

Pride of Ownership: An Identity Based Model

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Final version published as: Ahuvia, Aaron, Nitika Garg, Rajeev Batra, Brent McFerran, and Pablo Brice de Diesbach, "Pride of Ownership: An Identity-Based Model," *Journal of the Association for Consumer Research*. 3(2)

<https://doi.org/10.1086/697076>

A submission to:

BRAND RELATIONSHIPS, EMOTIONS, AND THE SELF

Issue Editors: C. Whan Park and Debbie MacInnis

Journal of the Association for Consumer Research | Volume 3, Issue 2

Abstract

Pride of ownership is explored in a series of depth interviews utilizing a new "surfacing" methodology. Results support some past findings, but also uncover some new and unexpected aspects. Consistent with past research, pride of ownership is linked to a brand's or product's ability to help consumers construct a positive identity. Specifically, we find that pride of ownership is related to constructing five major aspects of identity: cultivating personal taste, achieving non-dependence and adulthood, achieving social status, building close relationships, and connecting to groups. These five implicit identity goals are ordered based on the extent to which each aspect of identity is part of the independent-self (i.e. personal taste) or the interdependent-self (i.e. social roles and connecting to groups). We introduce the terms *independent pride* and *interdependent pride* to refer to pride that helps construct the independent and interdependent aspects of the self, respectively. In addition, this research uncovers several ways that consumer's pride of ownership changes over time. Conclusions are drawn for further theory-building and for managers.

Introduction

In 2009, Tata Motors launched "the world's cheapest car" in India, priced at a mere US\$2500. It was aimed at revolutionizing how millions of Indians travelled – often carrying entire families dangerously on two-wheeler scooters and motorcycles – by making safer, more comfortable travel affordable. Its cost-reducing design and manufacturing won plaudits and awards from all over the world (Chattopadhyay, Batra and Ozsomer 2012, p.68). Initial sales were high, but plummeted soon for a variety of reasons – including its positioning as "the world's cheapest car." "That was a mistake," said Tata Motors' Chairman Ratan Tata, "it gave the car a stigma." Apparently, even for poor Indians, buying "the world's cheapest car" did not provide the "pride of ownership" they were looking for.

While the pride felt for luxury products has received attention (e.g. McFerran, Aquino, and Tracy 2014), such pride of ownership – despite its obvious centrality to consumer-brand relationships -- is conspicuously absent from the standard lists of consumption or advertising emotions (e.g., Batra and Ray 1986; Richins 1997), and thus cries out for more research.

Below, we report our findings from a qualitative, exploratory investigation into pride of ownership, using a new “surfacing” methodology. Building on prior work, we explore this key research question: Based upon consumers’ lived experiences of pride of ownership, what are its features, antecedents, and consequences? We first provide a brief review of relevant literature and a description of our qualitative “surfacing” methodology. We then present our results, discussing five aspects of identity-building that are strongly linked to pride of ownership. These serve as *implicit identity goals*, in that the more each of these is achieved, the stronger the consumer’s feelings of pride. We conclude with some implications.

Brief Literature Review

The Emotion of Pride

Generally, much of what we know about the conceptualization of pride comes from psychology (a detailed literature review with supporting references appears in Web Appendix A). Culturally, pride is sometimes seen as positive (e.g., "she takes pride in her work") and at other times seen as negative (e.g., the "sin of pride"). This distinction has given rise to a particularly influential current theory: the two-facet model of pride (Tracy and Robins 2007). This model conceptualizes pride as having two facets, authentic and hubristic. Authentic pride arises from achievements that are attributed to internal, unstable, and controllable factors (e.g., “I did well because I worked hard”); in contrast, hubristic pride emerges when achievements are attributed to internal, stable, and uncontrollable causes (e.g., “I did well because I am brilliant”) (Huang et al. 2014; Tracy and Robins 2007).

It is noteworthy that while there are important differences between the two, both facets of pride emphasize the ‘self’ as the focal agent responsible for an outcome (Tracy and Robins 2007; see also Williams, Coleman, Morales and Cesareo 2018). For the current study, it is useful to combine authentic and hubristic pride into a single summary statement that *the two-facet model predicts that pride will increase when a person reflects on their (a) achievements, (b) positive behaviors, or (c) positive traits*, and conversely that pride will decrease if these are undermined. Our data show that, in the context of brands, while these relationships do exist, there are other important reasons as well why consumers can develop pride of ownership.

Pride in Consumption

For the current work, though we emphasize our findings concerning brands, we conceptualize pride of ownership broadly, as including not only tangible objects but also intangible consumption experiences the consumer has purchased or experienced, and feels a sense of psychological ownership over. Therefore, we use the term *pride-object* to refer to anything respondents claimed to be proud of, including products, brands, possessions,

consumption experiences, and consumption activities. Given the focus of this special issue, we highlight implications for brands.

The vast majority of prior work on pride in consumer research (see literature review in Web Appendix A) is experimental (although see Decrop and Derbaix 2010 for a qualitative exception, and Kirk, Swain, and Gaskin 2015 for a conceptual one). In one example, Salerno, Laran and Janiszewski (2015) examined the effect of pride on self-regulatory behavior. Experimentally, this involved manipulating feelings of pride (vs. control), along with other factors (e.g., self-regulatory goals) and testing their joint effect on virtuous choices (e.g., granola bars over M&Ms). Huang, Dong and Mukhopadhyay (2014) used a similar paradigm, manipulating pride (in this case, separating authentic from hubristic) and assessing uniqueness-seeking as the dependent measure. Several other works follow a similar structure, with pride examined as a momentary, incidental (as opposed to integral) feeling induced by researchers and testing its effects on subsequent consumption decisions (though occasionally, pride is treated as a chronic personality trait). Despite the relevance of this prior research, most of it only studies some particular consequences of momentarily-induced pride. In contrast, we explore here the multiple consequences of naturally-emerging pride in the acquisition and long-term ownership (and possible disposal) of consumption objects.

The question of how pride of ownership functions within an ongoing consumer-brand relationship¹ is therefore an appropriate next step in building on the extant literature. There is of course, a rich literature on how consumers develop relational bonds with brands, possessions, and activities (Aggarwal 2004; Ahuvia 2005; Batra et al. 2012; Belk 1988; Bellizza and Keinan 2014; Chang and Chieng 2006; Chaplin and John 2005; Escalas and Bettman 2003; 2005; Fournier 1998; Kleine and Baker 2004; MacInnis, Park, Priester 2014; Park, Eisengerich and Park 2013; Richins 1994; Thompson, MacInnis and Park 2005, and others).² These consumer relationships -- like all relationships -- are a series of interactions unfolding over time. Prior studies on pride, the majority of which are priming experiments with situational measures, are ill-suited to fully capture how pride of ownership functions over time within a consumer relationship. We explore the relational aspects of pride of ownership here, using a new qualitative methodology described below.

Methodology

This research was conducted using a qualitative methodology initiated in Ahuvia (2005), refined in Batra, Ahuvia, Bagozzi (2012), and now formally introduced here as a distinct process.

¹ Following common practice, we use the term “consumer-brand relationship” broadly, to include not only relationships with brands per se., but also relationships with other consumption possessions (e.g. ‘my car’) and consumption activities (e.g. ‘going out to eat’).

² Because of space limitations, some of these References are listed in Web Appendix A rather than in this main text.

Surfacing Methodology

This methodology, which we call *surfacing*, is a variant of the widely used long interview (McCracken 1988) and grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967) approaches. Surfacing is designed to uncover the content and scope of scientific constructs, such as pride, which correspond to commonly used everyday terms. In these cases, understanding the content and scope of the scientific construct requires researchers to uncover the psychological process or state that is denoted by the focal term. In the present case, when people say they are proud, what psychological state or process are they referring to and what are its attributes?

Surfacing is premised on the fact that for most people, their concept of a psychological phenomenon such as pride exists as tacit knowledge. They have no trouble using the word "pride", and often have a fairly nuanced notion of what it is, but they cannot readily bring this tacit knowledge to the surface in a way that would allow them to accurately and completely articulate it.

To understand the logic behind the surfacing methodology, consider a classic example of tacit knowledge: tying one's shoe. Suppose someone asked you to write step by step instructions for tying shoe laces. If you are like most people, you know how to tie your shoes, yet you would not readily be able to verbalize the process. One way to solve this problem would be to watch yourself tie your shoes and write down what you see yourself doing. Similarly, surfacing interviews include questions that require respondents to use the focal concept (in this case *pride*) to perform a number of mental tasks. Through introspection, respondents watch themselves performing these tasks and describe their mental activity to the researcher. These mental tasks include sorting pride objects based on how much pride they generate, comparing pride objects to each other, projective questions that require metaphorical thinking about pride, and summarizing any insights the respondent gained through the interview. The main interviews lasted 1.5-2 hours.

Sorting

Prior to the main interview, respondents participated in an intake interview or written survey. Along with getting some basic demographic information, these intake questions asked respondents if there were any things they were proud to own and if so, what they were. In the intake survey, some respondents said they were proud of things that fell outside of the topic for this study, but in the interviews we focused more narrowly on pride of ownership, that is, pride in objects or experiences that respondents had purchased or that had been purchased for them. Providing a list of pride-objects in the intake survey encouraged respondents to think about pride of ownership and activate relevant mental schemas prior to the main interview. When respondents arrived at the interview, they were provided with index cards, each listing one of the pride-objects they had mentioned earlier. They were then asked if there were any other pride-objects they would like to add. If so, these were also written on index cards.

In addition to providing a list of pride-objects to be used in the rest of the interview, this question required the respondent to use their tacit knowledge about pride in a fairly simple

way: to distinguish between things that they were, or were not, proud of. Later in the interview, respondents used their concept of pride to do a more complex sorting task in which they placed their pride-objects into three groups, objects for which: (1) their pride has increased over time, (2) their pride has stayed the same over time, or (3) their pride has decreased over time. This activity focused on changes in pride over time, and was consistent with our interest in how pride evolves and changes over the course of consumer-brand relationships. After each sorting task at the interview, respondents discussed the mental process and criteria they had just used to perform that task.

Comparing

The index cards listing the pride-objects were divided into two stacks. The respondent was asked to take the top card from each stack and compare them, telling the interviewer which item they were prouder of and what they were thinking about as they made that comparison.

Next, respondents completed two ranking tasks. In the first of these respondents lined up the index cards from most proud to least proud. This ranking required a more comprehensive series of paired comparisons between pride-objects similar to what they had just done. This second comparison task proved useful, as having respondents complete this ranking task surfaced new information that had not previously been attained through the paired comparison task.

Respondents were then asked to re-rank each of the pride-objects, this time from most loved to least loved, and explain how their thought process differed between love and pride. Since there are many commonalities between the things we love and the things we are proud of, this task provided insight into the difference and similarities between these two constructs (fully discussing these results is beyond the scope of the current paper).

Metaphorical Thinking

To get respondents to engage in imaginative thought using their concept of pride, respondents were given a large group of evocative visual images. Respondents were asked to select a few of the images that they thought were metaphorically related to pride of ownership and to discuss those perceived connections.

Summarizing

For the respondent, the surfacing questions generated several thoughts about pride, and sometimes useful insights as well. To be sure we had 'harvested' all of these, following the three mental tasks of sorting, comparing, and metaphorical thinking, respondents were then asked if they had any other thoughts about pride that they wanted to share, if they had learned anything new from the interview, and how they would define pride.

Other Interview Questions

Along with the surfacing questions, respondents were asked background questions about their life, questions about using the pride-objects in social settings, and a projective question in which they imagined that their pride object was magically transformed into an

animal. The interviews also included questions that relate to topics beyond the scope of the current paper.

Respondents

Based on their demographics as well as the intake interviews asking what they were proud to own, 10 respondents were selected who were proud to own various branded products. They are identified herein by aliases. This sample size is typical of depth interview research; it is the same as Batra et al. (2012) and is larger than Ahuvia (2005). All respondents were adult professionals (ages 26-47), and some were enrolled part or full time in MS programs in the US (4 interviews) or Australia (6 interviews). Respondents were 5 women and 5 men. Culturally, respondents were 2 Americans, 2 Indians studying in the US, 3 Australians, and 3 Indians studying in Australia. Table B-1 in Web Appendix B identifies respondents by alias and lists their pride-objects ordered from most to least pride.

Data Analysis

All interviews were recorded and transcribed, then coded by multiple researchers. A new code was added each time a statement did not fit an existing code. The coding continued until a complete analysis of all interviews produced no new categories. These initial codes were then sorted into groups based on face-similarity and relevance to previous research. These researchers followed the collaborative process used in interpretive content analysis (Ahuvia 2001), hence PRL or other measures of intercoder agreement were not appropriate. This process resulted in several major themes, many of which (but not all) are reported here.

Results and Discussion

Brand Talk

Despite asking respondents about things they had purchased (or that had been purchased for them), brand names were only occasionally mentioned in the interviews. In part, this may be due to the fact that respondents were mostly talking about things they already owned or used. In normal conversation people often say things such as “I’m thinking of buying a Ford,” but once they own the car, they simply refer to it as “my car.” So, it was common for respondents to talk about all sorts of branded products they were proud to own, without explicitly using the brand name. This common speech pattern does not imply that the brand name was, or was not, important in the purchase decision.

Identity

Pride is deeply enmeshed with identity (Pierce 2003, Pierce et al. 2001; Belk 2013). The important role that identity plays in pride of ownership was noted by Vihaan when, at the end of the interview, he realized that the things he is most proud of are not the most expensive items, but rather the items that are most a part of who he is (i.e., “most close to me”).

Vihaan: Yeah. If I look at it, I see that things that I'm more proud of are much cheaper ... than the other ones, right? Because the property was much more expensive, the car was more expensive, but then I actually-- the things that are

very close to me, and I'm very proud of are actually not that expensive, to be honest.

Identity construction was so important to pride of ownership that being part of a person's identity, in and of itself, led to increased pride. Here, Shaurya explains that he is prouder of his education than he is of his house, because his education becomes a permanent part of who he is, in a way that his house does not.

Shaurya: Education is such a thing which will stay with me forever A house is a thing maybe tomorrow I have to do away with it. But education, even if I tear that piece of degree (i.e. even if a tear up my diploma), but still the knowledge which I gain I have it with me.

Pride of Ownership, A Big Picture Model

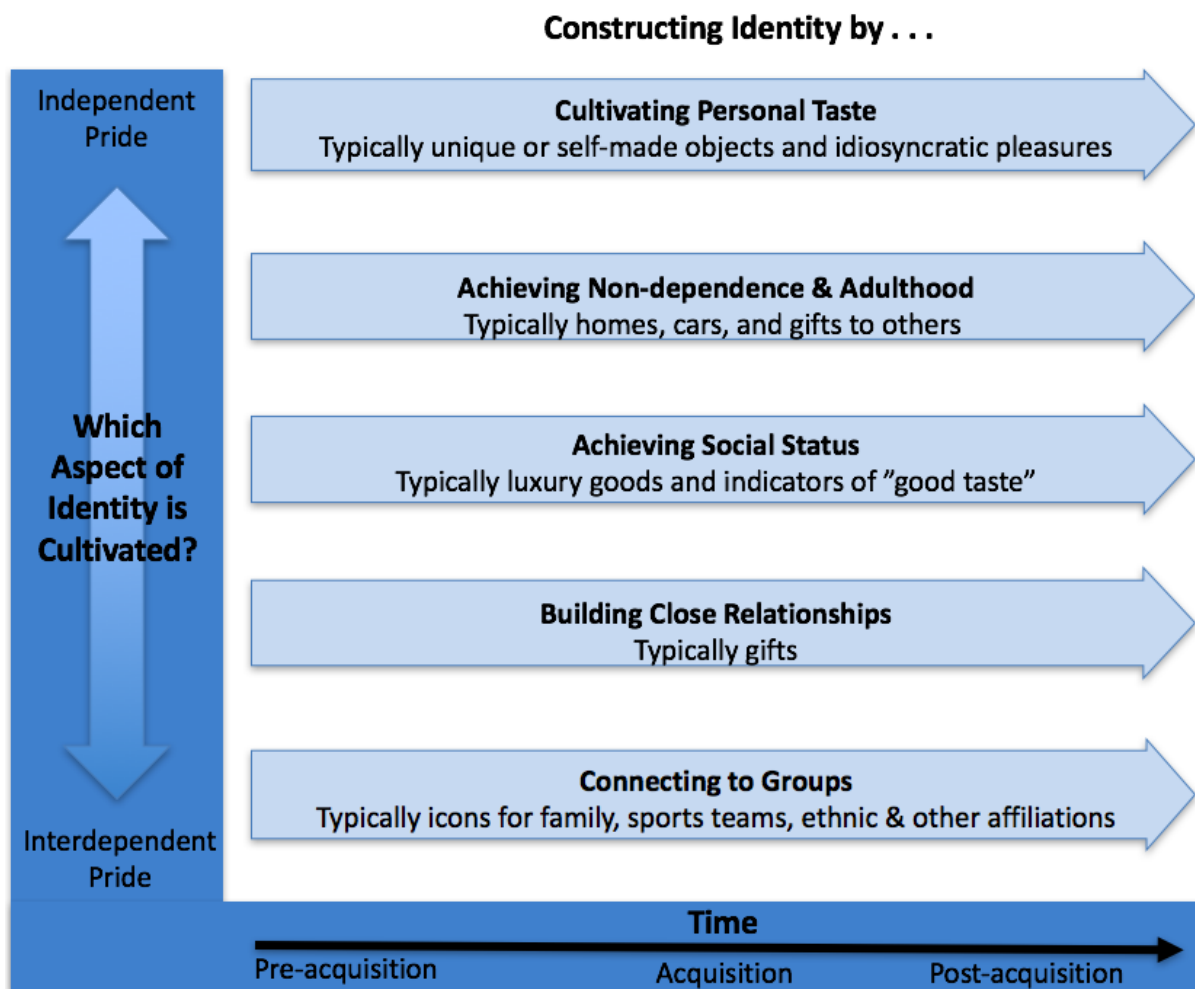
Figure 1 depicts our overall model for pride of ownership. The arrows depict the five major implicit identity goals that emerged in the interviews, reflecting specific ways in which pride of ownership is related to identity construction. These are *goals*, in that achieving them increases the consumer's pride of ownership. They are *implicit* in that consumers need not be consciously aware of them. These goals are often complementary, and it was quite common for a pride object to help construct several of these aspects of identity.

Identity construction occurs with regard to both the independent and interdependent aspects of the self (Markus & Kitayama, 2010; Wong & Ahuvia, 1998). The independent self refers to the inner private aspects of identity including emotions, desires, personal values, memories, etc. The interdependent self refers to the outer public aspects of identity including social roles, titles, social relationships, and the public persona presented to others. We introduce the terms *independent pride* and *interdependent pride* to refer to pride that helps construct the independent and interdependent aspects of the self, respectively. An example of independent pride would be taking pride in doing something that you personally considered to be the right thing, yet keeping your behaviour private. On the other hand, a respondent, Amit, provided an excellent explanation of interdependent pride when he said that "You feel proud of something if in your mind you think other people would think well of you as a result." Independent and interdependent pride are useful theoretical concepts, but none of the real instances of pride studied here were purely one or the other; all were mixtures of these two ideal types.

As we move through each goal in figure 1 from top to bottom, the focus gradually shifts from independent (e.g. personal taste) to more interdependent (e.g. connecting to groups) aspects of identity.

The process of developing and experiencing pride of ownership occurs over time, as depicted on the x-axis.

Figure 1



Goal 1: Cultivating Personal Taste

Respondents often linked their pride of ownership to the uniqueness of the pride object. A close reading of the interviews showed that the preference for unique or rare pride objects actually stems from two different phenomena. Here, we discuss unique pride objects as representations of individual taste. In the later section on social status, we discuss unique or rare pride objects valued for their exclusivity. Unique or rare pride object sometimes served both of these goals simultaneously.

Respondents frequently used the extent to which a pride object expressed their identity, as a basis for judging how proud they were to own it. Rachel talks about being proud of her T-shirts for some entertainment brands.

Rachel: I like silly t-shirts. I've got t-shirts for like dealing with Buffy and Angel, and those two shows. And Gilmore Girls, and I don't know, I just like them. I like getting to buy my own clothes, because it just is an individual choice and it helps to express my personality . . .

Rachel calls these t-shirts "silly", implying that they are not trophies of some great achievement; rather, they simply express her personality. Shows such as Buffy, Angel, and the Gilmore Girls are not conventional status symbols, yet pride can still be an important part of their appeal for the right consumer.

Buying something helps integrate it into the consumer's identity, but actually making or modifying something is even more powerful in this regard (Ahuvia, Batra, and Bagozzi 2009; Dahl and Moreau 2007; Mochon et al. 2012), with the level of pride increasing with the resources (money, time and effort) spent on the acquisition or customization of the object (Kirk, Swain, and Gaskin 2015; Pierce 2003). Such creative personalization and effort often also leads to feelings of self-competence and self-efficacy (Dahl and Moreau 2007; Thompson and Norton 2011). Despite the fact that our questions asked specifically about things that had been purchased, respondents sometimes mentioned items they had made, and frequently mentioned products they had creatively modified (which may also increase pride by making the pride-object more of an achievement).

Cindy: I've renovated two of the rooms (in my home). So, I'm proud that I got to design and choose aspects of the house. That's been a very big sense of pride for me . . . it's quite powerful when you get to manipulate your environment to the point that you are expressing your creativity in a practical way.

Divit: "I didn't like the way it was a simple car, so I wanted to have a bit highlighted. So, I used some LEDs and inside I changed with the high-sounding systems and stuff like that. I just made it."

Goal 2: Achieving Non-dependence & Adulthood

One pervasive and striking theme in the interviews – new to this literature -- was that the pride of ownership was particularly linked to objects that signified *adulthood via independence, autonomy, and responsibility*. Feelings of adulthood were frequently connected to financial achievements:

Rachel: (My laptop is) an incredibly expensive item and I actually managed to buy it myself. . . .I guess I kind of proved myself as a grown up.

Generally, people were proud of things that they saw as excellent (in quality), such as Rachel's laptop. Yet, next, we will see that Sarah was very proud of her first car that she got while still in high school, even though when she bought it, it was used and in terrible condition (and hence, as the quote begins, would not help her "become friends with the cheerleaders").

Sarah: By the time I had the car it was less like "I want to be friends with the cheerleaders" than "I want my independence, I want to go away to college, I want to get my own apartment" . . . It was more like: hey, I have my own independent transportation and I can do what I want. Sometimes it would be like, wow my car is really noisy and nobody else's is, but I think looking back at it now, having my own transportation and independence was more important than having a good showpiece.

Respondents also went out of their way to stress how much effort and self-sacrifice they put into their pride-objects or associated activities (c.f. Pierce 2001). For instance, of all the things that Rachel is proud to own, she is most proud of her university degrees because compared to her other pride-objects . . .

Rachel: it took a lot more work to get (the degrees). . . It took six soul-destroying years. And I've finally graduated. And I decided to splurge and get them framed after graduating. That's really expensive, but I did it (...) But I like them because I earned them through blood, sweat, and tears, and actual blood on occasion (...) I don't know, I worked really hard for them and I was proud of myself for achieving them because there were many times when I thought, "This is too exhausting, I can't do it, I'm going to quit," and then I didn't.

Every quote about effort and sacrifice is in the context of a notable achievement. This suggests that achievement leads to pride, while effort and sacrifice moderate that relationship.

It could be argued that these particular findings emerge because of the age group into which most of our respondents fell. However, pride stemming from demonstrating responsibility, autonomy, and adulthood was not limited to objects acquired when the respondent was in their teens or twenties. Here, Cindy, a 47-year-old mother of two, talks about her pride in her home that she bought later in life, and how her pride is derived from the adult characteristics of autonomy and responsibility.

Interviewer: Now, you said . . . that you feel proud of your home because you worked for it. . . . Now, what happened as a result of that?

Cindy: I became very grown up. So, you become very responsible and worrying about things that I've never been exposed to before, like mortgages and rights, and all those kind of-- it kind of is a very different aspect to how I saw it as a renter. It was like, "Oh, that's the owner's problem." But now as an owner, it's my problem. . . .

Buying a home is a straightforward symbol of adulthood and independence, but so is learning to leave one's home. Amit was proud of his trip to Goa in part because it was "the first time I was traveling on my own." Priya, another respondent, discussed how she was proud of traveling with her own money because it signified autonomy, achievement, and personal growth toward adult capabilities.

Goal 3: Achieving Social Status

Pride objects also help their owners achieve hierarchical social status, often through the display of either economic capital (i.e., wealth) or cultural capital (i.e., sophistication, intelligence, and good taste (Holt 1998)). Here Divit provides an example of both types of capital when discussing his watches:

Divit: I own Calvin Kleins, I own Lacoste, I own Guccis . . . a couple of Fossils. So, I have about 10 watches . . . I feel proud because again, they are part of my definition. . . . I wear them with pride ... towards a feeling of completeness. There is something in that watch and that brand that has been liked by me and many others. And that defines in part that I have a good taste on one particular product or a commodity that's there in the market to be owned. So again, that defines my taste, my top level, my style . . . My career is in management. And one part of management is the way how you dress, how you look, how you feel, and the way you carry yourself. (Watches are) one part of that design and that look that makes you feel complete.

What counts as cultural capital depends on the subculture one inhabits. Within Divit's business culture, owning expensive watches is often seen as indicating both wealth and taste. But among high education consumers who make cultural capital their primary social asset (i.e., the people some businesspeople refer to as "liberal elites"), a fancy watch may be considered gauche. For them, pride of ownership is more likely to be found in art.

Max: I've just got a few different artworks that I've collected over the years. Some that are made by a couple of different friends, and, yeah, why I'm proud of them? Yeah, because they have a certain value artistically, obviously, and they're nice to look at, and people are impressed by that, I guess.

The fact that he is interested enough in art to buy some original paintings, and that the paintings "have a certain value artistically", which is recognized by others, displays cultural capital on his part.

While *what* you own is an important part of pride of ownership, frequently, respondents put much more stress on what they had to go through to acquire and maintain the pride object. This is true for all five implicit goals, but it is especially true for the previous goal of achieving non-dependence and adulthood, and for the current goal of achieving social status. In this way, the pride-object often functions as a trophy representing an achievement – that is, a status symbol (Veblen 1899), more so when the object is consumed in a socially visible manner (Berger and Heath 2007).

The interdependent self refers to the ways we define ourselves through our relationship to other people. Although the desire for high social status is sometimes seen as an individualistic ambition, it is nonetheless an aspect of the interdependent self (Wong & Ahuvia, 1998). Many respondents used social comparison to gauge the extent of their achievement (e.g. Griskevicius et.al. 2010). For example, Cindy was the first person in several generations of her family to break out of poverty and into a middle-class life. Although her lifestyle might not be a source of pride to everyone, it was a huge source of pride for her because of her social comparison to her family.

Cindy: I'm the first person in my first family to own a home . . . So, I come from a long line of people who have never really owned a home, a lot of public housing, Department of Housing, and things like that. So, I feel like I've broken a tradition of, yeah, not having that. And it's interesting because my family don't relate to that. They're kind of like-- they're very proud of me, but they kind of think, "Oh, why you would own your own home if you can have housing?" So, I feel very proud that I've broken the mindset . . . So, I'm very proud of that.

Social comparison was central to many other quotes about the rarity of the pride objects as indicating their exclusivity. Shaurya expresses this underlying idea when he explains why it is inappropriate to be proud of one's cell phone: "There is nothing to be proud of -- Everybody has a cell phone." The same rationale is offered by Vihaan in discussing why he is prouder of his Alienware laptop than he is of his phone. Phones are very common, "but not everybody has an Alienware" computer, he notes.

Goal 4: Building Close Relationships

Building on the interdependent side of identity, we find evidence of pride objects serving as relationship markers (Ahuvia, 2015) or functioning to support close relationships. This was often seen in feeling proud to own a gift one had received from someone important, and taking pride in gifts given to others. In these cases, the intensity of felt pride was linked in part to the value of the gift but more so, to the value the person placed in the social relationship. Here, Sam explains why he is prouder of a necklace he received as a gift from an Afghani woman he had hoped to marry than he is of a camera and a vase, both of which had also been gifts.

Interviewer: The necklace, why (are you prouder of that then you are of) the camera?

Sam: . . . because I knew her (the woman who gave him the necklace) a lot better than I knew this guy (the guy who gave him the camera) or even this guy (the guy who gave him the vase).

Importantly, the amount of pride felt for relationship markers such as gifts is not fixed at the time the item is acquired. Rather, the level of pride closely tracks changes to the closeness of the social relationship going forward. For example, Sam was proud to own a coin he received as a gift from his father, but that pride lessened considerably when his relationship with his dad became more distant. As another example, Amit was proud of a trip he took to Goa with friends, and the pride he feels about that trip is very relationship linked. However, those relationships have faded somewhat over time, and thus his pride in the trip has also faded. At the end of the interview, Amit was asked if there was anything he noticed about his answers in the interview that surprised him. He replied:

Amit: Yeah, actually one thing did come to my mind. It was how (the things I am proud of are) related to the people or with the group, . . . and (how the extent of my pride) has actually changed over time. . . . When you ask me about it-- I got thinking, "Okay, so we were good friends back then." So maybe that was a special trip for me back then but now it is not the same because my relationship with those people has been different from what it was back then. . . . Over time, the intensity of having pride in something is (connected) with the relationship (with the people).

Having pride in owning things that mark or support social relationships has a strong moral aspect. The high value that Cindy places in her relationships comes through clearly as she talks about the pride she takes in traveling. And while she definitely enjoys these trips, her comments also convey that she believes there is a moral value in maintaining these relationships as the "right thing to do".

Cindy: Well, I feel proud because a lot of my travel has been to do with family, connecting with family. Yes. So, I've always traveled a lot to England to see my father, and my aunties, my grandma. . . . So, from when I was 16, I decided that that was quite a strong connection. So, from 16, I kind of traveled a lot back to the UK. So, I feel proud of that because I've been responsible for maintaining a lot of relationships because it would be easy just to let it go because you're so far

away. You can just say, "Oh yeah, later, later." And then all of a sudden, it's five years later, and you think, "Oh, I haven't seen my mom for five years or my aunties." So, I feel proud that I've been taking the responsibility to maintain that, even though it costs a fortune, as you know.

Having established that maintaining her close relationships is a strong value for Cindy, we can see evidence of that value in her explanation of why she is prouder of her travel than she is of her diary.

Interviewer: So, the next one is travel and your diary (which are you more proud of?).

Cindy: Okay. It has to be travel, it's more important. . . . Relationships, yeah. Again.

Cindy's greater pride in her travel (over her diary) is not based on her believing that, say, her travel was more unique, more wonderful, or more expensive (for examples) than the other items. Rather, her greater pride is an expression of the high moral value she places on maintaining her relationships.

Goal 5: Connecting to Groups

Pride objects helped consumers connect to groups such as ethnic identities, sports teams (Decrop and Derbaix, 2010), and brand communities. For example, Vihaan talks about his pride in the Chelsea soccer club because he identifies with the ethos and personality of the team. He sees this passion as very stable ("you can change your religion but you can't change your football team"), and he fell in love with Chelsea because there was a special fit between that club and himself ("I used to play soccer, they used to play my kind of soccer"). Vihaan's involvement with the team and his pride in it helps him connect with a larger community.

Vihaan: So, we have the Chelsea Fan Club as well. So, I'm a part of that... I talk to [other fans] a lot – you understand their point of view. I think it helps me to understand different cultures as well, to be honest. I know a lot of people from the African countries are huge Chelsea fans because a lot of Chelsea fans come from African region. So, when we are commenting or saying...a match got over and we are just talking about it. We all have different perspectives. Initially, it used to get to me, like "What is he talking?" But then I tried to understand their point of view as how they are. So, when it comes to this, I guess, I've become more culturally sensitive. Yeah. So that's helped me a lot, as well. And I use it in my daily life as well to understand people more than I used to.

The groups that pride objects connect people to differ in their cohesion and formality. For example, a fan club is an organization with a defined membership whereas 'Chelsea fans' constitute a more diffuse collectivity. Pride of ownership can also allow one to join an even more amorphous group of people who simply share a certain taste and sensibility. For example, Amit's is proud to own the Patek Phillippe watch because of the relationship it represents with his grandfather (who gave it to him) and its exclusivity.

It is interesting to note how well his lived experience fits with Patek Philippe's brand strategy. To enhance its perceived exclusivity, Patek Philippe positions its watches as objects that are passed down through the generations, transmitting a unique patrimony of aesthetic design, technical perfection, and knowledge. These can create feelings of connoisseurship and of being a part of a select group of owners (Kozinets et al. 2010; Leeuwen et al. 2013). Some previous work has also suggested links between pride of ownership and the rarity and uniqueness of the object, including its aesthetic and technical elements (Friedman and Neary 2008; Mathwick et al. 2010; Zammuner 1996) and its history and origin/provenance (Decrop and Derbaix 2010; Leeuwen, van Dijk and Kaynak 2013). Such feelings of connoisseurship and expertise can then lead to feelings of satisfaction, pleasure, or devotion (Decrop and Derbaix 2010; Pierce et al. 2001); success, self-worth and enhancement (Mochon et al. 2012; Wolf & McQuitty 2011); as well as create the sense of being a part of a select group, as we see in Amit's experience (Leeuwen et al. 2013). This connection at the level of a collective identity – being part of a select group -- more strongly weaves this pride object into Amit's overall identity.

Pride of Ownership Over Time

One of the important and unique findings from our research was the dynamic nature of pride of ownership. Pride of ownership for particular items was often quite unstable, increasing or decreasing long after they were acquired. For example, consistent with prior theorizing (Tracy and Robins 2007), if the pride-object was noticed or praised by another person, this elicited a surge of pride. That said, several other findings related to fluctuations in pride of ownership were more novel.

First, relationship markers provided one of the more interesting examples of how pride of ownership changed over time. The level of pride the person felt was not fixed at the time that the pride-object was acquired, but rather continued to increase or decrease over time as the linked relationship became closer or more distant. For example, Sam explained that some years ago he was very proud of a gold coin he had received as a gift from his father. But more recently, his father had cheated on his mother, which severely damaged his relationship with his father. This shift in the relationship significantly lowered the pride he felt for the coin. As another example, Amit was proud of a trip he took to Goa with friends. However, because those relationships had faded a bit over time, his pride in the trip has also faded.

Second, it is well known that sports fans take vicarious pride in their team's victories (Decrop and Derbaix 2010; Leeuwen 2013), and their feelings of pride rise and fall with the excellence (or lack thereof) displayed by their team. In a somewhat analogous process, respondents also took vicarious pride in the accomplishments and attributes of the things they owned, and their pride shifted over time with the excellence (or lack thereof) displayed by the pride-object. This can be seen in Cindy's pride for her car.

Cindy: My car is decreasing (in pride) because it's getting old. . . . It's a bomb now. Yeah. So [laughter] obviously, I was very proud when I bought it, but now over time, it's like, "Ugh, I need a new one." Yeah. So, I'm not that proud of it anymore now.

Taking vicarious pride in the positive attributes of the things we own can also help explain some of the pride of ownership people feel for gifts. The fact that people feel proud of owning gifts that they did not "earn" may at first be perplexing: if the object reflects neither one's effort nor one's talent, what is there to be proud of? As already noted, part of this pride may come from the fact that the gift is a relationship marker: it symbolizes an important social relationship and the approval the person feels within that relationship. Yet, in some cases, that is only part of the story. For example, Amit's pride in his Patek Philippe watch he received as a gift from his grandfather is partly because it represents his grandfather's respect and approval. However, Amit also explicitly states that had it not been a gift, he would still have been proud of it. Why? He answers this question below by first praising his watch for its fine qualities, then noting that it is not a trophy of his achievement, before finally concluding that he takes pride in it because it is "a wonderful thing".

Amit: About the watch, I feel (pride) probably because the watch is really nice. It's one of a kind, automatic, as I told you, it's really elegant look, and as I told you, it's a high-end luxury watch . . .

(The watch is) not my achievement in any sense, you know? It's not something I bought it for myself for my own money or something. But when it comes to pride, (the watch is) a wonderful thing. So, I take pride in it that I have one of these watches.

Amit takes vicarious pride in the excellence of his watch, in much the same way that people take pride in the accomplishments of their nation or their sports team. In these cases, the word "take" (from the phrase 'to take pride in something') is highly apropos. Vicarious pride occurs when we include someone or something in our extended self. In so doing, we *take* the pride that belongs to that person or thing, and make it our own.

Finally, one of the most intriguing findings was that when comparing how much pride they felt in various pride-objects, respondents routinely reported that they were prouder of objects that played a greater role in their daily life (for an identical finding with regard to brand love, see Batra, Ahuvia and Bagozzi 2012). This was somewhat puzzling, because pride of ownership was frequently contingent on the mundane happenstance of respondent's life in ways that seemed to have no connection to extant theories of pride. For example, pride of ownership was found to change over time as frequency of interaction changes. Both Vihaan and Divit were proud of their cars that they left in India when they came to study in Australia. Both of them made the remarkably similar comments, namely that their pride in the car has decreased simply because they do not use it regularly now. The examples from Vihaan and Divit make it clear that it is not the case that the quality of the pride-object has declined. Rather, they just happen to be unable to use their cars at the moment and this has led to a decrease in pride, even though it seems to have nothing to do with any of the usual bases for pride.

A similar phenomenon can seem to occur even when the frequency of use does not change. Max used to feel proud of his bed, but that pride has decreased over time. A bed is an unusual possession in that the extent of our use of that object tends to be remarkably stable

over time. Thus, it is unlikely that Max's usage frequency has changed, but the same cannot be said for his mental engagement with his bed.

Max: I was proud of it when I initially got it, and then, I guess, you get used to having it, and maybe it's not as much of a novelty over time.

When the bed was new it was interesting, so he thought about it a lot; now, not so much. This would also be true for Vihaan's and Divit's cars, since the cars are far away, Vihaan and Divit do not think of them very often. This suggests that it is not the frequency of use per se that influences pride, but rather the extent of mental involvement the person has with the object on a day-to-day basis.

Conclusion

Contributions to Theory

This research extends our understanding of pride by exploring pride of ownership (broadly understood). In keeping with extant theory, this pride model is strongly focused on individuals and their positive aspects of the self. One novel insight in the current study is the association between pride of ownership and the closeness of the person-thing aspect of the relationship between the owner and the pride-object. It was very common for respondents to report experiencing changes in pride simply based on how often they interacted with the pride-object or thought they would interact with it in the future, which we interpreted as being the behavioral aspect of relationship closeness. Park and colleagues (2013) have also noted how the frequency of interactions can raise a brand's "prominence." We find this closeness includes the extent of mental engagement with the pride-object, its perceived everyday-importance, and the owner's emotional attachment to the pride object. The finding that pride of ownership can wax and wane with closeness of the person-thing relationship is new and not accounted for by past work.

Our findings are clearly relevant for better understanding how consumers' pride of ownership increases or decreases over time within the context of a consumer relationship. In the time leading up to acquisition and shortly thereafter, pride of ownership largely conforms to extant theories and common-sense assumptions. People are prouder to own something if it is excellent, rare, and signifies major achievement on their part. At the time of acquisition, people are also proud to own certain gifts. At first blush, this is a bit puzzling as the gift may not reflect any achievements or abilities on the consumer's part that one would expect to produce pride. Instead, we find pride in gifts also stems from three sources: (1) the owner may take vicarious pride in the fine qualities of the pride-object, (2) the owner may feel pride just from knowing that others may be impressed by the object, and (3) the owner may experience pride from feeling that he or she is a socially valued person in the eyes of the gift giver.

It is in the time period after acquisition that our findings are most surprising. Initial pride of ownership may have been based on the fact that the pride-object represents an important achievement, and the importance of that achievement may not have changed over time. Still, the amount of pride of ownership can diminish if the pride-object itself wears down, becomes outdated, or through no fault of its own, gets used less frequently by the owner. In

addition, if the pride-object serves as a relationship marker within a person-thing-person relationship, pride of ownership will fluctuate over time if the underlying interpersonal relationship becomes closer or more distant.

Managerial Implications

Our findings and framework (Figure 1) suggest multiple routes through which marketers can attempt to increase the level of pride felt by owners of their brands. First, increasing the incentive for, and ease of, individually personalizing the product or service ought to increase pride of ownership, especially if significant effort is involved. Second, pride should also increase with the linkages made between the brand and the sense of personal achievement it symbolizes – and with links made with feelings of agency and independence it comes to represent (similar to the sense of "autonomy" highlighted by Warren and Campbell 2014). Third, the brand should evoke more pride of ownership with connections made with its history and origin, and the quality of rare workmanship that went into it (e.g., "Tito's Handmade Vodka from Austin, TX"). Fourth, connections could potentially be made between the brand and significant social others, with the aim of deepening its associations with meaningful social relationships; for instance, by embedding its consumption into social rituals or communal consumption, even gift-giving.

Methodological Contributions

Another major contribution of this work is the formal introduction of the surfacing methodology. Along with surfacing questions, our interviews included standard qualitative depth interview questions. When we analyzed the data, a difference between the question types became clear. Suppose, for example, a respondent was proud of her house. The standard depth interview questions would foreground the respondent's overall thoughts and feelings about her house. In contrast, the surfacing questions would foreground the nature of pride and what it means to be proud of one's house. In commercial market research settings and many scientific research settings, understanding what a consumer thinks about a particular product or brand is an important objective. In these cases, the standard depth interview questions can do an excellent job. However, if the core research question is about the nature and scope of a construct, such as pride, then the surfacing questions have much to offer.

Future Research

Our model (Figure 1) opens up several lines of future research. This model presents five goals that exist over three stages of ownership (pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase). Thinking of this as a 5x3 model, each "cell" can be a source of future research. For example, little is known about the ownership phase of family heirlooms. Future research can also examine, within every row, how the longitudinal passage of time impacts each implicit goal. For instance, how does anticipation of acquisition differ from passing on an heirloom, in the case of new (and old) recipients? Finally, each implicit goal can be compared and contrasted along both dimensions. For example, how the passage of time impacts a person's sense of self for heirlooms (highly interdependent) can be contrasted with a university degree (highly independent). In sum, we believe our model contributes a useful typology for organizing past research and suggesting new possibilities.

Finally, it is worth noting the similarities between pride, as we have studied it, and brand love. For the first author, who has also conducted interviews with people about the things they love, there were many places in the pride interviews that felt almost eerily similar to that earlier work on love. Not surprisingly, the excellence of products has a big impact on both pride and love. Both pride and love also revolve around identity, so both are enhanced by things that increase the integration of the object into the owner's identity including the work and creativity the owner has invested in the object or the extent to which the object is linked to the owner's life narrative. The person-thing-person aspects of both pride of ownership and brand love are extremely strong. And the closeness of the person-thing relationship seems to have a major impact (unsurprisingly) on brand love and (much more surprisingly) on pride of ownership. That said, pride and love are also clearly separate constructs, so clarifying the relationship between them is an interesting possible area for future work.

Overall, the current research takes important steps in mapping the construct of pride of ownership. In doing so, it also provides an impetus to future consumer research focused on developing a more nuanced understanding of pride of ownership, in particular, and the emotion of pride, more generally.

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WEB APPENDIX A: LITERATURE REVIEW

The Emotion of Pride

There is an extensive literature on pride in psychology (Leary 2007; Lewis 2000; Scherer 2001; Tracy and Robins 2004a; 2007). Pride is part of the class of self-conscious emotions (along with, for example embarrassment, guilt, and envy). Self-conscious emotions, more so than other emotions, are likely to generate thoughts about oneself (Lazarus 1991, Leary 2007; Tracy and Robins 2004b). Indeed, pride is highly linked to the formation and maintenance of feelings of self-worth, and arises from a variety of positive outcomes associated with oneself (e.g., Roseman 1991).

Prior empirical research has linked pride to both positive (e.g., altruism) and negative (e.g., aggression) outcomes (Kernberg 1975; McGregor, Naiand, Marigold, and Kang 2005; Tangney, Wagner, and Gramzow 1989). In particular, the two-facet model of pride (Tracy and Robins 2007) conceptualizes pride as having two facets, authentic and hubristic (see main text). The two facets show diverging associations to various life outcomes. Authentic pride is associated with positive outcomes, including: perseverance, self-esteem, empathy, and self-control (Ashton-James and Tracy 2012; Tracy and Robins 2007; Weidman, Tracy, and Elliot 2016; Williams and DeSteno 2009). On the other hand, hubristic pride has more socially dysfunctional correlates, including narcissism, aggression, impulsivity, relationship conflict, and prejudice (Ashton-James and Tracy 2012; Carver, Sinclair, and Johnson 2010; Tracy, Cheng, Robins, and Trzesniewski 2009; Tracy and Robins, 2007; Williams and DeSteno 2009).

Mascolo and Fisher (1995) offer a somewhat broader definition of pride as an emotion “generated by appraisals that one is responsible for a socially valued outcome or for being a socially valued person” (p. 66). Like the two-facet model, this also defines pride in terms of two antecedents. The first of these, “being responsible for a socially valued outcome,” requires some type of achievement: to be responsible for an outcome means that the self did something that led to that outcome. Therefore, both authentic and hubristic pride can be seen as subcategories of ‘being responsible for a valued outcome.’ However, “being a socially valued person,” does not necessitate that the self did anything at all; it is enough that other people value you. And even in the case of individual achievement, the Mascolo and Fisher definition has a social focus on what other people think, in that it explicitly refers to a socially valued outcome as a basis for pride. These nuances are important later for interpreting our results and how they fit into the broader literature.

Although much about how people experience pride is likely to be universal across cultures (Shi, Chung, Cheng, Tracy, Robins, Chen, and Zheng 2015; Tracy, Shariff, Zhao, and Henrich 2013; Tracy and Robins 2008), it is nonetheless interesting to note that both facets of the two-facet model focus on how an individual is responsible for some positive outcome, and therefore both types of pride revolve around the independent-self construct associated with individualistic cultures (Markus and Kitayama, 1991, Wong and Ahuvia, 1998). In contrast, the Mascolo and Fisher (1995) definition also includes social aspect that is more broadly consistent with the interdependent-self construct, associated with more collectivistic cultures. Although conducting a cross-cultural comparison is beyond the scope of the

current research, our findings are based on a culturally diverse sample that will allow us to explore themes related to both the independent-self and the interdependent-self concepts.

Pride in Consumption

There have been several papers on the topic of pride in a consumer context (Griskevicius, Shiota, and Nowlis 2010; Aaker and Williams 1998; Huang, Dong, and Mukhopadhyay 2014; Hung and Mukhopadhyay 2012; Louro, Pieters, and Zeelenberg 2005; McFerran, Aquino, and Tracy 2014; Mukhopadhyay and Johar 2007; Patrick, Chun, and MacInnis 2009; Ramanathan and Williams 2007; Salerno, Laran, and Janiszewski 2015; Wilcox et al. 2011; Winterich and Haws 2011). As stated in the main text, the vast majority of the work on pride in consumer research is experimental (although see Decrop and Derbaix (2010) for a qualitative exception, and Kirk, Swain, and Gaskin (2015) for a conceptual one).

There is also related research examining why people derive personal value, including pride, from goods, services, and experiences. For example, researchers have identified antecedents such as the rarity and uniqueness of the object, including its aesthetic and technical elements (Decrop and Derbaix 2010; Freedman and Neary 2008; Mathwick et al. 2009; Zammuner 1996), its history and origin/provenance (Decrop and Derbaix 2010; Leeuwen, van Dijk and Kaynak 2013); the experience of creating something new (Dahl & Moreau 2007; Mochon et al. 2012), or the resources (money, time and effort) spent on the acquisition or customization of the object (Kirk, Swain and Gaskin 2015; Pierce 2001). Such antecedents may lead to feelings of connoisseurship and expertise (Kozinets et al. 2010), satisfaction, pleasure, or devotion (Decrop and Derbaix 2010; Pierce et al. 2003), feelings of being a part of a select group (Leeuwen et al. 2013), feelings of success, self-worth and enhancement (Mochon et al. 2012; Wolf & McQuitty 2011), or feelings of self-competence and self-efficacy (Dahl and Moreau 2007; Thompson and Norton 2011) -- all of which should shape one's sense of self (Belk 2013). Such feelings should be greater when the object is more tightly linked to self-identity (Pierce 2003), is publicly visible (Berger and Heath 2007), when its acquisition requires more effort (Belk 1988; Pierce 2001), and in more collectivistic cultures (Aaker and Williams 1998; Maddux et al. 2010).

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WEB APPENDIX B: Table B-1. Interview Respondents

	Pride Objects
Participants	Ranked from Most to Least Pride
Amit	Patek Phillipe watch
Indian	Magazine for students (Prestorika)
Male, 26	Watches in general Basketball court with a gym, Drum kit Concert of Metallica Trip to Goa Clothing
Cindy	Supporting children
Australian	Animals
Female, 47	Home Traveling experience Things in home Car Diary
Divit	Experience
Indian	Perfumes
Male, 32	Watches Car Music keyboard Bose speakers
Max	Art
Australian	Exercise equipment
Male, 33	Laptop Books

Comfortable bed

Priya	Bonds and shares (stocks) bought with own money
India	Sacrifices done during life
Female, 30	Travelling with own money
	Books (second-hand books collection when a kid; then later purchase)
	Tiffany's ring
	Barbie doll (originally ranked first)
	Shoes with lights on them
	Jewelry (bought with own money)
	Jewelry (received as gifts and connected to rituals)
	Entertainment (restaurants, going out: social events) (purchased with own money)
	Donations
	Clothing and fashion accessories, Perfumes
	Whiskey bottle (offered to little brother)

Rachel	Framed degrees
Australian	Panda Pillow Pet
Female, 35	Trinkets from travels
	Clothes
	Phone
	Computer
	iPad

Sam	Necklace
American	Vase offered by his assistant-successor in Afghanistan
Male, 30	Golden coin offered by father for graduation
	Tapestry/rug from Afghanistan

	Old car
	Old Russian camera
	Coat or the plates and silverware
	Cooking mixer
	(This was his original order, he changed in during the interview.)
Sarah	Current house
American	First house
Female, 44	Great outfits
	Camaro old first car
	Cats
	Closet of outfits
	(neutral: Fridge)
	(This was her original order, she changed in during the interview.)
Shaurya	Education
Indian	Coming to Australia
Male, 26	Company
	House
	Car
	Cellphone
	Clothes
	Accessories
	Furniture
Vihaan	Autographed souvenirs from Michael Jordan and Messi
Indian	Chelsea jerseys for the last 10 years
Male, 29	Car
	Laptop
	Property
	iPhone7

