only have the other family members with whom we are confined to see, so they become our only means of having real human contact. Lately, it's been very important for all of us to be able to share these moments as a family, which is clearly not our priority in normal times, where we are much less in search of social connections […] Everyone makes much more effort to spend time with each other, rather than spending their evenings in their own corner as usual, to get to know others in depth, to try to understand them, rather than starting a conflict at the slightest annoyance. We're in a much more collective logic.

Suddenly unable to see other people (e.g., friends, classmates, colleagues), the members of this family refocus by default on the other members with whom they are confined for their social support and identity building needs. This adaptive consumer response (Campbell et al., 2020) to the lockdown relies on a changed mindset (i.e., family orientation, conflict avoidance) and an adjustment in temporal, energetic, and emotional resource allocation (i.e., members engage in significant efforts to share more time and more diverse consumption practices together).

Sharing revalorizing implies a redefinition and intensification of family shared consumption practices centered around both novel and family brands. This involves changes in the nature (e.g., introducing new brands to share novel consumption practices like the Guillot family who starts doing manual activities together and invest in craft brands), extent (e.g., increasing the frequency of shared consumption around known brands like the Roux family who starts regularly playing the game Trivial Pursuit, while they rarely played board games before), and inclusiveness (e.g., sharing of consumption practices hitherto performed only individually like the Legrand family who starts watching TV series like *Unorthodox* as a family, while they did not use to watch TV series as a group) of shared consumption practices. Doing so allowed the families to reimagine the way consumption is co-constructed and shared within the family.

Brands act as a focus point to gather and exchange in sharing revalorizing. Brands with high linking value (Cova, 1997) are essential to bring family members together in the redefinition and intensification of family shared practices. In this regard, board game or TV series brands are most commonly used for their ability to provoke hedonic consumption. For example, the Roux family, who reunited in the suburban parental home for the lockdown, turns to the TV series *Casa de Papel* to create a new valuable shared family moment:

> Watching Casa de Papel all together, on the one hand it allows us to have a nice, eagerly awaited moment that takes us out of our somewhat stressful and morbid daily lives, and on the other hand it allows us to spend time together again, like when we still lived here. It's not at all the same to watch a TV series that you know you're going to be able to watch in its entirety together, as opposed to watching one episode and then knowing that you're going to split up, and that some are going to continue the TV series on their own and others are going to give up. (Mégane, 25)

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The Roux reproduce a practice from their childhood but mobilizing a recent and popular

brand that better matches the actual aspirations of all the Roux members. This allows them to

rejuvenate their family shared practices by reinfusing them with novelty and excitement that

make them all the more appealing to family members.

By rendering shared practices more frequent, intense, and meaningful, the family we

interviewed strengthen their family character as illustrated by Margaux (16):

Having time to play board games like Colon de Catane, Hotel Empire Tycoon or Ticket

to Ride, or to watch shows like Koh Lanta together, definitely brings us closer together.

It creates an opportunity, a good reason to spend time together. It allows us to have fun

together, to have discussions, to create good shared memories […] Normally I'm very

critical of my family, it bothers me that there are so many of us, I'm tired of always

having children around, it's a bit of a war with Mum. But now, I realize that thankfully

they are there, that they are what I have left in times of crisis. And with Mum, we had

the opportunity to talk a lot, which brought us closer together. So, it really changed my

relationship with my family.

As creators of occasions for family gatherings and exchanges stimulators, board game brands

contribute to bringing members of the Garnier family closer together and allow family

members to simultaneously experience the same emotion. Such group emotions align norms

and facilitate coordinated actions among group members (Goodwin, Jasper, & Polletta, 2000).

Thus, the intensification of shared consumption moments fosters a sense of

interconnectedness among members (Neustaedter, Harrison, & Selles, 2013).

Board game brands also create shared memories and references that feed family

narratives. While the families in our study who are not experts in board games, like the

Jacquets and Chagals, have turned to mainstream games (e.g., Uno, Monopoly) which all

members know and like, board game fans, like the Garniers, have favored niche games (e.g.,

Colon de Catane, Ticket to Ride) they are used to playing and which are markers of their family identity. Playing niche games that they consider important for their family allows the Garniers to enact their family identity around a shared passion, and thereby strengthen their character, weakened by the lockdown.

Finally, by creating opportunities for family members to spend good time together and dialogue, sharing revalorizing improves family relations to the point of changing the perception that some members have of their family, as in the case of Margaux. Indeed, the greater sharing of family leisure activities reconciles her with her mom, with whom she had a very difficult relationship, and with having many little brothers and sisters, a key dimension of her "large family's" character from which she has long suffered. She suddenly rejoices in having a large family, realizing that being numerous makes them stronger in difficult times, through the mutual support they give each other and the reassuringly close-knit unit they form.

Of all the families we interviewed, only one did not succeed in sharing revalorizing during the lockdown. Indeed, the Vidal parents failed to increase sharing occasions with their four teenage children with whom they were quarantined, as Théo (18), the cadet son, points out:

> They tried to set things up, but very quickly things went back to normal, i.e., everyone spends their time in their room, we're together for meals only [...] because, I don't know, it doesn't fit with our relationship to suddenly start doing lots of things together, it sounds wrong. We don't have the right relationship with our parents for that.

Pursuing lockdown trends (Ipsos, 2021), the Vidal parents attempted to implement regular shared consumption practices by encouraging the whole family to share weekly reading hours, daily working sessions, and biweekly game nights. These shared practices did not last as they did not fit in with the family's character which does not involve spending time

together or sharing activities. Their weak family character seems to prevent sharing revalorizing. The need for family identity reconstruction is thus conditioned to a minimum of family character's strength.

4. 2. 3. Intergenerational romanticizing

To cope with the disorganization of their life trajectory and inability to balance temporal orientation, the families we interviewed turn to intergenerational romanticizing, defined as romanticizing legacy consumption practices to materialize family history. Within this strategy, brands act as vectors of family history and legacy. Intergenerational romanticizing helps ensure intergenerational continuity, thus restoring the family generational orientation which has been halted by the lockdown.

During the lockdown, the families in our sample feel unable to project into the future and stuck in an anxiety-inducing present, thus weakening their sense of link between past and future generations. To cope, they tend to idealize old family consumption practices, reinstating them, and emphasizing their rediscovered value. For example, Julien (28), who returned to his family home for the lockdown with his parents and younger brother, explains:

> Now, with the lockdown, we're doing much more basic activities, the kind of activities we did when we were kids. And it's funny, because normally we would judge these old activities as outdated, without any particular interest, whereas now it's as if we needed them, perhaps for their reassuring dimension. As if we needed to refocus on sure and familiar landmarks.

The lockdown suddenly prevents this novelty-seeking family from continuing to look toward the future. Reflecting consumers' tendency to adopt backward temporal orientation when faced with mortality salience (Boeuf, 2019; Landgraf et al., 2023), the Perriers retreat to the past and reintroduce old family activities such as board games, gardening, and family

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cooking. These homemaking activities, which the Perriers used to depreciate, are now romanticized as they embody intergenerational caregiving, crucial to family-making (Moisio et al., 2004).

Brands act as vectors of family history and legacy in intergenerational romanticizing. Indeed, families in our study mobilize brands evoking eras of the past to which they are attached. For example, during lockdown, many of them start watching again cartoons reminiscent of their childhood, such as Disney movies, as well as "classic" films such as old French comedies (e.g., Louis de Funès' movies) or family movies (e.g., Harry Potter movies). The nostalgic power of these brands is particularly valuable in this period of increased mortality salience as nostalgia tends to buffer existential threat (Bœuf, 2019). Furthermore, these movies are sagas (e.g., Harry Potter, Star Wars) or belong to a cinematographic universe (e.g., Disney universe, postwar French comedies) and can thus be consumed as a whole package. Watching such movies which are articulated as product constellations (Mimoun & Bardhi, 2022) and mature with their viewers (Dalsace, Damay, & Dubois, 2007) allows families to immerse themselves in an era of their past, embodied by these movie packages, which has played an important role in their family identity building. Here, we observe a strengthening of intergenerational influence on brand preferences (Moore, Wilkie, & Lutz, 2002).

Intergenerational romanticizing restores family generational orientation by connecting the family both to its origins and future. First, intergenerational romanticizing anchors the family in its roots by allowing certain practices of the past to be reproduced, thereby enriching family's culture and history. For instance, by starting cooking together again during the lockdown, as they did with their grandmother when the three children were young, the Girard family perpetuates a family ritual that links them to their origins:

It reminds me of our grandmother, who passed away a few months ago, and with whom we cooked a lot when we were little. These are really important moments, where one passes on recipes, a way of making dough. I think a lot about her when we cook, it brings back a lot of precious memories. So, I think it's really nice that we start to cook again together with the lockdown, that we rediscover together old recipes she taught us and try out new ones that Emma teaches us. (Constance, 22)

Homemade food is often seen as a sacred embodiment of family identity (Moisio et al., 2004). By recreating family moments around such homemade cooking practices, this family, gathered in the parental home for the lockdown, preserves and perpetuates the recipes and know-how handed down by their grandmother, who recently passed away. Reintroducing this family practice, which was a place of intergenerational transfer when the children were young, thus links them to their forebears, while enriching the family culture with new recipes taught by the eldest daughter.

Second, intergenerational romanticizing helps ensure linkages with future generations. In the face of increased mortality salience, our respondents demonstrate a heightened sense of family legacy and need to preserve it over the generations. For example, older informants, whom the pandemic has made more aware of their vulnerability, seek to increase direct contact with their grandchildren as part of a transmission logic. This is the case of Jean (65) and Sabine (68), who organize weekly Zoom sessions with their grandchildren to share stories and games of their own youth. Similarly, in a growing concern to maintain links and identity continuity between generations, some families set up family newsletters during the lockdown. Using apps such as Journalette or MyTribunews, they co-create online family newspapers, which are then printed and delivered in hard copy to grandparents and accessible in digital format to all other members. Overall, we find that the families in our sample are willing to adopt both new consumption practices and technological and innovative brands to support

their need to reconnect across generations. This contrasts with prior accounts that show that consumers facing mortality salience avoid change and innovative brands (Landgraf et al., 2023).

For younger informants, intergenerational romanticizing restores their ability to project into the future and imagine their potential future family. This is the case of Mégane's brother, Arthur (22), who explains:

> This period is quite nostalgic, it makes me think back on the years when we still lived here. And watching TV series together as a family again on a regular basis, like when we all watched NCIS together, really makes me realize how precious these moments are for the family, and it makes me want to reproduce this pattern with my own family later.

This example shows how collective identity reconstruction strategies are not independent but can be intertwined. Here, sharing revalorization (here, reestablishing past practices of shared nightly TV viewing around the contemporary series *Casa de Papel*) also rejuvenates legacy consumption practices, which restores a sense of family continuity, contributing to intergenerational romanticizing. Indeed, nightly watching of *Casa de Papel* with his parents makes Arthur want to perpetuate such practices with his future children in a process of generational practice transmission (Baldwin, Molina, & Naomi, 2020). This also reflects how intergenerational romanticizing can be a form of integrative timework, which "harmonizes multiple temporal orientations to create a shared community of time" (Robinson, Veresiu, & Babíc Rosario, 2022: 101). Intergenerational romanticizing allows for this harmonization both collectively by allowing families to find structure in a period marked by a sense of temporal emptiness but also at an individually level, allowing family members to realign their respective selves with the family generational orientation.

5. Discussion

In this research, we study how exogenous MLDs destabilize collective identities and how consumers mobilize brands and consumption practices to reconstruct their collective identities. First, we unveil how MLD-induced tensions impede the negotiation and enactment of collective identities. Second, we identify three market-based coping strategies (i.e., ritualized structuring, sharing revalorization, and intergenerational romanticizing) that consumer groups implement to reconstruct their destabilized shared identity. Further, we show that brands play a different role in each of these strategies (respectively, identity bundles delineator, gathering creator and exchange stimulator, and vector of collective history and legacy).

5. 1. Theoretical contributions

5. 1. 1. The process of collective identity reconstruction

We contribute to the literature on collective consumer identities (Arnould, Arvidsson, & Eckhardt, 2021; Cova & Cova, 2001) by evidencing one trigger –i.e., MLDs– of collective identity destabilization and a market-based process of collective identity reconstruction. Further, we theorize the process through which the adoption, abandonment, or reconfiguration of brand-centric consumption practices participate in collective identity reconstruction. Specifically, we show that collective identity reconstruction is achieved by addressing each of the components of a collective identity which have been weakened by the MLD. In the context of family identity, this means that collective identity reconstruction relies on the strengthening or renewal of family structure, character, and generational orientation (Epp & Price, 2008).

First, MLDs often muddle the limits and hierarchies between collective, relational, and individual identity bundles which must be delineated through ritualized structuring. This represents the clarification and renegotiation of members' roles, belongings, and hierarchies within the group. Our findings show that brands can participate in this ritualized structuring by acting as delineators of individual, relational, and collective times and activities. Future research should explore the extent to which ritualized structuring is needed in other consumer collectives. For instance, collective identity is so fragmented in consumer packs (e.g., brand public) (Arnould, Arvidsson, & Eckhardt, 2021) that identity bundles' limits may not get muddled by MLDs. In contrast, because brand community identity relies on a cocreative process that involves both individual members' identities and the brand identity (Chang et al., 2020), hierarchies and limits between relational identity bundles (e.g., a large array of community member subgroups such as hard-cores vs newbies) would need much more efforts to be clarified. Further, the importance of identity bundle limits and hierarchies is likely to be context dependent, affected by various sociocultural factors at a collective and individual level (e.g., culture, social class). Future research should therefore further explore the impact of such factors. An intersectional perspective might help understand how different power balances within the group impact ritualized structuring.

Second, MLDs weaken a collective's character which must be strengthened through the revalorization of shared consumption practices. Using brands to generate occasion to gather and exchange, group members foster common references, become closer to each other, and build a sense of interconnectedness around common values. Our study thus extends previous research on the necessary conditions for shared consumption to benefit collective identity building (Smith, Freeman, & Zabriskie, 2009). We find that sharing can be invaluable in collective identity reconstruction. By strengthening collective identity and making it more impervious to emerging tensions, sharing seems to play an important role in the collective

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management of MLDs. This reflects on previous works indicating the importance of sharing for collective identity building. For example, gift exchanges participated in reconstructing neighborhood identities in post-Katrina New Orleans (Weinberger & Wallendorf, 2012). Future research could confirm how sharing participates in collective identity reconstruction at a societal and even global level.

Our findings also suggest that the success of sharing for collective identity reconstruction depends on the degree of commitment of members to collective practices. This degree varies depending on the extent to which members perceive the sharing of specific practices as contributing to the preservation and reconstruction of their collective identity. By proposing the lens of collective identity reconstruction, we allow for a better understanding of the reasons why certain practices are shared and others are not. Yet, prior research has explored a large array of shared practices, including "gifting (one-sided giving), sharing (accessing), exchange (reciprocal giving), and predation (one-sided taking), as well as commodity exchange (profit seeking)" (Arnould et al., 2021: 422), in which group members may be more or less willing to take part. Exploring the role of group members willingness and commitment to take part in shared practices in collective identity reconstruction might be a fruitful direction for future research.

Third, MLDs halt generational continuity which must be restored through intergenerational romanticizing. Using brands as vectors of collective history and legacy, consumers are able to collectively reorient themselves in time and restore the continuity of collective transfers (e.g., generational transfers in a family) both in terms of actual transfers among current members but also imagined transfers toward potential members (e.g., future children in a family). In the family context, intergenerational romanticizing is often led by parents or heads of families who feel in charge of establishing and reaffirming the family's generational orientation. Future research could explore how intergenerational romanticizing

emerges in other consumer collectives. Indeed, the degree to which the internal functioning of the group is institutionalized and members' roles are formalized would affect intergenerational romanticizing. For example, in fragmented or horizontally-structured consumer collectives (Arnould et al., 2021) like brand publics (Arvidsson & Caliandro, 2016) and consumer tribes (Cova & Cova, 2001), the impetus for intergenerational romanticizing might take more time to emerge due to the lack of clear leadership in contrast to more structured collectives like subcultures of consumption that have a clear hierarchy (Schouten & McAlexander, 1995).

5. 1. 2. Brands and consumer identity (re)construction

We contribute to the understanding of the role of brands in identity (re)construction (Fuschillo et al., 2022; Hollenbeck & Patrick, 2016) by showing how brands as symbolic market-based resources interact with communications forms to enact the collective identity. Specifically, we show how this role differs from the one played by brands in the reconstruction of individual identity demonstrated by past research, and how it differs from the usually investigated role of brand as marker of group identification and social categorization.

First, our work extends what we know about consumer identity reconstruction, a stream of research which has until now focused on individual identities (for a review, Fuschillo et al., 2022). We find a key difference between individual and collective identity reconstruction. On the one hand, individual identity reconstruction relies on associating with brands that make important dimensions of the consumer identity salient (Fournier, 1998) in a very active and conscious way. This is reflected in the abundant literature on how individual consumers use brands as symbolic pools of meaning to (re)construct their self-project (Hollenbeck & Zinkhan, 2010). This is the case, for instance, when consumers use brands to

signal specific aspects of the new identity that results from courageously facing life difficulties (Hollenbeck & Patrick, 2016) or to demonstrate the acquisition of new cultural capital to others (Seregina & Schouten, 2017). On the other hand, we find that collective identity reconstruction is first and foremost relational and communication based. Indeed, to achieve collective identity reconstruction, cooperation is usually ensured tacitly, and brands play both a linking and separating role (e.g., for bundle delineation). This reflects the centrality of communication forms, such as narratives, rituals, and social dramas, in collective identities (Epp & Price, 2008) as well as the relational nature of intimacy (Beetles & Harris, 2010), which is a structuring force in a consumer group like family. Future research could explore whether this holds for other consumer collectives which may have a more heterogeneous nature than a family.

Second, our work proposes a new perspective on the relationship between brands and collective identities. Past studies have mainly investigated this question under the prism of social identity (Jenkins, 1996) that sees collective identity as a dual process of internal (i.e., how individuals signal to their peers their belongingness to the group) and external definition (i.e., how outsiders recognize that individuals belong to a group). In this literature, the role of brands as instruments of group identification and social categorization has been abundantly investigated to show that brands can become key markers in the crafting and affirmation of collective identities such as national (Beverland, Eckhardt, Sands, & Shanker, 2021) or racial identities (Lamont & Molnar, 2001). In our study, we identify another dynamic that brands can take to participate in collective identity reconstruction by enabling a harmonious interplay among the communication forms through which collective identities are enacted (Epp & Price, 2008). As delineators of individual, relational, and collective times and activities, brands contribute to the creation of rituals that shape collective identity. As creators of sharing occasions, brands facilitate the feeling of togetherness and foster everyday

interactions. As vectors of group history and legacy, brands contribute to the construction of shared narratives and to intergenerational transfers of objects and consumption practices.

5. 1. 3. *Major life disruptions and transitions*

Finally, we contribute to past research on MLEs by proposing a differentiating framework which categorizes MLEs impacting consumers' lives. Because MLEs have a significant impact on consumers' lives and consumption patterns, an abundant scholarly literature has investigated them (e.g., Kerrane et al., 2021; Phipps & Ozanne, 2017; Thompson et al., 2018). Yet, this literature has tended to look at MLEs as a multitude of contexts to explore varied marketing phenomena such as customer-brand relationships, consumer identity, or materialism. Our framework aims to create parsimony by synthesizing the findings from this heterogeneous field of research around two dimensions: the temporality of the event and the locus of the event cause. Temporality refers to whether the MLE occurs suddenly in consumer life (i.e., major life disruption) or is awaited (i.e., major life transition). Locus of cause refers to whether the cause of the MLE is exogenous or endogenous.

Our findings add to the understanding of each of these dimensions. First, with regard to temporality, we observe that, from a consumer perspective, MLDs are characterized by the inability to prepare for them. In contrast to MLTs which can be anticipated (indifferently, with enthusiasm, or with fear depending on the MLT and the specifics of the consumer's situation), MLDs are sudden and often foster very intense and fast changes in consumers' lives. For example, in our context, we observe intense and fast changes in consumers' brand attachment and patterns of consumption. Further, we note that consumers react to MLDs with much more improvisation than prior research would suggest. For example, we observe that consumers' development of new rituals and routines is accelerated under pressure. To reconstruct their collective identities destabilized by an MLD, consumers skip some of the

usual phases of routine development (Thomas & Epp, 2019). It is possible that, under pressure, consumers acquire new skills that compensate for the lack of building realignment capabilities (Thomas & Epp, 2019) that are usually developed during the preparation phases of new routine development.

Second, with regard to the locus of cause, our findings suggest that exogenous MLEs do not encourage the same attribution of responsibility patterns as endogenous MLEs. Blame but also accolade attribution can be important in determining how endogenous MLEs are perceived. For example, self-blame can foster a loss of agency that makes MLEs even harder to endure (Thompson et al., 2018). In contrast, actively seeking MLEs in a pursuit of novelty and flexibility and feeling responsible for attaining them can contribute to consumer wellbeing and sense of status (Mimoun & Bardhi, 2022). Exogenous MLEs make responsibility attribution much more complex. We did not observe any attribution of blame for the lockdown among our informants. This lack of blame contributed to enhance the cooperation among family members in their efforts to reconstruct their strategy. We believe that this dimension should receive more attention in future research.

Finally, our framework indicates three main areas in the study of MLEs which have not yet received sufficient attention. First, more research should contrast the impact of MLTs versus MLDs on marketing outcomes such as brand loyalty, consumer preferences, and shopping habits. Second, our framework suggests that neither MLDs nor MLTs are inherently negative. Yet, MLDs are usually viewed as negatively impacting consumers and very little research explores positive MLDs (e.g., winning the lottery; unexpected family inheritance) from a consumer viewpoint. This could be a particularly rich context to investigate responsibility attribution in relation to consumer experience of MLDs. Third, research on exogenous MLTs remains very limited because such transitions can be very long-term (e.g., several years or more). For example, while research on global warming and sustainability

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abounds, adopting an MLT lens can explain why the myth of responsible consumers is doomed to fail (Rémy et al., 2024). Similarly, looking at the adoption of same-sex marriage as an MLT can help us understand why same-sex consumers had to develop consumption alignment strategies in their pursuit of adapted wedding ceremonies with limited help from marketers who failed to catch up to the ongoing transition (Velagaleti & Epp, 2024). We invite future research to investigate the trajectory of exogenous MLTs and their implications for brands and consumers. Finally, the scope of exogenous MLDs is an area that could benefit from more research. For example, in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, lockdowns were very differentially experienced depending on whether they were implemented on a national (e.g., the whole country is under lockdown), regional (e.g., a region or city is under lockdown) or individual (e.g., an individual and their family are under lockdown) scale. Difference in scope generated very different coping mechanisms by consumers. Further, narrower scope limited social solidarity and created greater perceptions of injustice which can make the MLD experience harder. This is another area which could generate interesting insights in how brands can help consumers cope with MLDs.

5. *2. Managerial implications*

Our findings can help develop market offers that can contribute to the reconstruction of destabilized collective identities and give a chance to brands to become crucial to consumers by helping them in such times of need. We first present some overall suggestions before deriving recommendations from the three coping strategies we identified.

5. 2. 1. Overall suggestions

First, we observe that reactivity to the suddenness of the MLD can confer a strong advantage to brands in being most salient in consumer minds at a time of need. MLDs cause significant and unexpected changes in consumers' lives, forcing consumers to adjust their practices collectively. Brands providing assistance at the early stage of the MLD, when consumers are looking for any guidance as to how to adapt, can gain significant loyalty benefits.

Second, we find that brands should be particularly aware of the scope of the MLD and adapt their strategy accordingly. For example, if an MLD affects the whole country or rather a region, different collective identities (i.e., family but also national or regional respectively) will be destabilized. Brands should not only be aware of these different levels of collective identity which may be disrupted but may also find interesting to target which collective identities they want to help reconstruct. For example, after the 2015 terrorist attacks in France, Parisians' city identity as the city of love with a very active night life was significantly destabilized as Paris theaters and bars were the stage of the attack. Brands can help consumer collective identity reconstruction by identifying key symbols and meanings associated to the disrupted identities and helping consumers integrate them in their practices. This was the case around Paris' until-then mostly forgotten motto *fluctuat nec mergitur* (Demaille, 2018). According to our framework, after an exogenous MLD like this one, brands which not only mobilize such symbols but also address MLD-induced tensions (e.g., heightened mortality salience, disruption of routines and access to cultural and night life) would be likely to catch the most attention and possibly loyalty from Parisians.

5. 2. 2. Recommendations based on the three coping strategies we identified

First, consumers need the support of products and services that facilitate the ritualized structuring of their collective life. Indeed, adopting new routines and rituals can be costly in terms of money, time, and cognitive resources. Brands can build competitive advantages by minimizing these costs for consumers. For instance, the home furniture brand Ikea gained market share by lowering its prices during the lockdown and providing advice to families on how to reconfigure their furnishing. This new offer was backed by a communication campaign describing the intimacy of a family who had to learn reorganize their home and habits to adapt to the new living conditions. This campaign efficiently struck a chord with consumers at that time. Moreover, in the ritualized structuring process, consumers also need solutions to identify and emphasize the clear markers that serve as transitions between key moments of the day or as separations between individual versus collective activities. Here, mobile apps can help in organizing for instance screen versus non-screen activities (e.g., Screen Time), adopting new daily meal planning (e.g., Mealtime), or building daily markers and facilitating the redefinition of individual versus collective roles of family members (e.g., family organizer apps). Finally, at other collective identity levels, brands can also play an important role in this strategy. For instance, in major life disruptions at the local community level such as hurricanes, recovers.org proposes solutions allowing members of local communities to adopt new roles as community helpers or to adopt new daily routines oriented toward the help of their fellow community members. This leads to an easier reconstruction and protection of the collective local identity.

Second, there is a fast-growing market linked to the need of sharing revalorizing that offers many avenues for new products and services. For instance, brands can develop solutions to facilitate remote collective consumption sharing. Virtual platform Papoti is a good example in this regard as it provides a space for family sharing where grandchildren,

parents, and grandparents can remotely chat, play, exchange photos, and nurture their

complicity. Here, digitalization is at the service of families' need to overcome the spatial

barrier of enactment and perform resource sharing and generational transfer. Similarly, by

offering the possibility to create online family diaries, brands such as Tribu News, Famileo, or

Neveo, help families stay connected and reduce the negative effects of a lack of socialization

and increased vulnerability. Board games such as Draw Something or extensions of streaming

platforms such as Netflix Party, help remote families continue nurturing and enacting their

family identity and strengthen their character. Similarly, products such as the smart cameras

Meta Portal allow children and their grandparents to create shared memories and maintain

family traditions and rituals despite the barriers to collective practices and the lack of

socialization that result from physical distance. Such solutions have proven to be particularly

relevant in the case of MLDs such as the death of a loved one: the app Lalo allows for a new

type of collective memories sharing to honor the life of the deceased.

Third, there are multiple options for brands to accompany the process of

intergenerational romanticizing in case of collective identity destabilization. First, brands can

seek to provide a buffer to heightened mortality salience, so as to relieve consumers' angst.

They can, in this end, capitalize on nostalgia, which tends to buffer existential threat (Bœuf,

2019). Concretely, they can postpone new product launch and campaigns that emphasize

innovativeness, and resurrect old campaigns to emphasize nostalgic and shared past between.

They can also nostalgically communicate on intergenerational transmission, on the model of

Kinder who, to celebrate its 50th anniversary, released a spot that makes direct reference to

the nostalgia of childhood and the memories shared between a father and son. Another way

for brands to support the process of intergenerational romanticizing is to facilitate within-

group transmission of practices to become key to group members' orientational practices. In

this regard, brands can promote products and services that facilitate the materialization and

sharing of collective memory, such as family gazette, matching clothing, or services to convert analog recording devices to digital to make them sharable.

Article 3

Couple Identity Negotiation: How Couples Manage Collective Identity Tensions Through Everyday Consumption Practices

Abstract

Throughout all the stages of their life cycle, couples strive to negotiate "who they are as a unit." Managing identity tensions through consumption is at the heart of this process of identity negotiation. Yet, while the literature highlights the existence of several identity bundles within a given couple, little is currently known about the identity tensions that may result from their interplay, nor about how couples navigate such tensions through consumption. This results in a limited understanding of the negotiating process of couple identity through consumption, and consequently of many facets of couple's consumption. Using individual and couple interviews that focus on the context of TV series viewing, this research identifies the identity tensions that couples experience while negotiating their identities, as well as the strategies that they implement when using consumption practices to navigate those tensions. This research contributes to the literature on collective identities by further elucidating the identity dynamics at the heart of their negotiation. It also enhances understanding of consumption behaviors by highlighting how consumption choices are guided by the desire to minimize the identity tensions that undermine collective identity projects.

Keywords: couple identity; consumption practices; TV series viewing; consumer culture theory.

1. Introduction

"When we arrived at the Airbnb where we were supposed to stay two nights, the Wifi was out of order. My boyfriend was devastated that we could not watch our TV show in the bed, he cried: "what are we going to do?" So I raised the alarm! I told him that it was out of question that we become one of these couples who do not know how to spend their time without the Wifi, who are getting lost if they cannot sit in front of a screen!"
— Anaïs, partner of Nicolas.

"Before, to test if we could live together as a couple under the same roof, we used to adopt a cat or a dog; nowadays, we take out a Netflix subscription."
— C. Vanhoenacker, comedian, 15/10/2018

Consumption has for long been considered as largely "inseparable from identity" (Anderson, 1997: 189), and our consumption decisions define who we are and who we (do not) want to be. What happens at the individual level is also true at the collective level: a growing body of research focuses on the process of collective identity building through consumption, which occurs when groups of consumers form "a sense of who they are as a unit" (Epp & Price 2008; 2011). Romantic partners, through their decisions, interactions and relationship with others, form a collective identity for their couple (Hickman-Evans et al., 2018; Surra & Bartel, 2001). Whether they are cocooning or outdoorsy, fusional or independent, habit-based or novelty-seeker, romantic partners constantly negotiate through consumption how they see themselves as a couple and how they are seen by others.

During the process of collective identity negotiation through consumption, multiple identity bundles (i.e., the individual identities of members, the relational identities between members, and the collective identity of the group) interact, and sometimes clash, with each other (Epp & Price, 2008; Scabini & Manzi, 2011). This can be a complex, and sometimes painful, process. In the case of romantic couples, partners have to find a way to conciliate the

identity project that they envision for their couple with the identity projects that they have for themselves as individuals (Therkelsen & Gram, 2008). Partners "experience a disruption to their self-concept or their understanding of who they are as a person" (Walsh & Neff, 2018: 587) when they enter a relationship. Because this identity building is more vividly experienced at the occasion of important life events and decisions, most prior studies on couple identity building have focused on the context of serious life events such as a partner's severe chronic illness (Miller & Caughlin, 2013) or drug dependence (Crowley & Miller, 2020). Consequently, very few studies focus on couple identity negotiation in the context of daily life (for notable exception, see Khanijou, Cappellini and Hosany (2021)), while most of the negotiation process is done in the mundanity of the everyday life (DeVault, 1991; Edirisingha, Ferguson, & Aitken, 2015; Valentine, 1999). More importantly, no research specifically investigates the tensions that arise from this process of couple identity negotiation and how partners adapt and reconfigure consumption practices to navigate through these tensions, while this process of identity tensions management is at the heart of collective identity negotiation (Epp & Price, 2008; 2011).

We argue that a better comprehension of the management process of identity tensions through the mundane consumption would enlighten the dynamics of many consumption facets of couple's life, such as joint decision (Hasford, Kidwell, & Kidwell, 2018; Munsinger, Weber, & Hansen, 1975), sharing (Belk, 2010; Khanijou, Cappellini, & Hosany, 2021; Marshall & Anderson, 2002), digital technologies adoption (Gonzalez & Katz, 2016), or response to social influence (Dahl, 2013; Shalev & Morwitz, 2012). It would also contribute to a better understanding of the influence of consumption practices negotiation on consumers' well-being, as harmonious couple identity has been linked to greater level of happiness and life contentment (Acitelli, Rogers, & Knee, 1999; Reid et al., 2006). Therefore, the present study aims to answer the following research questions: what tensions arise from the way

couples negotiate their couple identity through everyday consumption practices? And what are the strategies that couples develop to ease the identity tensions they experience, and thereby negotiate their identities?

To answer these questions, we focus on one particular type of consumption practice, namely TV series viewing. TV series viewing plays an increasing role in couples' lives. A 2017 Netflix study shows that 72% of individuals consider staying at home watching Netflix with their partner to represent the ideal casual date night and 51% of viewers believe that sharing their Netflix password with their partner is a sign of a serious relationship. Moreover, TV series viewing is subject to social pressure (Alasuutari, 1992; Feiereisen et al., 2019), which is critical to the formation of one's identity (de Campos Rezende & Gomide, 2017; Ryan & Macey, 2013). Besides, TV viewing is a meaningful activity that is fully embedded within, and even structures, the organization of daily life and consumption (Jayasinghe & Ritson, 2013; Silverstone, 2003). Finally, the tremendous flexibility in viewing patterns allowed by the multiplication of devices, digital platforms, and viewing strategies (Watkins, 2015) allows partners to adopt practices that are representative of their intended lifestyle (Feiereisen et al., 2021).

In this paper, we present the outcomes of our analysis of collective and individual depth interviews conducted with 21 couples regarding the practice configuration around their TV series viewing activities. Based on a thematic analysis of the gathered data, we construct a framework that explains the dynamics of couple identity negotiation through this mundane consumption practice. Our analysis unveils three types of tensions that stem from misalignments between the partners' individual identities, the couple's collective identity, and internalized social norms. More specifically, tensions arise when the identity bundles within the couple exert an unbalanced weight on the daily functioning of the couple (identity imbalance), lack convergence and compatibility with each other (identity divergence), or

differ from the internalized social norms formed by partners (social disconformity). The analysis also uncovers five coping strategies of practice reconfiguration that partners use to minimize such identity tensions. These strategies involve adapting the enactment of the practice configuration or the meaning derived from it, either by framing the practice within specific boundaries, adjusting the extent to which the practice is shared with one's partner, enriching the practice performance, distancing oneself from the practice, or deceiving (oneself or others) about the actual implications of the practice performance for one's individual or couple identity.

Our contribution is twofold. First, we unravel the dynamics through which couples experience tensions while negotiating their identities and require careful readjustment of consumption practices to navigate those tensions. We thus extend the literature on couple identity, and more broadly on family identity. Second, we enlighten the identity dynamics that underlie many facets of couple's consumption, such as sharing or digital technologies adoption. We indeed highlight how consumption choices are guided by the desire to minimize the identity tensions that undermine collective identity projects. We thereby contribute to a finest understanding of couple, and more broadly family, consumption.

2. Couple identity, identity tensions, and consumption practices

2. 1. Collective Identity Negotiation Through Consumption

Consumption as a central factor associated with self-construction and self-expression has been widely investigated at the individual level (Schau, 2018; Weinberger & Crockett, 2018). Possessions and consumption practices define who individuals are, as well as who they want to be (Berger & Heath, 2007; Campbell, 1993). They situate their identity within the socio-material world (Belk, 1988; Escalas & Bettman, 2013; McCracken, 1988). In turn,

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identity projects influence consumption choices and patterns (Coulter & Zaltman, 2000; Escalas & Bettman, 2005; Sheehan & Dommer, 2020).

Recent studies demonstrate that identity building also takes place at the collective level through a process whereby members of a group collectively define a "sense of who they are as a unit" (Epp & Price, 2011; Miller & Caughlin, 2013: 64) through their consumption practices. Researcher have, therefore, become increasingly interested in studying the process of identity negotiation through consumption at the collective level, through examining groups such as local communities (Baker & Hill, 2013; Beverland et al., 2021), brand communities (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001), racial communities (Lamont & Molnár, 2001; Liu, 2015), or families (Bennett, Wolin, & McAvity, 1988).

As a concept, collective identity does not consciously exist in the minds of individuals; rather, it is co-constructed through actions performed individually or collectively by members of the group and through the collective meaning they attribute to shared symbolic activities (Bennett et al., 1988; Gergen, 1996). Studying the specific group of family, Bennett et al. (1988) define family identity as "the family's subjective sense of its own continuity over time, its present situation, and its character. It is the gestalt of qualities and attributes that make it a particular family and that differentiate it from other families" (212).

Rather than understanding the individual dynamics that explain how group members make their individual decisions, studying collective identity negotiation involves taking the group as the unit of analysis and examining "communicative practices such as symbolic consumption activities as constitutive of collective identity" (Epp & Price, 2008: 52). This process forms a sense of "We" that is co-constructed through the interactions among group members, communication modes, and shared practices embedded within the fabric of daily life. Epp and Price (2008; 2011) have laid the foundations for the conceptualization of this process of co-construction of a sense of "We" through consumption practices. They have shown how

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consumption practices manifest in communication forms between family members, such as everyday interactions, rituals, social dramas, or narratives, which are particularly informative regarding the process of collective identity negotiation. However, the model falls short in elucidating the process of identity tensions management, which is at the heart of the process of familial identity negotiation (Epp & Price, 2008; Rogan, Piacentini, & Hopkinson, 2018).

The family unit is made up of multiple interacting bundles of identities: (1) the collective identity of the family as a whole (Edirisingha, Ferguson, & Aitken, 2015); (2) the individual identities of each family member (Ahuvia, 2005); and (3) the relational identities of subgroups formed by several family members, such as the mother-daughter dyad, siblings, etc. (Diamond et al., 2009). The constant interaction between these identity bundles can create tensions when the identity projects associated with these different bundles are not compatible. Families then seek to minimize these tensions by adapting their consumption practices (Scabini & Manzi, 2011). While the literature acknowledges the existence of such tensions at family level (Epp & Price, 2008) as well as the need to manage them through consumption, it does not identify the nature of these tensions nor the specific strategies that families use to resolve them.

2. 2. Identity tensions management through consumption, at the heart of the process of couple identity negotiation

As a collective unit, couples are not spared from the need to negotiate a collective identity by managing multiple identity bundles. Indeed, couples are made up of several interplaying identities: the respective individual identities of the partners and the collective identity of the couple (Acitelli, 1993; Hickman-Evans et al., 2018; Kwang, 2010; Wang, Chen, & Aron, 2020). Prior research on couple identity, which is sometimes also referred to as *we-ness* (Ahmad et al., 2017), has generally viewed couple identity as "the tendency to see

oneself as part of a specific relationship" (Acitelli, Rogers, & Knee, 1999: 591). According to

this approach, a couple identity emerges within a relationship as the partners progressively

view themselves as a "we" unit, rather than as two distinct "I" units (Thoits & Virshup, 1997),

thereby shifting "from self-orientation to couple-orientation" (Huang, Zhang, & Yu, 2018: 1).

Due to the need to deal with both an "I" and a "we" (Therkelsen & Gram, 2008: 277),

partners must simultaneously negotiate who they consider and/or aspire to be as a couple, in

addition to who each of them is as an individual within the couple (Reid et al., 2006). This

collective identity is, therefore, not easy to negotiate, as the negotiation process often collides

with internalized social norms (Therkelsen & Gram, 2008), with the partners' respective

extended selves (Aron & Aron, 1996; Belk, 1988; Wong, Hogg, & Vanharanta, 2017), and

with potential dynamics of power domination between partners (Kwang, 2010; de Singly,

2017; Walsh & Neff, 2018).

Most previous studies on couple identity belong to the social psychology research

stream that generally measures couple identity quantitatively using questionnaires. They

investigate the extent to which partners feel that they are part of a couple (Surra & Bartell,

2001), as well as how this feeling influences other reactions, such as the behavior adopted

when one member of the couple becomes ill (Ahmad et al., 2017; Hernandez et al., 2019;

Huang, Zhang, & Yu, 2018; Merrill & Afifi, 2017). Within this research stream, the two main

theories—social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and identity fusion theory (Swann et

al., 2012) —debate as to the possible coexistence of individual and collective identities within

a couple. The social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner 1979, 1986) postulates that the personal

self (i.e. characteristics of individuals that make them unique) and the social self (i.e.

characteristics of individuals that align them with the group) are antagonistic, while identity

fusion theory (Swann et al. 2009; Swann et al. 2012) maintains that they can both be

simultaneously active and agentic. They both measure the degree of overlap between these

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identity bundles. But they do not explain how, on a day-to-day basis, couples manage the tensions that may result from this identity interplay.

A few consumer culture studies have however investigated couple identity negotiation in the context of shared consumption (Wong, Hogg, & Vanharanta, 2017). Such studies consider couple identity as "the partners' sense of who they are as a unit" (Miller & Caughlin, 2013: 64) and study the process of couple identity construction through shared consumption practices such as meal preparation (Khanijou et al., 2021), holidaying (Therkelsen & Gram, 2008), or shared leisure activities (Hickman-Evans et al., 2018). They show, for instance, how couple identity is formed at different stages of the family life cycle, such as moving in together (Khanijou et al., 2021), getting married (Hickman-Evans et al., 2018), becoming parents (Magni-Speck et al., 2012; Parkinson, Gallegos, & Russell-Bennett, 2016), or retiring (Therkelsen & Gram, 2008).

However, despite the enrichment offered by these consumer culture studies in terms of understanding couple identity building, there remain certain unanswered questions that leave space for much needed contributions. First, only a handful of studies examine couple identity building in the context of everyday practices that are constitutive of the daily life structure. Most studies focus on specific contexts such as opioid consumption (Crowley & Miller, 2020) or specific issues such as the challenges associated with collective identity building in an intercultural context (Rogan, Piacentini, & Hopkinson, 2018). By investigating how meal practices are co-performed day by day by newly cohabiting couples, Khanijou, Cappellini and Hosany (2021) are an exception this respect, but they place the focus on the process through which practices become co-performed rather than on the process of identity negotiation. Collective identity being shaped as much by everyday consumption choices and behaviors as by more occasional ones, such a gap in the literature prevents a deep understanding of couple identity negotiation. Second, even though identity tensions management is at the heart of

couple identity building, no research investigates what specific identity tensions couples experience in their collective identity building process, nor what consumption strategies they implement to resolve those tensions (Epp & Price, 2008; Rogan, Piacentini, & Hopkinson, 2018). These grey areas result in a limited understanding of the process of couple identity negotiation through consumption, and consequently of many facets of couple's consumption.

This research seeks to address these gaps by examining how, through flexible consumption practices that are fully integrated into their everyday lives, couples negotiate their day-to-day functioning in order to manage identity interplay tensions and, in doing so, negotiate their couple identity.

3. Method

3. 1. Empirical Context

To study the process by which couples negotiate their shared identity through everyday life consumption practices, we select TV series viewing as an empirical context for several reasons. First, this activity is fully integrated into all aspects of consumers' everyday life, from their daily routines to their meaningful occasional rituals. Indeed, digitalization has offered consumers greater flexibility with regard to their viewing patterns (Glevarec, 2013; Watkins, 2015): they now have the option to watch the TV series of their choice, whenever and wherever they want, on the medium of their choice, whether alone or with friends, family, or their partner. Practices concerning TV series viewing are therefore deeply anchored in the organization of consumers' daily lives. Second, TV series viewing lies at the heart of consumers' identity negotiation. Indeed, viewers often develop a close attachment to TV series and their characters, thereby creating important emotional bonds. This connectedness (Russell & Puto, 1999; Russell & Schau, 2014) influences the way viewers see themselves,

make sense of the world, and interact with others (de Campos Rezende & Gomide, 2017). TV series thus contribute to modifying consumers' reality (Sépulchre, 2017) and help them "understand [their] lives and construct a self-identity" (Ryan & Macey, 2013: 4). Third, TV series viewing is highly stigmatized regarding the type of TV series watched, as well as the practice configuration itself. It is indeed commonly perceived as a passive (Skeggs & Wood, 2011), socially isolating (Ahmed, 2017), and lowbrow cultural (Alasuutari, 1992) activity. Thus, the way couples allocate their time to this activity is a key component of their shared identity, and all the more so as most couples have little free time. Partners consequently tend to be particularly careful as to the practice configuration they adopt.

3. 2. Data collection

We used a combination of 22 individual and 6 couple depth interviews with a total of 21 different couples. This enabled us to gain an emic understanding of the process of identity tensions management through everyday consumption from multiple perspectives (Epp & Price, 2011; Thompson, Locander, & Pollio, 1989).

We began by interviewing couples where we were able to interview both partners, for a total of ten couples. In four of these ten couples, we interviewed the two partners simultaneously. This encouraged collective reflection on their part on their practices and helped us understand the practices that they collectively consider central to defining their couple (Epp, Schau, & Price, 2014). In another four of these ten couples, we interviewed both partners individually. Interviewing them separately enabled us to identify the practices that they have implemented around TV series viewing and to understand how they make sense of these practices. It also enabled us to compare the respective discourses and interpretations of the two partners, so as to identify potential discrepancies. Finally, for the last two couples interviewed during the first phase, we had the opportunity to interview the two partners

together in a couple interview, and then to interview them separately in two individual interviews. This allowed us to compare their discourse when they were with their partner versus alone and thereby to identify potential discrepancies, which we sought to explore. This combination allowed us to triangulate between informants and between methods, and thus to enhance the credibility and confirmability of our findings (Wallendorf & Belk, 1989). It also enabled us to combine the benefits of individual and group interviews and thereby helped us gain a particularly fine understanding of the identity issues and processes at play in these couples.

Then, during a second phase of data collection, we extended our sample to include couples where we could only interview one partner. Conducting these additional individual interviews enabled us to identify any new processes that had not been observed in the other couples, and to confirm or refute the central concepts of our framework and the conditions under which the relationships between these concepts were maintained (Creswell, 2006).

Table 13 gives further detail on how these 28 interviews were organized among our 21 informant couples. The interviews were conducted in three phases: winter 2019, spring 2020, and September 2020. These successive phases allowed us to reinterview some couples in order to deepen our understanding of their cases.

Table 13. Informants' profiles

	Name	Sex	Age	Nationality	Professional situation	TV series consumption	Duration of relationship	Cohabitation	No. of children	Collective interview	Individual interview
Couple 1	John	M	39	French	Employed	Heavy	17 years	Yes	9	X	
	Laure	F	39	French	Housewife	Very light					
Couple 2	Damien	M	32	French	Employed	Light	11 years	Yes	2	X	
	Claire	F	33	French	Employed	Heavy					
Couple 3	Jean-Pierre	M	58	French	Employed	Light	5 years	Yes	3 *(not with Hélène)*	X	
	Hélène	F	45	French	Employed	Light			0		
Couple 4	Gabriel	M	73	French	Retired	Heavy	12 years	Yes	5 *(not with Anne)*	X	
	Anne	F	75	French	Retired	Light			3 *(not with Gabriel)*		
Couple 5	Aziz	M	65	Moroccan	Retired	Heavy	45 years	Yes	2	X	X
	Yasmina	F	63	Moroccan	Retired	Heavy					X
Couple 6	Jules	M	64	French	Retired	Light	42 years	Yes	5	X	X
	Sixtine	F	66	French	Retired	Light					X
Couple 7	Arnaud	M	30	French	Employed	Heavy	6 years	Yes	0		X
	Julie	F	28	Moroccan	Employed	Light					X
Couple 8	Rémi	M	26	French	Employed	Medium	4 years	Yes	0		X
	Jade	F	26	French	Employed	Medium					X

Couple	Name	Sex	Age	Nationality	Status	Viewing	Duration		Children		
Couple 9	Fabien	M	27	French	Employed	Light	9 years	Yes	0	X	
	Camille	F	26	French	Employed	Heavy					X
Couple 10	Nicolas	M	25	French	Student	Heavy	1 year	No	0	X	
	Anaïs	F	24	French	Student	Medium					X
Couple 11	Lucas	M	26	French	Employed	Light	2 years	Yes	0	X	
	Inès	F	26	French	Employed	Light					X
Couple 12	Briac	M	24	French	Student	Medium	8 years	Yes	0	X	
	Daphné	F	24	French	Employed	Medium					
Couple 13	Vincent	M	26	French	Employed	Light	4 years	No	0	X	
	Lara	F	25	Moroccan	Employed	Heavy					X
Couple 14	Boris	M	26	French	Employed	Medium	1 year	No	0	X	
	Audrey	F	23	French	Student	Light					
Couple 15	Jean	M	63	French	Retired	Medium	38 years	Yes	5		
	Sabine	F	61	French	Retired	Medium					X
Couple 16	Salim	M	65	Moroccan	Retired	Medium	41 years	Yes	2	X	
	Florence	F	61	Swiss	Housewife	Light					
Couple 17	Florian	M	22	French	Employed	Heavy	4 years	Yes	0	X	
	Alice	F	26	French	Student	Heavy					X
Couple 18	Sébastien	M	28	French	Employed	Medium	10 years	Yes	0	X	
	Diane	F	27	French	Employed	Medium					X
Couple 19	Timothée	M	39	French	Employed	Heavy	3 years	Yes	0	X	
	Solène	F	38	French	Unemployed	Heavy					X
Couple 20	Cédric	M	25	French	Employed	Medium	4 years	No	0	X	
	Magalie	F	25	French	Employed	Light					X
Couple 21	Hugo	M	33	French	Employed	Heavy	7 years	Yes	0	X	
	Nathalie	F	32	French	Employed	Heavy					X

The 31 informants were recruited using the snowball sampling method on the basis that they were TV series viewers (whether individually or as a couple) and had been in a relationship with their current partner for at least one year (which we consider a sufficient period to develop a couple identity and establish stable routines of viewing practices). 16 of them were women and 15 men. They were between 22 and 75 years old. Their profiles were diverse in terms of their professional situation, relationship duration, marital status, number of children, stage of family life cycle, and TV series consumption patterns. Among the 21 couples, 17 were cohabiting. Table 13 provides an overview of the respondents' profiles.

The interviews were conducted informally in a convenient place (e.g., the participants' home when possible) to ensure that the participants felt comfortable and to create a sense of closeness between the researcher and the informant. Some interviews were conducted via Zoom or over the telephone due to COVID-19-related lockdown restrictions. The duration of the interviews ranged from 30 to 120 minutes (average: 70 minutes). We continued conducting interviews until we reached theoretical saturation, meaning that no new themes emerged in the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). To allow for a detailed analysis, we audiotaped and transcribed all the interviews, ultimately producing 421 single-spaced pages of transcripts.

3. 3. Data analysis

Using the constant comparison method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), we explored the differences and similarities within and between transcripts to identify common themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Spiggle, 1994). We proceeded in this way both within and across couples (Mick & Fournier, 1998; Thompson, Locander, & Pollio, 1990). Indeed, we first analyzed the data of each partner within a specific couple, paying particular attention to rituals, daily interactions, narratives and conflicts. We then explored each couple as a whole, categorizing the data from which broader conceptual classes emerged. We then compared these concepts across couples, exploring the differences and similarities between couples (Thompson, 1997) so as to bring out important themes that capture the essential dimensions common to all participants' interviews (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). We more specifically started with couples in which we had access to the two partners and then extended to couples where only one partner participated, so as to refine and deepen the categorization of relevant analytical themes (King, 2010) and ensure that each was illustrated repeatedly in the transcripts (Wallendorf & Belk, 1989). This enabled us to identify recurring tensions and strategies, from which we built our framework.

We initially carried out this thematic analysis individually, with each author reading the transcripts, engaging in coding procedures, and noting emergent themes (King & Horrocks, 2014). Subsequently, we acted collectively, with both authors comparing the identified themes, developing a consensus concerning the themes, and ensuring that each theme was illustrated repeatedly in the transcripts (Wallendorf & Belk, 1989).

4. Findings

Based on the gathered data, we develop a theoretical framework that shows how couples negotiate their collective identity through everyday consumption practices. Figure 3 represents this framework. It more specifically depicts (1) the process of interplay between the partners' individual identities, the couple's collective identity, and the partners' self-imposed norms; (2) the identity tensions that result from this process; and (3) the strategies that couples can implement to alleviate such tensions. In the following sections, we further analyze this entire process.

4. 1. Identity Interplay

Couple identity building is a complex negotiation process of three intertwined identity bundles: the collective identity of the couple and the two individual identities of the partners. It encompasses what the partners collectively aspire to be as a couple, their own individual identity projects, and the normative ideas they have concerning what an ideal couple should be.

4. 1. 1. Building a Collective Identity

Our findings confirm that couples aspire to form a sense of who their collective "We" is (Miller & Caughlin, 2013). Such a collective identity is negotiated through consumption practices: partners embed these practices into the organization of their daily life, the amount of time they devote to the practices, the fact that they conduct them together or separately, or the ability of the practices to generate shared meanings that nurture who they want to be as a couple. These day-to-day characteristics both inform and direct consumption activities (Epp & Price, 2008). Among our participants, Aziz and Yasmina are two Moroccan sexagenarians who, after long working lives, now see themselves as an epicurean couple and have collectively

Figure 3. Couple identity negotiation: navigating collective identity tensions through consumption strategies
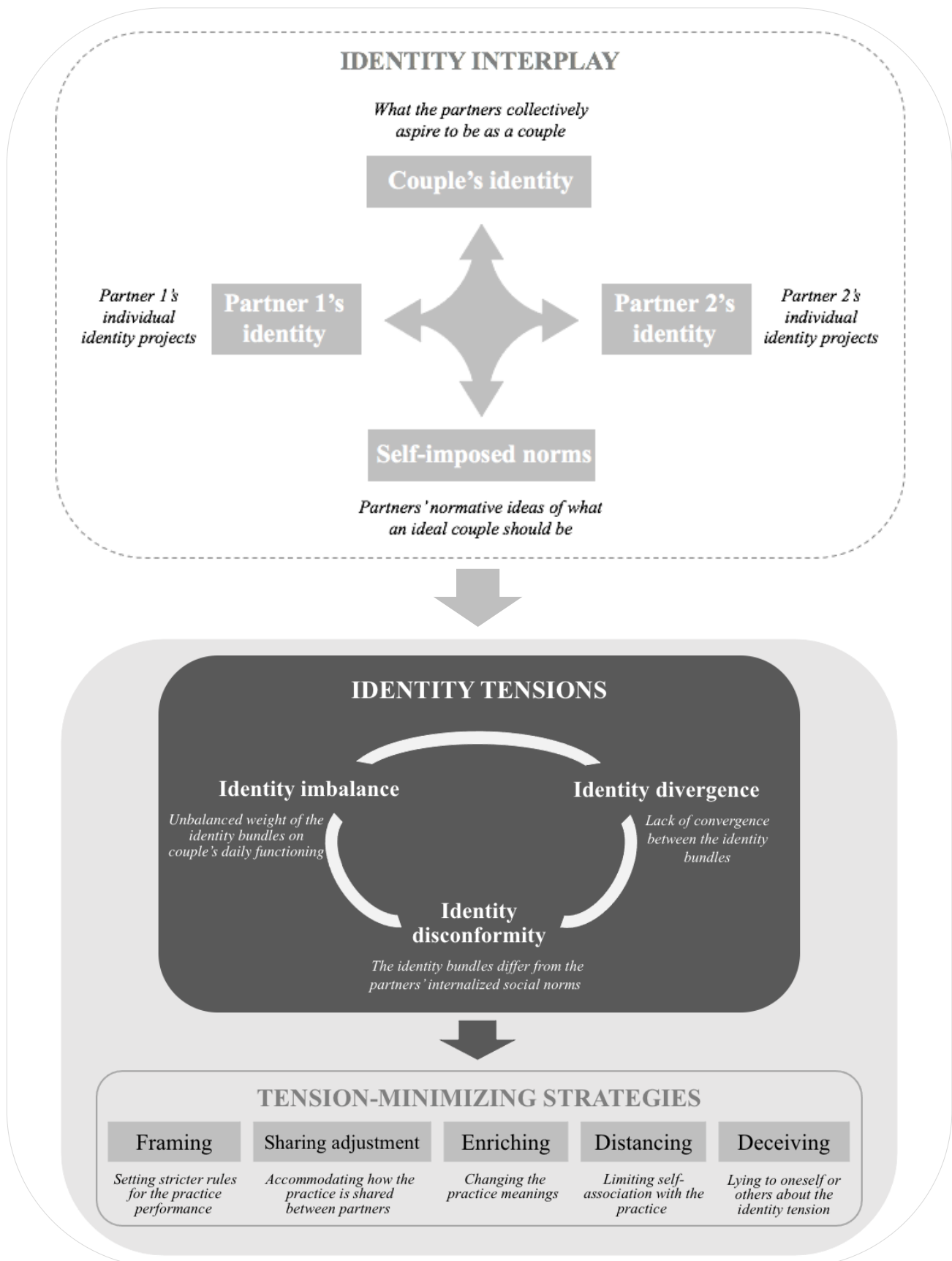
decided to make the most of all the pleasures available to them in retired life. Aziz and Yasmina fully incorporate TV series viewing into their identity project:

> We are epicureans, we seek to have maximum please, without worrying about constraints. We take advantage of retirement to enjoy all the pleasures of life, to do everything we like without asking ourselves any question (…) We watch a maximum amount of television. We put ourselves in bed, we curl up in blankets, we relax, and we start watching … I sometimes prepare a meal to be eaten in front of the TV, for instance, pizzas, burgers, or a nice dessert like roasted almonds … It is really superb; it's a life pace that you get used to without any problem (Yasmina).

They spend a large part of their day watching TV series on the couch, sometimes binge watching until dawn. This involves a wide range of shared hedonic food rituals, comfortable settings, and meaningful routines that render the viewing experience as pleasant as possible.

TV series viewing is one of the activities that most clearly crystalizes couple identity building. Whatever their collective identity project, couples consider the consumption of TV series to be particularly representative of who they are as a couple. Being heavy or light TV series viewers, watching together or separately, carefully choosing or causally selecting the TV series they watch, all these conducts say a lot about who the partners see themselves and their couple as. For Solène and Timothée, for instance, TV series viewing is particularly powerful in reinforcing the connection between partners, which is a principal component of their couple. They spend most of their shared time watching TV series around various rituals that contribute to structuring their daily schedule. Their shared TV series viewing provides a sense of belonging and coordination that is not fostered by other types of leisure activities:

> TV series are fundamental for us. It's a work of fiction that you can share. Reading is a very solitary activity, and even if two people read the same book, by definition you're going to read it at your own pace and you're going to get something different out of it...

whereas with a TV series, you are really manipulated, because the rhythm is imposed on you and because you have the music that takes you by the hand to tell you when you have to be happy etc., which makes you live emotions at the same rhythm, at the same time... so, it's something that brings us very close, we talk a lot about it, it's really something important in our relationship... (Solène).

4. 1. 2. *Interplay between collective and individual identity bundles*

Building a shared couple identity does not imply the disappearance of the individual identity of each partner; rather, it suggests the coexistence of three different identity bundles (Therkelsen & Gram, 2008). Individuals, more or less consciously, develop identity projects for themselves and for their couple that have to manifest through their consumption practices. Partners fulfill who they want to be individually by playing a specific role within their relationship. The incorporation of this individual identity project into the collective identity interplay is performed through the implemented practice configurations. In harmonious interplays, the collective and individual identity bundles nurture and reinforce each other. The two individual identities recursively interact in order to nurture a collective identity that displays "the appearance of emergent qualities that [are] not possessed by the parties" (Durand, 1979: 9–10; Magni-Speck et al., 2012). For example, while realizing their epicurean couple identity, Yasmina fulfills her role as a devoted wife through their hedonic food rituals, by providing food and comfort to her husband, while Aziz uses TV series viewing to fulfill his role as a protective husband, by reassuring his wife during frightening moments and comforting her during sad scenes: "Sometimes, when there are atrocious scenes, he closes my eyes so that I don't see and don't get scared, as if with a child, it's really cute… and if a scene is sad, he takes me in his arms and gives me a kiss to comfort me (…) He is really protective and caring with me, I am very lucky" (Yasmina).

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The way in which collective versus individual identity bundles interplay within couples' consumption practices can reach different equilibriums, ranging from the sole enactment of one collective "We" identity to the preponderance of two independent "I" identities (Hernandez et al., 2019; Merrill & Afifi, 2017). Solène and Timothée form a very fusional couple. They define themselves primarily as a couple, rather than as two individuals. They attach great importance to sharing most activities, developing similar tastes, and cultivating the same vision of life. They share a great passion for TV series, watching everything together to the point of setting an alarm to wake up together in the middle of the night to watch each new episode of the final season of Game of Throne. By contrast, Diane and Sébastien form a very independent couple. They have always voluntarily preserved their individuality by doing few activities together, evolving in different social circles, and developing different patterns in terms of professional schedules and life rhythms:

> We are a very independent couple... we like to compartmentalize things... we are not in a format where we do everything in common, we don't do many things in common... I don't identify so much with my couple, and neither does she... there is me, there is her, and then there is our couple, it's not a kind of entity which forms a whole, that's not our thing at all, we are first and foremost two distinct individuals… (Sébastien)

This approach is clearly reflected in their very different TV series viewing patterns. For instance, she watches her TV series on her laptop in bed during the early evening, while he watches his TV series late at night, in the kitchen, while she is asleep. They also differ in the meaning they derive from the activity. Sebastien considers TV series viewing as a way to relax and be entertained, which is why he watches superhero- or crime-related TV series; Diane uses TV series to nurture her engagement with thought-provoking content concerning society and politics, thereby generating the intellectual stimulation that defines her.

4. 1. 3. Influence of internalized norms

Couple identity is also subject to internalized norms that individuals, more or less consciously, impose on themselves. Partners have strong ideas about what a "good" couple should be as well as about the respective roles that each partner should fulfill within the couple. This is particularly visible within TV series viewing practice configurations, as this activity is subject to strong stigma: it is often associated with passivity and the image of a "couch potato" (Skeggs & Wood, 2011; Van den Bulck, 2000), perceived as socially isolating and discouraging social interactions (Ahmed, 2017; Bickham & Rich, 2006), and frequently denigrated and associated with lowbrow culture (Alasuutari, 1992). These self-imposed norms influence couple identity negotiation because the partners fear how others might perceive their couple and because of how they judge their own couple. The norms regarding viewing practice are particularly noticeable in the narratives of Jules and Sixtine concerning the place that TV series should occupy within a romantic relationship:

> Couples in which one partner locks himself away on his own to watch TV series while the whole family is there bother me a lot... I think they are depriving themselves of lots of moments together and I wonder on what basis their couple is built. Because, for me, that's THE danger of TV series; they can isolate, especially since we have more flexibility to watch them with Netflix and all that... viewing then takes place to the detriment of the couple, instead of being a link, a moment of complicity between partners (Jules).

These young retirees, who share a cohesive vision of romantic relationships and for whom it is through exchanges and social commitments that couple identity fulfills the most, consequently see TV series viewing as posing a potential danger for romantic relationships, particularly for young couples who have little time to spend together.

You really have to be very careful with TV series during a certain period of life …

Because couples who work, who have children, already spend little time together, so if

they spend all their time together watching TV series, it can kill their couple! (Sixtine).

4. 2. Tensions

The analysis of the interviews further reveals that tensions arise in the identity

interplay when the daily practice configuration does not allow for each identity bundle to

manifest through the practice performance. Three tensions experienced by couples have

emerged from the gathered data. They correspond to whether some identity bundles

predominate in terms in shaping the identity negotiation process (identity imbalance), whether

the identity projects associated with the different identity bundles are compatible (identity

divergence), and whether the enacted collective identity conforms to the norms that the

partners have internalized (identity disconformity). We do not consider these tensions to be

mutually exclusive: each couple is not characterized by a single tension, but rather

experiences all three tensions to varying degrees and at different times. The degree of

awareness of these issues varies significantly from one partner to another. As little is currently

known about the identity tensions that result from the identity interplay and the collective

couple identity negotiation, we dedicate the remainder of this section to each of the three

identified tensions. For the purposes of clarity, we only use a few couples from our sample to

illustrate the tensions: these couples are listed in the first two columns of Table 14 alongside

relevant examples.

Table 14. Use of exemplar couples to illustrate tensions and strategies

TENSIONS		STRATEGIES				
Type	**Example**	**Framing**	**Sharing Adjustment**	**Enriching**	**Distancing**	**Deceiving**
Collective-Individual Imbalance	*Diane and Sebastien* Imbalance due to the predominance of the independent individualities of the partners, which has prevented them from establishing their couple identity as a unit.	*Anaïs and Nicolas* Anaïs imposes new rules on the practice, including a rule about the choice of content to watch.	*Diane and Sebastien* They want to implement new shared rituals that will allow them to watch TV series together in order to facilitate the expression of their couple as a unit.	*Anaïs and Nicolas* Anaïs transforms viewing sessions into opportunities for cocooning and intimate cuddling, in an effort to promote the intimacy necessary for a suitable couple identity.	*Audrey and Boris* Boris develops differentiated practice configurations to distance himself from identity-threatening programs and immerse himself in identity-consistent ones.	*Audrey and Boris* Boris justifies the situation using contextual elements rather than an imbalance in the practice performance.
Individual-Individual Imbalance	*Anaïs and Nicolas* *Audrey and Boris* Imbalance due to a practice configuration that fulfills one partner's self-image realization but threatens the other's identity.					
Collective-Individual Divergence	*Laure and John* Divergence between the practice configuration necessary to maintain the couple's intimacy (daily dinner routine in front of a soap opera) and its impact on John's identity and self-esteem.	*Camille and Fabien* Collective implementation of rules concerning the practice configuration to reach a compromise on the expression of their respective identity projects.	*Camille and Fabien* Camille watches self-identifying TV series alone, as Fabien denigrates them because they threaten his masculine identity.	*Camille and Fabien* Development of TV series watching rituals on Sundays whereby each of them finds a specific and different self-fulfilling meaning thanks to a specific combination of objects and actions.	*Laure and John* John builds narratives that signal his limited involvement in the practice. He makes fun of the show, indicating that he does not take it at face value.	*Camille and Fabien* Camille ignores the identity divergence with her partner.
Individual-Individual Divergence	*Camille and Fabien* Divergence between the balanced Fabien and the impulsive Camille in terms of the way they implement the viewing practice configuration.					
Self-Disconformity	*Solène and Timothée* *Sixtine and Jules* Disconformity between the shared time spent watching TV series and their own norms regarding this activity (lowbrow culture for Solène and Timothée; asocial and reclusive for Sixtine and Jules).	*Sixtine and Jules* They regulate the intensity and frequency of their viewing practice so as to limit its importance to their relationship.	*Sixtine and Jules* They watch all their TV series together and cannot conceive of watching some separately due to the number of hours they involve.	*Solène and Timothée* Adoption of an active pattern of narrative navigation that transforms their viewing sessions into intellectual and erudite moments.	*Sixtine and Jules* They have recently decided to stop watching TV series in favor of pursuing activities that are more in line with their self-imposed norms.	*Nathalie and Hugo* They hide their behavior from others and pretend to carry out a behavior that is in line with the ideal image they have of themselves as a couple.
Disconformity with Others	*Nathalie and Hugo* Disconformity between the social and dynamic image they build of themselves as a couple in front of others and their heavy binge-watching during weekends.					

4. 2. 1. Identity imbalance

It happens that one of the identity bundles takes up "too much space" and prevents the others from being realized through the practice performance. We refer to this phenomenon as "identity imbalance".

Collective-Individual Imbalance. A first type of imbalance resides between the collective bundle on one side and the individual bundles on the other side, with one side leaving little to no room for the other to be fulfilled through the practice performance. While the couple formed by Diane and Sebastien has long blossomed in a very independent balance, it has gradually begun to feel such imbalance tension. As expressed by Sebastien, "for a long time we were fine with that... but now that we have been together for a lot of years, we would like things to evolve on this point." This confirms that identity projects evolve with time and transitions during different life stages (Schau, Gilly, & Wolfinbarger, 2009). In the case of Diane and Sebastien, the adopted practice configuration regarding TV series viewing now needs to fulfill the expression of the couple as a unit, rather than each partner's individual identity project. To this end, not only are they willing to change their viewing routines, such as "finding one or two TV series to watch together on a regular basis, which would become our ritual" (Sébastien), but they are also ready to engage in changes as major as changing apartment, as their current home does not allow them to adopt a viewing practice that would enable this couple identity enactment:

> We don't really have a place at home where we could do it: we don't really have a living room, we don't have a sofa on which we could sit in front of the TV... the only place is either at the kitchen table or in bed, and clearly, I don't want to go to bed as soon as I get home from work to watch TV series... so there's a practical issue in our current apartment that prevents us from developing this habit (Sébastien).

Individual-Individual Imbalance. Another tension stems from an imbalance between the respective influence of each partner's individual identity within the building of their couple identity. In this situation, one of the partners shapes most of the couple's practice configuration, meaning that the couple identity project reflects the image of one partner's identity. This represents an important source of frustration for the other partner, whose identity project for themselves and for the couple are overlooked (Kwang, 2010). This is the case for Anaïs, whose couple identity mainly reflects the image of her partner's ideal life. Anaïs and Nicolas do not live together and only see each other twice a week. Nicolas has social anxiety, dislikes unfamiliar situations, and feels the need to practice activities in relation to which he has everything under control. He maintains a feeling of security by staying in the fortress of the flat watching TV series over which he has total control in terms of the choice and consumption pace. Therefore, when they are together, the couple spends almost all their shared time watching the TV series that he likes, to the point that it has become the main marker of their couple identity: a reclusive homebody. Anaïs has always defined herself as a social person, happily engaging in various intellectually or physically stimulating activities and needing to make her own decisions for her life. Even though Anaïs enjoys watching TV series, she feels crushed by this practice configuration, which solely corresponds to Nicolas' individual identity and does not allow her to realize the identity projects she has for herself and her couple:

> I'd like us to go out more, to vary our activities more, but that's not the case. We tend to shut ourselves up in this cocoon. He is totally fine with it, as he loves watching lots of TV series and is a homebody; he doesn't need to see people often. But it doesn't look like me and I think it's a pity (…) I would like us to be a less reclusive couple, who socializes more. (Anaïs)

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4. 2. 2. Identity divergence

Another tension arises from a lack of compatibility between the identity projects involved in the building of the couple identity. Indeed, what makes some identity bundles blossom can cause other bundles to wilt. We refer to this tension as identity divergence.

Collective-Individual Divergence. For the sake of a harmonious relationship, partners are often willing to make compromises in the way they organize their life and share consumption practices by performing behaviors they would not embrace by themselves. Although ostensibly harmless, these arrangements can eventually become a fundamental constituent of the couple identity and, at the same time, threaten one partner's self-image (Weinberger, 2015). For many of our informants, such identity threats can stem from choices as simple as the TV show they decide to watch together or the way they organize the viewing activity. John and Laure are in a challenging position when it comes to maintaining an intimate couple life due to their nine children and John's busy career as a top executive. To achieve their project of being a tender and affectionate couple, they have decided to implement a daily dinner routine in front of a TV series. Being dependent on the TV broadcast schedule, they have built this routine around the only TV series available in the time slot they can regularly secure, the cheap and sappy soap opera "Plus Belle la Vie". While Laure has developed an attachment and a sense of connectedness with the storylines and characters (Russell & Puto, 1999; Russell & Schau, 2014), John has gradually built up a strong feeling of rejection regarding this soap: "I am really wondering who the people are who watch this at the literal level without ironic distance; this is very scary!" It is not simply a program he dislikes; seeing himself as a regular viewer of this show has damaged his self-esteem. Many respondents found themselves stuck in conflicts between what they had to do to build their couple identity and what they had to do to preserve their individual identity, which often cause great psychological suffering.

Individual-Individual Divergence. The divergence can also dwell between the two individual identity projects in terms of the way they interact when forming the couple identity. In the shared practice performance, the two individual identity projects can collide and even threaten each other. The perception of such a difference in the individual identities of the partners within a couple represents a source of frustration and tension (Fonseca et al., 2020), as it is difficult to achieve a practice performance that allows both individual identities to harmoniously flourish while building a collective image of the couple. Fabien and Camille find themselves in such a situation of divergence. Fabien considers himself a wise and balanced person. When it comes to leisure activities, this translates into a mindful mix of solo and shared activities, a controlled level of consumption (especially in relation to activities involving screens), and a preference for physical activities that allow him to surpass himself. More specifically, he aspires to not watch too many episodes of a TV series in a row, to space out viewing sessions, and to avoid eating in front of the TV in order to limit the omnipresence of screens. Camille describes herself as a passionate person with a strong desire to enjoy life. She impulsively plunges into leisure activities without worrying about moderation. She has an addictive relationship with TV series, enjoying binge watching for several hours, including at mealtimes. In their case, this divergence can even alter the image that one partner has of the other, thereby altering the relationship: "She always wants more! She begs me to continue watching, she tries to bargain, and I try to reason with her. I sometimes feel like I am managing a child! (…) I wish she'd behave a little more as an adult, more responsibly." (Fabien).

4. 2. 3. Identity disconformity

This tension stems from the difference between the adopted practice configuration and the norms that the partners have internalized as corresponding to the ideal couple. In practice,

the enacted couple identity does not always fit with these self-imposed norms, resulting in tensions within the identity interplay. We refer to this tension as identity disconformity.

Disconformity with personal norms. Partners often have strong ideas about what a "good" couple should be and about the way the practice should be performed so as to comply with the image they have of themselves or their couple. They tend to feel pressured to adapt their practice configuration to match these self-imposed norms. Solène and Timothée are a couple who experience such tension. They are both true TV series addicts and devote a considerable amount of their free time to this activity. However, they also want to consider themselves, at least in the ideal vision they have of their collective identity, as an intellectual and erudite couple. They describe themselves as snobbish bohos and like to emphasize how highly educated and cultured they are. Their discourse reveals a fear that their high TV series consumption tarnishes the intellectual identity they aspire to achieve for their couple. They are, therefore, torn between the fundamental role played by TV series in their relationship and the strong lowbrow cultural stigma they associate with this activity:

> We are big fans of TV series, we watch a lot of them, and we find that it brings us very close together... But the thing is that we are very snobbish, so we don't want to watch anything and anyhow... we want intelligent TV series, we refuse to be stultified by the TV series we watch (Solène).

Disconformity with other people's norms. Partners may also suffer from the fact that other people, whether friends or relatives, project onto their couple an image they are not at ease with. The impact of other people's judgment is a key aspect of individual identity building (Becchio, Bertone, & Castiello, 2008), and our findings indicate that the same is true at the couple identity level. This external image is built when others are judgmental about an adopted practice configuration that is perceived to not fit with specific social norms

(Therkelsen & Gram, 2008). Hugo and Nathalie are both executives who aim to build a couple identity that they describe as healthy, taking care of their appearance, eating healthy food, remaining fit, and combining intense working days with a hectic social life. However, when the weekend arrives, they are generally exhausted and completely abandon this way of life: they spend their Saturdays and Sundays binge watching TV series and snacking while slumped on the sofa. They do not feel any guilt about this behavior, which they justify as being the logical outcome of their intense life during the week and not representative of who they really are. Yet, they are ashamed of what other people might think if they happened to discover this socially unflattering practice configuration. This negative image perceived by others reflects badly on their own couple identity and so creates tension:

> I used to feel very guilty about the fact that we had this kind of life during weekends. Today, I have made peace with it personally, but I am still ashamed of the very negative social judgment regarding this type of sloppiness and of how others may consequently perceive our couple (Hugo).

4. 3. Tension-minimizing strategies

Our findings also show that couples navigate identity tensions using different strategies, which involve adapting the performance of the consumption practice. Ultimately, such coping strategies allow couples, more or less consciously, to achieve greater harmony in the couple identity interplay within the practice performance. Five tension-minimizing strategies emerge from the gathered data: setting stricter rules for the practice performance (framing), accommodating the way the practice is shared between the partners (sharing adjustment), changing the practice meanings by incorporating complementary elements into the practice (enriching), limiting the self-association with the practice (distancing), and lying to oneself or others about the identity tension (deceiving). These strategies manifest

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differently depending on whether they are primarily intended to minimize tensions of identity imbalance, identity divergence, or identity disconformity. For the purposes of clarity, we only use a few couples from our sample to illustrate these strategies: these exemplar couples are featured in the last five columns of Table 14.

4. 3. 1. Framing

The framing strategy represents a couple's conscious effort to establish a specific set of rules concerning the practice performance in order to make it fit with each partner's aspirations as well as with the image they collectively have of their couple. Framing helps to control the practice elements that most clearly crystallize the identity tension. In terms of TV series viewing, such rules can, for instance, involve the upward or downward adjustment of the time devoted each day to the viewing activity through setting strict time slots, the adoption of careful rules about the type of content that is watched, or the arrangement of new settings around the activity.

Negotiating identity imbalance through framing. In the case of individual-individual imbalance, it is uncommon to observe a collaborative strategy stemming from imbalanced identity bundles. On the contrary, the dominated partner often has to impose new rules to recover a balanced negotiating process of couple identity. Anaïs suffers from never having a say in the choice of the TV series watched and so from being systematically forced to watch action-based TV series in which she does not identify herself. Crushed by the feeling of having her self-realization strangled by her partner, she had to find the inner strength to impose new rules concerning the process of deciding which TV series to watch. She fought so that they would alternate the decision-making role in order for her tastes to also be taken into account: "It was always going in the same direction: he considered that my tastes were null

and void, so he didn't even consider what I proposed. So, I thumped the table. Now, it's more balanced, we choose each one in turn" (Anaïs).

Negotiating identity divergence through framing. When the couple identity enactment is hindered by a conflict between two identity bundles that cannot find compatible ways of expressing themselves in the practice, the framing strategy consists in looking for ways to find a compromise in relation to the practice performance. Here, couples tend to set rules more collaboratively. For Fabien and Camille, such a compromise is found through different dimensions of the practice. First, they collectively find a way to regulate the extent of the practice performance:

> I make an effort to watch a few more episodes than I'd like, so that she doesn't get frustrated, but I fight to make sure we don't watch too many, otherwise I'll get upset. This compromise is pretty good, because in the end, if we both make an effort, no one feels wronged (Fabien).

Second, they establish the rule of alternating the way they take their meals: in the lounge in front of a TV series to please Camille's aspirations for a bulimic viewing, or in the kitchen in the absence of any screen, which Fabien considers fundamental for their relationship. Third, Fabien insists on balancing evenings spent watching TV series with evenings dedicated to other activities. By achieving equilibrium between the expression of both their identity projects, Fabien and Camille engage in a daily functioning that keeps away potential conflicts linked to identity divergence.

Negotiating identity disconformity through framing. Couples also establish rules to ensure that the practice configuration conforms with social norms that are either self-imposed or strongly suggested by what others might think. In doing so, they further align their relationship functioning with their internalized ideal image of life as a couple. For instance, as

quality exchanges during meals and screen-free time are socially perceived as fundamental to the achievement of a united and fulfilled couple, several respondents insist on eating at a dinner table away from the TV set:

> It's important, because otherwise you may very quickly fall into the habit of always watching TV series while eating, and you may eventually forget to talk with your partner and lose this time for sharing, which I think is very important for the relationship. So, I like to distinguish these two moments (Inès).

Framing also serves to assign the "right" place to TV series viewing within the couple's life. Given the limited free time available to most couples and the widespread stigmatization of TV series viewing (Ahmed, 2017), the way in which couples allocate their time to this activity is constitutive of their identity. Many respondents are, therefore, particularly vigilant as to the intensity and frequency of their viewing, considering excessive TV series consumption to pose a threat to what they consider to be a balanced couple. For instance, Sixtine and Jules regulate their viewing practice in such a way as to limit its importance in relation to other activities that they consider more beneficial for their relationship, including social commitments:

> We give priority to outside activities, meetings, whether with friends, children, unknown people... We make sure that TV series doesn't encroach on all those social activities that are far more important and beneficial to our relationship in our eyes... We keep their place in our daily lives to a minimum (…) We start watching in the evening, after 6 p.m. Never before! ... We really force ourselves not to watch more than two episodes in a row. (Sixtine)

4. 3. 2. Sharing adjustment

Tensions within the identity interplay can also be resolved through the way partners decide to share the practice performance. This involves not only deciding the extent to which the practice is performed together or separately, but also, and more importantly, deciding which parts of the practice should be shared and which should not. Achieving such a harmonious partition in the sharing of the practice represents a key aspect of identity tension reduction.

Navigating identity imbalance through sharing adjustment. Sharing or not certain aspects of consumption practice can contribute to rebalancing the couple identity in the desired direction. While less sharing of certain activities can help to prevent partners' individual identities from being subsumed by the couple's collective identity, intensifying the sharing of other activities can provide more space for the collective identity within the couple. Importantly, our findings show that a couple's identity balance evolves over time, as is also the case for individuals (Schau et al., 2009). This happens either gradually as the relationship progresses or more suddenly following specific transition phases or events which lead the couple to reconsider their identity balance. The sharing adjustment helps navigate related tensions. As previously discussed, Diane and Sébastien aspire to evolve toward a less independent collective-individual balance. To further establish their couple identity as a unit, rather than as two parallel individual identity projects, they want to reconfigure their viewing practices, watch more TV series together, and implement shared rituals concerning this activity. This requires a certain number of changes, starting with moving house, as the current configuration of their apartment does not allow them to adopt a shared TV series viewing practice:

> We're thinking of moving to a place that will allow us to do more things together,
> especially to establish little common rituals, including around TV series… currently, it's

complicated for logistical reasons, as the apartment is not necessarily well arranged for it (Sébastien).

Navigating identity divergence through sharing adjustment. The divergence tension can be reduced by sharing only those practices that express convergent partner identity projects and by performing separately those that are subject to divergence. Each partner then has more flexibility to consume their products or services as suits them, without feeling limited or threatened by their other half. This is the strategy adopted by Camille, who loves to watch, among other things, TV series that she perceives as girly, such as Gossip Girl or Newport Beach. She recognizes part of herself in the stories and the characters in these TV series. Moreover, watching such content allows her to escape from reality, to feel a kind of lightness that she needs in daily life to feel happy and be in a good mood. Her boyfriend, Fabien, feels that he is wasting his time when watching these TV series and, worse, that he is threatened in his virility and his masculine identity, to such an extent that he cannot help but denigrate these TV series by openly mocking them as a means of dissociating himself from them. As a result, while she enjoys sharing TV series viewing with Fabien, Camille prefers to watch these specific TV series alone, as a fulfilling moment for her individual identity:

> I like to watch by myself some stupid stuff... well, not stupid stuff, but what I am, TV series that resemble me... I like to watch them by myself, so I don't have to suffer his remarks "ah, it's boring," or "ah, it's for the girls! blah, blah, blah, blah" ... in this way, I'm quiet… these TV series put me in a good mood and I don't want him to spoil it… it's really a very selfish moment, a moment just for me. ... During the day, I look forward to having this little time for myself when he is still at work... and if he comes home unexpectedly early, I say to myself "damn, I didn't have time to finish watching!" (Camille).

Navigating identity disconformity through sharing adjustment. Sharing (or otherwise) activities with one's romantic partner is subject to strong social norms: couples feel a social pressure to spend most of their time together and to perform their activities jointly (Orthner, 1975; Orthner & Mancini, 1990), as doing so is believed to promote couple interaction, optimal communication, and marital satisfaction (Baxter & Dindia, 1990; Smith et al., 1988). Thus, couples who have particularly internalized these norms make a point of watching all their TV series together. This is the case for Sixtine and Jules, a recently retired couple who, in accordance with their very cohesive and collective vision of the ideal couple, do most of their activities together and only some one-off activities separately. This is reflected in their TV series consumption: while each may sometimes watch a 90-minute movie on their own, they cannot conceive of watching a TV series separately due to the amount of viewing hours that a TV series involves. They would even become very upset if their partner were to "Netflix cheat," as doing so would distance their couple from their cohesive ideal.

> For us, it really is a couple thing; it would never occur to us to watch it alone, because it is OUR moment. It is not a moment for me, it is a moment for us (Sixtine).

> This is not a rule that we set for ourselves, but a conception that we both share not to watch individually. I cannot see myself watching a TV series by myself; this is not our conception of a couple's life (Jules).

4. 3. 3. Enriching

The enriching strategy involves inferring new meanings from the practice performance by incorporating complementary objects and actions. These new meanings, which are more beneficial for the relationship, can either be inferred by one partner individually or by both partners collectively, depending on whether the tension is felt by one partner or both.

Navigating identity imbalance through enriching. Enriching the practice configuration can be a way of recovering some identity balance within the collective identity negotiation. Anaïs feels that she is gradually losing herself in the high consumption of action-based TV series that she feels is imposed on her by her partner. In addition to being erased by her couple's reclusive and passive image, she feels that all the time spent watching TV strongly limits the exchanges and interactions she needs in her couple to feel accomplished. As she could not find a way to modify the time devoted to or the frequency of the practice performance, Anaïs sought a way to compensate for the imbalance by enriching the practice. She transformed the couple's viewing sessions into opportunities for cocooning, intimate cuddling, and intimacy using a different combination of elements, such as a bed, blankets, cushions, and body positions, that create a romantic sensory atmosphere: "We are both half sitting/half lying under a blanket, one against the other, I have my head on his chest. We make the light a little subdued, sometimes I even light candles for a romantic atmosphere" (Anaïs). Consequently, the meaning she derives from these moments is not reduced to mere viewing. Instead, they contribute to fulfilling the intimacy part of the project she has for her couple: "I see it as an excuse to sit together, cuddle, and enjoy being together, rather than as an activity that we value in itself" (Anaïs). Thus, she recognizes herself better in the practice configuration, which contributes to reducing her perception of an identity imbalance.

Navigating identity divergence through enriching. Enriching also allows couples to derive multiple meanings from the practice so that both partners can feel more in phase with their own self-image during the practice performance. The "wise and balanced" Fabien and the "passionate and TV-series-bulimic" Camille overcome their identity divergence by enriching the practice through the development of a viewing ritual established when they moved in together. They watch TV series every Sunday, from late afternoon to evening, always in the exact same conditions (while the conditions vary for the non-ritualized viewing

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sessions): always in the living room, sitting on the same chairs, in the same positions, wearing comfortable clothes, snuggled up under blankets, drinking herbal tea and eating cookies at the end of the afternoon, and switching to an aperitif when the evening comes. Camille experiences a sense of fulfilment through deeply immerging herself in these viewing sessions, while Fabien enjoys this relaxing moment that harmoniously fits with the other social and sport activities they engage in on weekends:

> It's our cool moment on Sunday afternoon, where we slack off and chill. We enjoy having a quiet time together after having done a lot of stuffs outside during the rest of the weekend. I like it because it's limited in time, because we need to relax together before going back to work, and because it's a time when we wouldn't have much else to do anyway (Fabien).

This shared calm interlude is essential for the building of their identity as a couple who have recently moved into the same nest. During this quiet time, they can rest and recharge together before a hectic new week:

> If, on a Sunday afternoon, we don't watch TV series, it means that it is a failed weekend! For years, on Sunday evening, we each went back to our respective place... so, now we really enjoy spending the evening together. This moment has a particular importance for us (Camille).

Navigating identity disconformity through enriching. Couples who are experiencing identity disconformity can modify some of their practice configurations in order to render their meanings more consistent with their self-imposed norms. In doing so, they reduce the perceived gap between their enacted and ideal couple identities. Solène and Timothée are torn between the important role of TV series in their relationship and the fear that the stigma associated with heavy TV viewing tarnishes the intellectual identity they aspire to for their couple. They enrich their practice by adopting an active pattern of narrative navigation

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(Feiereisen et al., 2021), which transforms these viewing sessions into erudite moments. This involves actions such as reading articles about the historical or political issues mentioned in the episodes during the broadcasts, and pausing the viewing to search for information on the Internet concerning the way the ongoing episode was written or directed:

We constantly ask ourselves questions, we comment, we rewind to better understand, and so on ... With us, a one-hour episode of The Crown lasts 90 minutes as we constantly pause to do research on Wikipedia in order to better understand who the characters are: Queen What's-Her-Name is the aunt of who? What is the Salique Law? Things like this … We love to read American websites, like The A.V. Club, where you have reviews and debriefs on the episode by people whose job it is to write about TV and who underline this or that aspect... And for most of the TV series we watch, after viewing we listen to a podcast that lasts almost the same amount of time as the episode... (Solène).

In this way, they assign an intellectual and active meaning to their TV series viewing, claiming to not consume them "as everyone else" does: "We are everything except dorks in front of the thing ... I know people say that you empty your brain in front of Netflix, but we are not doing that" (Solène). Through these complementary actions, they gain a finer reading of TV series than other viewers, which they believe allows them to escape the social stigma of dumbing-down and lowbrow culture associated with TV series viewing.

4. 3. 4. Distancing

The distancing strategy involves solving the identity tensions that appear in the practice performance by introducing distance from the practice. Distancing allows partners to limit the self-association with the practice, to make it less central to the identity expression, and therefore, to limit the tension caused by its performance in the identity interplay. This distance

is introduced either individually or collectively, depending on the identity bundles involved in the tension. In extreme cases, couples can completely stop performing the relevant consumption practice. Most of the time, however, the distance is introduced less directly, by slightly modifying the practice configuration in a way that changes its association with the self.

Navigating identity imbalance through distancing. In the case of imbalance, distancing allows one partner to defend their identity by dissociating themself from the practice that is causing the identity imbalance. Boris suffers from an identity imbalance because the leisure practices developed with his partner, Audrey, tend to solely correspond to her aspirations, tastes, and preferences. Their TV series consumption, which is much more frequent than what he aspires to and directed toward programs that often do not interest him, most clearly crystallizes this imbalance. As an emblematic example, Audrey imposes on him to watch many scripted reality shows with her, such as "Les Anges", a TV show that he considers stupid and boring, having no interest in watching people locked in a house doing nothing all day. To protect himself from this practice that he judges to be inconsistent with his self-image, he seeks to distance himself from it. To this end, he tries to clearly distinguish the context that surrounds the viewing of these types of shows from that surrounding the viewing of TV series of higher perceived quality, so as to mark a distance from the former that he does not mark from the latter. More specifically, he has convinced Audrey that they should watch these types of shows while eating (lunch and dinner), while he refuses to eat in front of TV series he enjoys because, according to him, they demand a high level of concentration and commitment in order to be fully appreciated. Eating can, therefore, be used as a distancing activity to dissociate oneself from the undergone practice, as it prevents total immersion and engagement in it.

Navigating identity divergence through distancing. The distancing strategy is also used by partners who experience identity divergence in relation to the practice performance. Due to feeling threatened with regard to his self-esteem by becoming a regular viewer of the soap opera "Plus Belle la Vie", John distances himself from this viewing practice by building narratives that clearly signal his limited involvement with the show. He constantly makes fun of this show: "I can't help commenting on something so stupid! Because watching Plus Belle la Vie while being silent is just unbearable, it's enough to make you want to shoot yourself..." (John). In this way, he shows that he does not take this TV series at face value; rather, he sees himself as being above its regular viewers and so transforms the viewing activity into a kind of sociological experiment, wondering how some people can love this program. Moreover, his narratives insist that watching this TV series is his wife's choice, not his own. In this way, he maintains the shared ritual while preserving and reaffirming his individual identity.

Navigating identity disconformity through distancing. Lastly, to move closer to the relationship ideal to which they aspire, couples can distance themselves from any practice configurations that do not fit with the self-imposed norms associated with their ideal couple. After having watched several TV series with many seasons, both Jules and Sixtine were frightened by the number of hours they had spent on this activity, which stands in stark contrast to the couple they aspire to be: social, dynamic, and privileging reflection and intellectual stimulation. They decided to distance themselves from TV series by ceasing to engage in the activity, except for a few educational TV series from time to time. Instead, they now dedicate their time to activities that conform to their self-imposed norms, so as to move closer to their relational ideal:

> Now we hardly watch any TV series, because if you think about the number of hours
> spent, you say to yourself that it would be better to devote the time to doing more
> interesting and beneficial things... or else to be more selective about the type of TV

series, to only watch documentaries, with a cultural or historical interest... we don't want to get involved in TV series that are only for leisure, because you are not nourished by that stuff... there are much more important things in life, such as reading or meeting other people ... Now it must be a year since we last watched a TV series (Jules).

4. 3. 5. Deceiving

The deceiving strategy involves avoiding having to admit that one is experiencing identity tensions. Partners can deceive themselves through auto-persuasion and, therefore, avoid a confrontation with a reality they cannot handle, or they can lie to others in order to hide their actual practice performance and cultivate a good social image.

Navigating an identity imbalance through deceiving. Several of our informants relate practice configurations that only reflect the aspirations of their partner, although they describe their relationship as balanced. They seek to justify the existing imbalance using various narratives. Boris uses contextual elements to justify his couple's reclusive and monotonous daily life and the significant role that TV series viewing plays in their relationship, offering many justifications that are not linked to the actual issue of identity imbalance. While many other possibilities exist, he pretends that this state is due to their extreme tiredness, the configuration of Audrey's apartment, or the fact that they do not see each other often:

At Audrey's we don't have a TV, nor a couch, nor a real table, so there are a lot of activities that we can't do, like board games and so on... so, TV series have somewhat become our default activity, because we don't have much choice... and I have to admit that we're often tired, so it's an easy solution as it doesn't require a lot of energy (Boris).

At no time does he present the practice configurations in his couple as being solely in phase with Audrey's aspirations. In avoiding doing so, he protects his vision of their couple as beneficial to his individuality and, therefore, spares himself from being confronted with a truth that would cause him to question his influence over his couple.

Navigating an identity divergence through deceiving. Some respondents convince themselves that they and their partner are in phase with regard to the practice performance. Camille explains that she and her partner both agree on the place assigned to each activity within their relationship, their extent of sharing each activity, and on the meanings to give to these practices. While her partner, Fabien, explicitly explains that he does not identify with their heavy TV series consumption, she persuades herself that they aspire to the same viewing practice configurations and that their current TV series consumption pleases them both: "It suits us both very well... we both like this activity a lot, we find that it brings us closer, we love watching TV series together, even if it is also important for me to watch some of them alone..." (Camille). Thus, she protects her perception of her couple being perfectly matched.

Navigating an identity disconformity through deceiving. The deceiving strategy may also be used by partners who experience misalignments with their ideal life as a couple and so fear that other people may project a socially unflattering image onto their couple. As they do not socially accept themselves as weekend binge watchers, Hugo and Nathalie strive to make others believe that their practices are totally in line with their ideal norms. They pretend to engage in weekend activities that accord with their ideal image of an active and trim couple, thereby preserving their ideal identity in other people's eyes:

> Honestly, I don't tell people that we spend a good part of our weekends watching TV series like wrecks. I prefer to let them think that we do stylish stuff, things that are well perceived like exhibitions, sports ... it's stupid, because given the hard weeks we have,

it's normal to be tired and to rest on weekends, but I think that others see us as a model couple, dynamic in our professional and private lives, and I prefer to maintain that image rather than being taken for wrecks (Hugo).

5. Discussion

This research contributes to a better understanding of couple identity negotiation. By focusing on how couples negotiate the building of their couple identity through the daily practice of TV series viewing, the aim of this study was to elucidate how couples rely on consumption practices that are completely integrated into their everyday lives in order to manage identity tensions that emerge from a misalignment between the partners' individual identities, the couple's collective identity, and the partners' self-imposed norms.

5. 1. Theoretical contributions

This study makes three primary theoretical contributions.

5. 1. 1. Contribution to the literature on family identity

First, by facilitating a better understanding of the complex identity mechanisms at play in collective consumption, we position this research as a contribution to the literature on family identity. This newly prolific literature considers family as a whole and studies family consumption through the prism of collective identity (Cappellini & Parsons, 2012; Edirisingha, Aitken, & Ferguson, 2022; Edirisingha et al., 2015). In accordance with this vision of consumption, we embrace couples' consumption practice configurations as primarily depending on the dynamics of their collective identity construction, rather than on conscious individual deliberations based on either choices or preferences.

The literature on family identity negotiation highlights the existence of tensions resulting from the interplay between distinct identity bundles and the need to manage these tensions through consumption (Epp & Price, 2008; 2011). Yet, although this process of identity tensions management is at the heart of family identity negotiation, little is known about the nature of these tensions and of these coping strategies. We thus contribute to this literature by identifying the identity tensions that underlie the identity interplay of a specific relational bundle of the family unit, namely the couple. Specifically, we show that the normative ideas that members have of what an ideal couple or family should be play an important role in these tensions: identity tensions result not only from the interplay between different identity bundles within the family, but also the confrontation between the enacted identity of these identity bundles and members' self-imposed norms. We therefore highlight the importance of taking into account the norms that members have internalized as corresponding to the ideal family when examining family identity negotiation. We go further by unveiling the coping strategies that couples implement in an effort to alleviate these tensions. We unveil how they modify the practice configuration to cope with identity tensions. Thus, by enlightening how consumption behaviors are guided by the desire to minimize the identity tensions that undermine collective identity projects, we enhance understanding of many facets of collective consumption.

5. 1. 2. *Contribution to the sharing literature*

Second, we also position this study as a contribution to the sharing literature (Belk, 2010; 2017; Scaraboto, 2015; Scaraboto & Figueiredo, 2021), particularly the sharing of practices. As shown by Wong et al. (2017), the way couples share resources and perspectives is constitutive of the formation of their shared self. The issue of the sharing of daily consumption practices and its impact on couple identity development has, however, received less research attention. As

suggested by Belk and Llamas, "sharing binds a couple together through a desire for interdependence leading to a sense of mutual extended self" (2012: 32). Yet, at the same time, the sharing of practices is sometimes subject to tensions, especially when the resulting practice configuration is not compatible with the identity project of one partner.

By facilitating a better understanding of the processes of identity negotiation at the heart of couples' consumption, we elucidate the partitioning of shared practices. Indeed, we shed light on the identity issues that motivate the sharing of some practices, but not others. For example, our findings show that some couples only share practices concerning which the partners' respective identity projects are compatible and separately conduct the practices concerning which they diverge in order to avoid associated conflicts. Our findings also show that, so as to move toward their ideal of a cohesive couple, some couples who have strongly internalized norms according to which a united couple conducts their practices together tend to share most practices, especially those they consider to contribute significantly to shaping their couple identity. Moreover, we explain how partners manage to share certain practices concerning which they have different aspirations. We show that they can share a moment around the practice while each integrating into the practice performance a specific combination of actions, objects, and meanings that allows their respective identity projects (for themselves and their couple) to be fulfilled. For instance, two partners can watch the same TV series together while one of them, who does not blossom through the passivity of this activity, simultaneously rides an exercise bike to protect his or her identity as an athlete. Thus, by shedding light on the identity dynamics underlying consumption, our study extends the understanding of how the practice performance can be adapted so as to be shared while preventing identity tensions.

5. 1. 3. Contribution to the literature on digital technologies

Third, our research contributes to the existing literature on digital technologies and their influence on identity negotiation (Belk, 2013; Jenkins, 2006; 2013). More specifically, it shows how digital devices, by allowing for greater flexibility (Watkins, 2015) and ubiquity (Katz, 2009) in terms of consumption practices, help to adapt practice configurations in order to overcome identity tensions. Indeed, in the absence of the significant temporal flexibility offered by digital platforms, it would be much less feasible for couples, who would be constrained by the schedule imposed by linear TV channels, to frame their viewing hours and days in such a way as to strike a compromise between the diverging aspirations of both partners. Similarly, couples would face difficulty adopting an active viewing pattern that involves regularly pausing the viewing to read articles on the content of the episode in order to render their practice configuration consistent with the intellectual image they have of their couple. In addition, without the vast choice of TV series offered by digital platforms, it would be difficult for partners with different tastes to establish a shared viewing routine involving a TV series they are both willing to watch so as to evolve toward an identity balance that provides more space for their collective identity. Thus, our research shows that digital technologies can facilitate identity tension management and, consequently, collective identity negotiation.

This finding is in line with the study by Epp, Schau, and Price (2014), who show that technologies can play a significant role in families' adaptation of their consumption practices in an effort to nurture their collective identity despite physical distance. Our study, therefore, adds to the intense debate concerning the role of technologies in the family, which notably pits studies according to which technologies facilitate exchanges within the family (Le Douarin & Caradec, 2009; Williams & Williams, 2005) against other studies that claim they divert people's attention from the family members they live with and so contribute to the

distancing of family relationships (Danet, Martel, & Miljkovitch, 2017; Stone, 2009; Turkle, 2012).

5. 2. Managerial implications

The findings of this research also have a number of managerial implications. Actors both within and outside the digital television industry would directly benefit from a more in-depth understanding of the way couples negotiate their identities. There is room for services that support couples in implementing consumption strategies that minimize the identity tensions they face.

First, services could be developed to help couples better frame their practices, most notably by controlling the time they actually allocate to them. For example, regarding TV series viewing, platforms could design applications that monitor couples' consumption (tracking their viewing duration or frequency, the number of episodes watched in a row, etc.) or even block access to the platform at specific times. This would help couples to carve out the "right" place for such practices in accordance with the self-imposed norms associated with their conception of the ideal relationship.

Other services could be designed to help couples enrich the meaning of certain consumption practices at the heart of their identity tensions. Platforms could, for instance, develop offers that allow couples to add a dimension to their TV series viewing experience that is more beneficial to their relationship. To this end, they could offer additional features, such as fact sheets for each TV series that contain information about the filming or about historical and/or cultural events related to the program. This would provide couples who suffer from a perceived inconsistency between their high TV series consumption and the norms associated with the intellectual identity they aspire to for their couple with an opportunity to reduce the related tension by watching TV series, which they love to do, while

fulfilling the intellectual part of their couple identity. Marketers indeed have a role to play in proposing products or services that can help to reduce the tensions between real and ideal couple life (Epp & Thomas, 2018). In addition, cocooning kits adapted to TV series viewing could be designed, perhaps composed of blankets, heating cushions, pleasant incense, candles, or sweets, which would help couples turn their viewing sessions into an opportunity to spend quality and comfortable time together and become closer. Making this moment particularly beneficial for the relationship would elevate the meaning couples ascribe to this activity.

Furthermore, services could be developed to help couples who wish to achieve an identity balance that provides more space for their collective identity to share their activities by facilitating the organization of shared and routinized rendezvous. For instance, Netflix has introduced a "Teleparty" feature, which allows partners who are not in the same place to watch episodes in a synchronized way while chatting to one another. This allows them to maintain, despite physical distance, the bonding rituals that allow their collective identity to be expressed and fulfilled. Moreover, as the difficulty associated with finding a TV series that both partners like is recognized as a barrier to shared viewing by many couples, adaptations could be made to recommendation algorithms to facilitate the choice of TV series within the couple and, therefore, help couples who wish to share their viewing experience. Such algorithms are currently programmed to analyze the consumption of individual profiles without considering if the programs have been watched alone or as a couple. Allowing for a new profile representing the couple would allow for more suitable recommendations that are adapted to both partners when watching together and so would facilitate collective viewing. In addition to being based on the consumption history of this common profile, the recommendations for the couple profile could take into account the tastes of both partners on the basis of the individual consumption evidenced by their respective profiles. In addition, to facilitate shared consumption within the couple in a fun way, companies could follow the

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example of the ice-cream brand Cornetto, which launched TV series commitment rings that must both be near a couple's computer for an episode of the relevant TV series to be played.

Finally, to help partners who experience contradictory demands stemming from their collective and individual identities, brands could design offers that allow them to participate in collective viewing to nurture their couple identity while also distancing themselves from the activity to protect their individual identity. For example, sports equipment brands could market kits to be used while watching TV series and/or design exercise programs adapted to the duration of TV series episodes to help partners who feel the need to mark a distance between the collective viewing and their individual athletic identity.

5. 3. Avenues for future research

Our research is not exempt from limitations, which suggest valuable directions for future research. First, as collective identity is shaped by both culture (Edirisingha et al., 2015) and social class (Miller & Sassler, 2019), it would be interesting to gather data from a more diverse sample, most of our participants belonging to the middle/upper class in France. Even though the identity negotiation process observed among our few Moroccan respondents follows a similar logic to the processes of the other couples, it would be interesting to further explore the possible influence of culture on couple identity negotiation.

Second, only heterosexual couples were interviewed in this study. Thus, it would be interesting to extend the analysis by including same-sex couples. Indeed, our results show that couple identity negotiation is strongly influenced by the partners' ideas of their role within the couple and by the social stigma associated to those roles. The mere fact that same-sex couples may develop a shared identity project as a couple is in itself subject to strong stigmatization (Mohr & Fassinger, 2006), which might change the dynamics of the couple identity construction

and enactment. The same applies for other types of couples who potentially suffer from social stigma, such as inter-racial or inter-religious couples (Frost, 2011).

Third, the way in which couple identity negotiation evolves over couples' life cycle is worthy of future research. Indeed, as identity projects evolve over time (Schau, 2018; Schau et al., 2009), the identity tensions that couples face may likewise evolve over time, depending on different stages of life. For example, the tension a couple faces most is not necessarily the same at the beginning of their relationship, with the arrival of children, and upon retirement. Therefore, we invite researchers to investigate how tensions evolve according to the stage of the couple's life as well as how the strategies adopted in relation to those tensions evolve according to the maturity of the relationship.

CONCLUSION

This research contributes to a better understanding of family identity negotiation. We shed light on two processes at the heart of family identity negotiation through consumption: the management of the identity interplay within the family unit and the reconstruction of a family identity destabilized by disrupting events. Families being composed of multiple identity bundles that constantly interact with each other, sometimes in competing ways, managing the resulting identity tensions is indeed a daily challenge which largely shapes family identity negotiation. In addition, even if they families are not confronted with disrupting events on a daily basis, they all experience at some point in their lives, if not several times, MLDs which deeply destabilize their collective identity. Given the tremendous impact that such events may have on a family's collective sense of itself, the reconstruction process that follows is an essential challenge for families, which significantly influences family identity. These processes are therefore two fundamental dimensions of family identity negotiation through consumption. As a result, shedding light on them is essential for a more detailed understanding of family identity negotiation.

1. Theoretical contributions

1. 1. Contribution to the literature on family identity

This thesis contributes to the literature on family identity (Edirisingha, Ferguson, & Aitken, 2015; Moisio et al., 2004) in several ways.

First, this research sheds light on the origins of the lens of family identity, on its differentiation from the rest of family consumption research, as well as on its main logics and components. It shows the fertility of this lens is in terms of topics and theoretical contributions

to consumer research, filling the gap in consumer research of a comprehensive overview of the entire field of research that this lens has opened up. It furthermore shows how adopting this lens can offer concrete understanding and solutions to key consumption phenomena.

Second, we extend the literature on identity interplay management within the family unit (Epp & Price, 2008; 2011). While this literature highlights the existence of identity tensions that stem from the interaction between multiple identity bundles within the family unit, it does not identify the nature of these identity tensions, nor the strategies implemented to alleviate these tensions. We contribute to filling this gap by unveiling the three main tensions that couples experience (*identity imbalance*, *identity divergence*, and *social disconformity*) and the five main strategies they implement to alleviate these tensions (*framing*, *sharing adjustment*, *enriching*, *distancing*, and *deceiving)*. In addition, we highlight the important role of the normative ideas that members have of what an ideal couple or family should be in these identity tensions. We indeed show that, at the couple level, these tensions stem from misalignments between the partners' individual identities, the couple's collective identity, and internalized social norms.

Moreover, this research evidences one trigger –i.e., MLDs– of family identity destabilization and a market-based process of family identity reconstruction. Specifically, we theorize the process, central to family identity negotiation, through which the adoption, abandonment, or reconfiguration of brand-centric consumption practices participate in family identity reconstruction, by strengthening or renewing family structure, character, and generational orientation (Epp & Price, 2008). We more precisely unveil the three coping strategies that consumers use to minimize the tensions generated by exogenous MLDs: *ritualized structuring*, which helps clarify the limits and hierarchies of family identity bundles, which have been muddled by the MLD; *sharing revalorizing,* which contributes to strengthening family character, which has been weakened and shaken by the MLD; and

intergenerational romanticizing, which helps ensure intergenerational continuity, which has been halted by the MLD. And we show that brands facilitate the implementation of these strategies by delineating individual, relational, and collective times and activities; creating occasions for family gatherings and stimulating exchange; and conveying family history and legacy. We thereby extend previous research on identity reconstruction (McAlexander, Dufault, Martin, & Schouten, 2014; Schouten, 1991), by unveiling the processes at play for families, showing how they operate in the specific context of exogenous MLDs and enlightening the role of brands in this process (Batra, Ahuvia, & Bagozzi 2012; Fuschillo, Cayla, & Cova, 2022; Hollenbeck and Patrick 2016). Specifically, we show how this role differs from the one played by brands in the reconstruction of individual identity demonstrated by past research. Indeed, the reconstruction process of individual identity relies on associating with brands that make important dimensions of the consumer identity salient (Fournier, 1998) in a very active and conscious way, with consumers using brands as symbolic pools of meaning to (re)construct their self-project (Hollenbeck & Zinkhan, 2010). On the other hand, the reconstruction process of family identity is first and foremost relational and communication based, with brands playing both a linking and separating role (e.g., for bundle delineation).

1. ## 2. Contribution to the literature on sharing

This thesis also contributes to the literature on sharing (Belk, 2010; Belk & Llamas, 2012; He, Li, & Wang, 2023). First, we extend previous research on the necessary conditions for shared consumption to benefit collective identity building (Smith, Freeman, & Zabriskie, 2009). We show that sharing can be invaluable both in collective identity reconstruction and in the management of competing identity interplay within the group. Indeed, adjusting harmoniously the extent to which the practice is shared, and which parts of this practice are

shared, represents a key aspect of identity tension reduction. It helps rebalance a collective identity in the desired direction, strengthen this collective identity and make it more impervious to emerging tensions. Thus, by shedding light on the processes of family identity negotiation, we elucidate the partitioning of shared practices: we unveil the identity issues that motivate the sharing of some practices, but not others.

Our findings also suggest that the success of sharing for collective identity reconstruction depends on the degree of commitment of members to collective practices. This degree of commitment varies depending on the extent to which members perceive the sharing of specific practices as contributing to the preservation and reconstruction of their collective identity. By proposing the prism of collective identity reconstruction, we allow for a better understanding of the reasons why certain practices are shared and others are not.

1. *3. Contribution to the literature on digital technologies*

This research also contributes to research on the effects of digitalization on family life (Danet, Martel, & Miljkovitch, 2017; Turkle, 2012) and identity negotiation (Belk, 2013; Jenkins, 2006; 2013). It evidences the facilitating role of digital technologies in family identity negotiation. It shows how, by allowing for greater flexibility (Watkins, 2015) and ubiquity (Katz, 2009) in terms of consumption practices, digital devices help adapt practice configurations so as to overcome identity tensions, and thus shape the collective identity in the desired direction. It also evidences their significant role in family identity reconstruction after MLDs. Indeed, they contribute to recreate shared consumption moments, to maintain cherished family rituals, and to foster daily interactions as well as intra- and inter-generational transfers between members. This research thus extends the debate regarding the effect of technologies on family (Stone, 2009; Turkle, 2012; Williams & Williams, 2005).

We specifically highlight the particularly effective role of TV series in helping alleviate identity tensions and reconstruct destabilized collective identities. Indeed, the great adaptability of their practice configuration makes them particularly easy to share and allows members to interact despite the prevailing constraints imposed by exogeneous MLDs. What's more, they provide shared references that feed a common social reality within family members (Gomillion, Gabriel, Kawakami, & Young, 2017), which helps reduce the obstacles to socialization often encountered in times of exogenous MLDs (Cava et al., 2005). This reinforces the study led by Epp, Schau, and Price (2014), which shows that technologies can play a significant role in families' adaptation of their consumption practices in an effort to nurture their collective identity despite physical distance.

1. *4. Contribution to the literature on routines and rituals in consumption*

Finally, our research contributes to a better understanding of the role of consumption routines and rituals in family identity negotiation (Cappellini & Parsons, 2012; Yu, Veeck, & Yu, 2015). Our findings show that routines and rituals establishment is an important dimension of identity tensions management and collective identity reconstruction through consumption. For instance, it helps reorganize daily family life, reclarify the roles and responsibilities of each member, and rebalance individual and collective identities, so as to accommodate to a family's specific identity needs. It thereby contributes to preserving a threatened family identity and to making it evolve in the desired direction.

Moreover, our findings evidence the important role of consumption routines and rituals in the restoration of ontological security. When their daily life is strongly disrupted, consumers tend to adopt new routines and rituals, which provide them with reassuring reference points (Phipps & Ozanne, 2017). The routinization of daily life thus appears

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valuable in case of exogenous MLDs, which may be less the case in less destabilizing situations (Mimoun & Bardhi, 2022).

2. Avenues for future research

Our research is not exempt from limitations, which suggest valuable directions for future research. First, family identity being shaped by both culture (Edirisingha et al., 2015) and social class (Miller & Sassler, 2019), it would be interesting to investigate family identity negotiation with more varied samples of families. Indeed, most of our participants belong to the French middle/upper class. Even though the identity negotiation process observed among our few Moroccan and Swiss respondents follows a similar logic to the processes of the French families interviewed, it would be interesting to further explore the possible influence of culture on couple and family negotiation. For instance, family members' roles being more or less formalized depending on the culture, it would be interesting to investigate how the rigidity of family roles affects the processes of identity interplay management and family identity reconstruction we propose. In addition, our findings evidence the significant role of digital technologies, and in particular of TV series, in family identity negotiation. As research shows that the relationship to TV content varies depending on the social class (Greenberg & Dominick, 1969; Skeggs & Wood, 2011), we call future research to interview families from varied social backgrounds.

Second, even though we sought to interview families with varied profiles, it seems relevant for future research to broaden even further the diversity of the families interviewed. For instance, it would be interesting to extend the analysis by including families with same-sex parents. Indeed, our findings show that couple and family identity negotiation is greatly shaped by the partners' ideas of their role within the couple and the family, as well as by the associated social stigma. The mere fact that same-sex couples may develop a shared identity project as a family is in itself

subject to strong stigmatization (Mohr & Fassinger, 2006), which might change the dynamics of the family identity negotiation. Likewise, it would be interesting to examine identity dynamics underlying the consumption of single-parent families. Consumption indeed contributes greatly to the construction of a new family identity, notably through the creation of new relationships between single parents and their children (Chour, 2017).

Third, we recommend future research to investigate how the process of family identity negotiation through consumption evolves over families' life cycle. Indeed, the identity tensions that families face may vary depending on stages in the family life cycle. For example, it is likely that the most keenly experienced tensions are not the same for a young couple as for a family with adult children. Likewise, how MLDs affect family identity and how families deal with the destabilization of their collective identity may vary depending on their stage in the life cycle.

Fourth, we encourage future research to take further into account current changes affecting family when investigating family identity. Indeed, family is at the heart of major transformations (Price & Epp, 2005; Segalen, 2010). For instance, the progressive transition from a solid to a liquid society (Bauman, 2000; 2007) gradually breaks old social structures down (Bauman, 2000); thus, while marriage has long been considered an immutable foundation of society, it is now more unstable and less durable (Bauman, 2003). A great diversity of experience of family life is now common and several sets of potential kin link a growing proportion of children and adults (Déchaux, 2009; Finch & Mason, 2013), making today's family plural (Guillot, 2018; de Singly, 2017) and family boundaries more malleable (Costa, 2013). In addition, liquidity makes a whole host of components of family life less structured and more volatile, starting with family rituals and daily routines, attenuating their perpetuation over generations. If all these upheavals that affect family appear implicitly in our findings and analysis, they are not the focus of this dissertation. We thus call future research to further examine how liquidity, among others, affects key elements of family identity. We

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more broadly raise the question of the future of family. Indeed, family being an institution in

perpetual evolution (Ezan & Mazarguil, 2014), we can wonder to what extent and how family

identity negotiation is and will be affected by these profound changes.

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« UN SENTIMENT DE QUI NOUS SOMMES » :
VERS UNE MEILLEURE COMPRÉHENSION DE LA NÉGOCIATION
DE L'IDENTITÉ FAMILIALE À TRAVERS LA CONSOMMATION

En tant qu'unité sociale majeure qui façonne les comportements de consommation, la famille est un sujet de plus en plus important dans la recherche sur la consommation. Cette thèse par articles vise à améliorer la compréhension du processus de négociation de l'identité familiale. Le premier article (conceptuel) démontre la pertinence du prisme de l'identité familiale pour éclairer de nombreuses pratiques de consommation. Il donne un aperçu complet de la fécondité de ce prisme en termes de sujets de recherche et de contributions théoriques et montre comment son adoption peut offrir une compréhension concrète et des solutions aux tendances de consommation actuelles. Le deuxième article (empirique) se concentre sur le processus de reconstruction par la consommation d'une identité familiale déstabilisée par un bouleversement majeur de la vie. Il dévoile les stratégies de consommation que les consommateurs utilisent pour minimiser les tensions générées par les perturbations majeures de la vie exogènes qui déstabilisent l'identité familiale et met en évidence le rôle des marques dans chacune de ces stratégies. Le troisième article (empirique) s'intéresse à la gestion par la consommation des tensions qui résultent des interactions identitaires au sein des couples. Il dévoile les tensions identitaires que les couples vivent lors de la négociation de leurs identités et les stratégies de consommation qu'ils mettent en œuvre au quotidien pour atténuer ces tensions. Ensemble, ces trois études contribuent à une meilleure compréhension de la négociation de l'identité familiale, tant dans des contextes de consommation quotidienne que dans des moments de consommation plus exceptionnels. Ce faisant, cette thèse contribue à la littérature sur l'identité familiale et éclaire toute une série de comportements de consommation.

Mots clés : Négociation de l'Identité Familiale, Consommation Familiale, Gestion des Tensions Identitaires, Reconstruction Identitaire, Perturbations Majeures de la Vie, Consumer Culture Theory.

"A SENSE OF WHO WE ARE":
TOWARDS A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF FAMILY IDENTITY NEGOTIATION THROUGH CONSUMPTION

As a major social unit that shapes consumption behaviors, family is a growing topic in consumer research. This paper-based dissertation aims at improving the understanding of the process of negotiation of family identity. The first (conceptual) article demonstrates the relevance of the lens of family identity to enlighten many consumption practices. It provides a comprehensive overview of the fertility of this lens in terms of research topics and theoretical contributions and shows how adopting it can offer concrete understanding and solutions to major current consumption trends. The second (empirical) article focuses on the reconstruction process through consumption of a destabilized family identity after a major life disruption. It uncovers the market-based strategies that consumers implement to minimize the tensions generated by exogenous major life disruptions that destabilize family identity and unveils the specific role of brands in each of these strategies. The third (empirical) article deals with the management through consumption of tensions that result from identity interplay within couples. It unveils identity tensions that couples experience while negotiating their identities, as well as the consumption strategies that they implement on a daily basis to navigate these tensions. All together, these three studies contribute to a better understanding of family identity negotiation, both in mundane consumption contexts and more exceptional consumption moments. This doctoral research thus contributes to the literature on family identity and sheds lights on a whole range of consumer behaviors.

Keywords: Family identity negotiation, Family consumption, Identity tensions management, Identity reconstruction, Major life disruptions, Consumer culture theory.