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**ADVANCING THEORY OF PRESENTATION-OF-SELF VIA  
INTERPRETIVE RESEARCH OF ATTENDING PERFORMING ARTS**

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**ADVANCING THEORY OF PRESENTATION-OF-SELF VIA  
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**ABSTRACT**

This paper probes and refines a theory of presentation of self via attending performing arts. An interpretive analysis of an in-depth case study informs reconstruction of presentation-of-self theory. The case study demonstrates that low cultural capital (LCC) (e.g., Bourdieu 1984), typically associated with a lack of formal education and a non-cultured upbringing, exerts a powerful influence on lived experiences of performing arts. In particular, LCC associates with the moderate-high expression of a certain hedonic motivations, notably diversion, self reference and conspicuous consumption, the relatively low expression of alternate hedonic motivations as well as very low patronage of performing arts, except for watching television. Complementary variables intensify or diminish LCC influences as reflected in lived experiences. In particular, self-concept, gender identity, personality, successful social class mobility (i.e., transition from low to high economic capital), and to a lesser extent age and certain situation specific factors provide insight into subtleties of behaviour. The study highlights linkages between several literature streams and deepens our understanding of how people use attending performing arts as a basis for impression management.

## **ADVANCING THEORY OF PRESENTATION-OF-SELF VIA INTERPRETIVE RESEARCH OF ATTENDING PERFORMING ARTS**

“We were discussing the other day in the office how we spend our entertainment dollar; we’d rather go to a sporting event than the theatre. It is very difficult to encourage a 37-year old man who lives a fast lifestyle that he should go to the theatre with a group of other blokes, it’s not the sort of thing you do. So what we did instead was sponsor a Canterbury Racing Night Meeting. We’ll take a group of twenty-five guys to the races next Thursday night. A lot of our major clients have an interest in racehorses.” (Source: Stewart, male, 37 years old male, stockbroker, LCC)

### **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

Presentation of self is intrinsic to human existence (Goffman 1959 [1971]). People consciously and unconsciously use various means of making impressions on themselves and others. Presentation of self typically simultaneously communicates group affiliation and distinction (Bourdieu 1984)—activities critical to human survival and well being (Weiner 1992). Lived experiences attending performing arts are especially useful for this purpose. In many Western cultures, descriptions of attending performing arts have connotations that give people with opportunities to establish their actual or aspirational social class membership while simultaneously communicating their personal uniqueness.

Exhibit 1 presents the model of presentation of self via attending performing arts (see Authors 2003).

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 Exhibit 1 here.  
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The following summary describes the components of the model:

- *Lived experiences of performing arts* are first person descriptions of behaviours associated with attending performing arts (Thompson, Locander and Pollio 1989). Lived experiences of attending performing arts are not independent of total lived experiences past and present. See Box 1.
- *Cultural capital (CC)* consists of a set conscious, but mostly unconscious, norms, values and psychological responses that impact on an individual's purchase choices, expressed tastes, levels of involvement and consumption activities (eg., Bourdieu 1984). See Box 2. CC is a resource associating with social class position that is unequally distributed through out the population (Bourdieu 1984). Individuals differ in the amount of CC they possess, ranging from low to high CC. See Boxes 2a and 2b.
- *Hedonic motivations* are internal representations of goal states that are reflected in lived experiences of performing arts. These motivations have certain properties such as goal equi-finality, intensity, direction, multiplicity and range from hard wired to transient (Austin and Vancouver 1996). See Box 3. Low CC and high CC link with different hedonic motivations respectively. These include: (1) diversion versus affective and/or cognitive intensity; (2) naïve evaluation versus connoisseurship; (3) communalism versus individualism; (4) univorousness or aspirationalism versus cultural exclusionism or omnivorousness; (5) imitation versus authenticity; (6) familiarity versus classicism and/or innovativeness; (7) conspicuous consumption versus humanism; (8) parochialism versus

cosmopolitanism; and (9) self reference versus critical detachment (see Authors 2002 for detailed descriptions of these hedonic motivations). See Boxes 3a and 3b.

- *Patronage of Performing Arts* includes the thoughts, feelings and actions arising during the entire consumption process associated with attending performing arts, including the pre and post consumption phases. See Box 4.
- *Complementary factors* include age gender, gender identity, pre-adult exposure, self concept, personality and situation specific factors which have different levels of permanence. See Box 5.

Exhibit 2 details proposed relationships between the model's components in a series of research issues.

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 Exhibit 2 here.  
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## **INTERPRETIVE METHOD APPLIED TO IN-DEPTH CASE RESEARCH**

An in-depth case study (i.e., an “abductive analysis” (Dubois and Gadde 2002) of an adult male, Stewart of presentation of self via attending performing arts informs the attempt here for advancing a deepened theory of presentation-of-self. Stewart is a wealthy 37 year old male stockbroker who lives in Sydney, Australia. A marked absence of descriptions of attending live or recorded performing arts distinguished Stewart's life. He reports frequently attending live sporting events where he gambles and socialises with other Alpha males (Allman 1996) like him. This lived experience likely reflects Stewart's low cultural capital (i.e., LCC, a status laden resource associated with social class position – see Bourdieu 1984), traditional Australian masculine gender identity, and highly driven outgoing personality. Such

characteristics associate with a constant need for elevated feelings of excitement, superiority and mastery which Stewart finds difficult to experience when attending performing arts.

Stewart's case derives from a collection of cases intended to validate a model of presentation of self via attending performing arts (see Authors 2003 for details of the model construction). His case demonstrates the usefulness of the model in explaining and predicting this behaviour. The case reflects the imperative to move beyond overly simplistic explanations about consumer behaviour. As Holt (1995, p. 1) points out ... "[we need] to comprehensively describe the variety of ways in which people consume, to understand how these differences vary across groups and to explain the unacknowledged conditions that structure how different groups consume and the unintended consequences of such patterning"

## **METHOD**

The exploratory nature of the research necessitates "abductive systematic combining," that is, "continuous movement between an empirical world and a model world" (Dubois and Gadde 2002). The aim during the research process is to validate, refine and extend theory. The primary phenomena of interest indicate a qualitative rather than a quantitative approach. Relatively stable motivations associating with CC and complementary variables are derived well by analysis of lengthy interview transcripts rather than direct questioning using pencil and paper surveys.

### **Data Collection**

*Access and Rapport Building:* Long interviews (McCracken 1998) with subjects were conducted using a semi-structured framework. Interviews were 45-90 minutes in duration. Measures were taken during the research process to reduce social desirability bias.

**Sample:** The sample consisted of ten subjects, five with CC scores of 5 or less (LCC) and five with CC scores of 10 or more (HCC). CC scores were calculated using a formula identical to Holt (1998), involving ratings associated with level of formal education, occupational status and father's occupational status and formal education.

**Interview Protocol:** In the first section of the interview, subjects were encouraged to talk about their most recent life experiences (i.e. over the past two weeks) and to indicate the degree to which experiences were typical of their lives generally. In the second section, subjects were asked to describe a variety of different types of experiences with entertainment, including entertainment other than performing arts.

The interview concluded with subject supplying personal and demographic details and completing a NEO-PI R personality test.

### **Data Analysis**

At the data analysis stage, prior research informed the development of a pre-defined categorisation system. This approach was supplemented by allowing for the emergence of categories to explain individual cases or to generate new theory. A coder unaware of the research issues analysed the verbatim text to address the human cognitive bias toward confirmation. Expression of each motivation and patronage level was evaluated as high, moderate or low (NB. Consumption motivation dimensions are nonorthogonal).

### **STEWART SEEKS THRILLS AND SPILLS**

The following sections present details for Stewart's lived experiences. Stewart's case informs because of its capacity to illustrate the usefulness of a proposed model (reported in Authors 2003), in particular the role of CC, gender identity, self concept and personality in determining behaviour.

## **Background**

*Current Life:* Stewart works for an inner city financial organization located in the heart of the financial district of Sydney. The building has numerous bars, lunchtime eateries and boutiques at its base. The boardroom of Stewart's office is furnished in a minimalist contemporary style with an expansive view of nearby Sydney Harbour. Stewart's appearance is stereotypical of a successful trader. His hair is closely cropped. He wears a dark finely cut woollen suit, white shirt, silk tie and black leather loafers with black silk socks. Stewart has the supreme confidence of a self-made man. For example, he eschews the need for any formal training beyond his high school education.

I: "What's your educational background?"

S: Just a high school certificate. I did a couple of courses in the Securities Institute – I found it a waste of time, I was learning most of the stuff I already knew – I thought that hands-on experience was much better."

Stewart scores high on competence (29/32), a sub-facet of conscientiousness, well above the adult male norm (22/32, top 3% of the population). He scores high on activity (29/32) and excitement seeking (28/32), two sub-facets of extroversion, well above adult male norms (17/32 and 17/32 respectively, in the top one percent of the population, Costa and McCrae 1985, pp. 75, 81 & 84). These scores likely explain his enthusiasm for active self-directed, rather than passive activities including learning.

Stewart's self-reports indicate strong subscription to the Protestant work ethic, that is, "individual initiative, hard work, and self-perfection" (Arnould, Price and Zinkhan 2002; p. 13). For example, Stewart claims that he works one hundred and fifty hours per week, which is practically impossible. He explains that he is strongly



driven to achieve financial and material success. (Inquiries at Stewart's workplace, suggest that during profitable periods, successful traders like Stewart, can earn \$ 700,000 or more per year.)

S: I've set myself goals as to what I want to achieve. So far, I've always managed to get to the next possession, for instance, luxury cars.

Stewart's tastes in literature mirror his lifestyle aspirations.

I: What would you rather be reading?

S: Newspapers. I read newspapers all the time, magazines.

I: About anything in particular?

S: Lifestyle magazines that detail people with high incomes in America and introduce you to all the luxury items from stereos, homes, expensive cars, cognac, cigars, and clothes. These magazines give you exposé's on individual people with their success stories.

Stewart's lived experiences concur with Arnould, Price and Zinkhan's (2002; p. 189) proposition that nouveau riche often consume information about luxury items "because of their unfamiliarity with the goods and services appropriate to their new station."

Stewart lives in a rural hamlet two hours west of the centre of Sydney. Travel to and from work by car takes up a considerable proportion of his day. When he arrives home he reports playing with his children, a 5½-year-old girl and a 15-month-old boy, and occasionally watching animal documentaries with his young daughter. He has been married for twelve years. His wife is a full-time mother and housewife.

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<sup>1</sup> Inquiries at Stewart's workplace, suggest that during profitable periods, successful traders like Stewart, can earn \$ 700,000 or more per year.

Descriptions of his wife's behaviour concur with traditional stereotypical female gender behaviour typically found in lower social classes.

*Past Life:* Stewart's reported accomplishments are remarkable given his life history. Tragedy, notably loss of family members and a severe shortage of money, marks his early life. Stewart grew up on a treeless housing estate in a suburb of Campbelltown; a large working class town situated two hours south west of Sydney. Campbelltown is notorious for a high crime rate; in particular, gang related violence. Recently, Stewart's brother was murdered in a drug-related conflict. He lost another sibling during childhood to "sudden infant death syndrome" or "cot death." Stewart's father, a plumber who never finished high school, left his mother and Stewart's five siblings when Stewart was five years old.

I haven't seen my father for 30 years. He was a plumber. His educational background wasn't overly high, he more or less learnt on the job. He left my mother when I was very young; I was probably five years of age. There were six children, one died of cot death and I had a brother die six months ago, so there's only four left of us.

Stewart's mother raised her five surviving children by herself without any financial support from her ex-husband. She worked full-time, becoming a successful real estate salesperson. His mother had no leisure interests, being totally absorbed in her work and looking after her children. Stewart completed high school and went to work in the finance sector, where he has remained since. Much of Stewart's adult choices in work and play seem a reaction to his harsh upbringing. Stewart's prescription for a happy life supports this observation.

I think its contentment. You need to enjoy your employment because it occupies a very huge percentage of your day. A good home life. I think money helps, but I don't believe it's the essence of a good life; it

can actually cause more problems than what it's worth. Initially, you need to have some, so you're not struggling. I think contentment in your family life and your work is important.

*Hedonic Consumption:* Stewart's reports of hedonic consumption evidence his financial success. Prominent motivations are conspicuous consumption and superiority, (a sub-facet of individualism), which occur most frequently within the context of Australian masculine gendered sub-culture (Booth and Tatz 2000). He describes going to high profile expensive sporting events with other males; for example Melbourne Cup Day (the most famous day of horse racing in Australia) and The Australian Football Grand Final. Attending these events allows Stewart to engage in public displays of leisure and competitive spending (Veblen 1915) and to build bridges with socially distant acquaintances (Gainer 1995), especially other "alpha" males (Allman 1996), hence solidifying his nouveau riche social class position.

I'm going to the Grand Final Football Game.... It's mainly a boy's weekend. We'll head off to Melbourne on Thursday afternoon [a city located one hour away by air from Sydney], go to our respective accommodation, catch up at the pub and have a lot of beers on the Thursday night. Next morning we will wake up late and try to shrug off a hangover with a bit of greasy food and head off the Carlton Football Club for the pre-Grand Final lunch....That's usually from 11:30am to 5:00pm, lots of beer and wine consumed and good food. There's entertainment and auctions and raffles. From there, we'll head off for a few more beers somewhere and probably end up at one of the lap dancing bars in Melbourne on the Friday evening. Saturday morning we'll sleep in and recover...Then we're picked up at the hotel

in a stretch limo' and taken to the "Fork and Spoon Club" then off to the Grand Final. It's a big social night. Sunday is a recovery day so we'll go to the races; they start at mid-day.... A few beers after that and then head home Sunday evening.

Stewart's self-reports correspond with expectations of socially mobile consumers who often admit abandoning their lower class friends and establishing relationships with members of the upper classes into which they move (Packard 1959).

Stewart pursues certain sports to engage in "self-reference." His self-reference appears in two alternative forms. Stewart identifies with the performance of sports contestants, especially footballers; explaining that he loves sport, are an excellent all-round sportsman, and played cricket and Australian Rules football as a boy. He suggests that he once aspired to becoming a professional sportsman. Stewart's enthusiasm for sport (and rejection of high brow performing arts) confirms his traditional Australian masculine gender identity (Booth and Tatz 2000).

S: I've always been involved in sport.

I: So you play sport?

S: Yeah.

I: What sort of sport do you play?

S: I played mainly cricket, Australian Rules football. I was always very good at whatever sport I played, so I always had an interest. It's interesting for me to watch and think what could have been.

Stewart's self-reference links to his motivations for superiority and mastery, which he achieves through the process of self-extension when openly sponsoring sporting events or owning animals that race. Mastery is defined as "meeting a challenging standard achievement or improvement, and avoiding incompetence, mediocrity or decrements in performance" (Austin and Vancouver 1996).

I used to hate watching horse races but I love watching them now.

I have a share in a racehorse so I like to follow the form, to see what happens. I've actually sponsored races myself and bought one at an auction once for the Para-Olympians.

Stewart reports that he rarely socializes with his wife outside the home. He intimates that over many years of marriage they have grown apart. He states that his wife rationalizes that she needs to restrict her socializing because of an unwillingness to leave their children with baby-sitters.

I: What do you do with your wife?

S: Not a great deal. We're slightly different personalities, I've been married for 12 years, we've got two little children, she's very reluctant to leave them with other people since the children have been born, she's basically been a mother to them and that's about all. She doesn't enjoy sport, football etc – she doesn't mind the races and we'll go together when she can get a babysitter.

*Postscript:* Stewart's remarks associate with his very current behaviour. In a follow up phone call to Stewart's stock-broking firm, the researcher learns that Stewart has left his position, after leaving his wife and moving in with a young secretary also employed previously at the firm.

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<sup>2</sup> Mastery is defined as "meeting a challenging standard achievement or improvement, and avoiding

### **Attending Performing Arts**

Primary influences on Stewart's presentation of self via attending performing arts are CC, gender identity, self-concept, personality, and successful social class mobility. Secondary influences are age and certain relatively transient factors.

- **Diversion (Very High/Highest)**

- Likely positively associates with CC (Low), Situational Factor (Stressful Life-style).

High motivation for diversion dominates Stewart's lived experiences.

Diversion appears in descriptions of "chilling out" or relaxing while watching commercial television after work at night.

S: I watch shows to relax; I don't want anything too intense. If I find something relaxing and interesting, then I'll watch it, for example, "Sex in the City."

Diversion manifests as a means of escaping his highly demanding profession.

Surprisingly enough what I don't like is, being in this industry, is finance news. It bores the hell out of me, after being at work all day and putting up with it, the last thing I want to do when I get home is watch finance news. The people I work with tell me that they go home and watch three hours of finance news. To me, that's not my idea of a lifestyle. But I like watching the news.

Stewart's accounts of watching comedic movies suggest he seeks fun and humour. Motivation for parochialism, manifested as a preference for commercial Australian or American television films, is also apparent.

I: If you were going to get out a movie, what type of movie would you choose?

S: It would have to be a comedy, it would have to be a really stupid comedy, for example, “Austin Powers” was OK. Things like “Caddy Shack” – those sorts of light-hearted, silly comedies. I liked “The Castle,” its dry Australian humor.

Diversion associates with “light mental challenge,” for example Stewart reports illustrates such diversion by watching “Who Wants To be a Millionaire,” a television quiz show. Stewart’s enthusiasm for this program also reflects two of his great loves: money and competition.

Diversion reflects in his accounts of listening to CD’s when traveling by car. Music to me is to occupy my time, for instance, while I’m driving to and from work.

His lack of enthusiasm for any highly intellectual activities (with the exception of working out the odds when gambling) reflects from his entertainment choices generally and also attending performing arts. For example, his rejection of rock music that concerns political issues suggests he has no motivation for equity.

S: I like U2– I was a fan.

I: What happened?

S: I still like them but they’ve had one or two records that were good.....I went to their concert and was a little disappointed with what I heard. It was quite political; they were trying to make a stance. They completely changed their style of music. I went a bit off them.

Motivation for diversion is likely intensified by a stressful lifestyle linked to his working long hours and driving to and from work four hours per day. Thus, Stewart seeks lowbrow (e.g., American comedy television shows) rather than

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highbrow performing arts as these forms of entertainment more likely foster relaxation.



- **Conspicuous Consumption (Very High/Highest)**

- Likely positively associates with CC (Low), Self-concept (Financially Successful, Dominant), Successful transition from Low Pre-Adulthood Economic to High Adult Economic Capital

Stewart's behaviour supports Weber's (1975; p. 34) assertion that business people have "a self-confident, ostentatious life style and value cultural pursuits of the same order;" that is, conspicuous consumption. His motivation for conspicuous consumption associates with his LCC and self-concept, notably financially successful, dominant aspects. Stewart's strong Australian male gender identity means that conspicuous consumption associates with Australian masculine gendered sub-culture. Exceptions include reports of taking a weekend package to a distant city to see a musical.

The Phantom of the Opera. I was with my wife, just for a weekend away. She loved the soundtrack so she wanted to see it so it was a full weekend down in Melbourne.

His need for conspicuous consumption (and multiple sources of stimulation generally) also appears in his plans for a future pleasurable night out.

People tell me to go to the dinner concerts they have at The Hilton Hotel, more the cabaret style and I think they would be an interesting night. As long as food and drink are in front of me, I could put up with whatever was on stage.

- **Self Reference (Very High/Highest)**

- Likely positively associates with CC (low), Gender Identity (Traditional Australian Masculine), Self-concept (Financially Successful, Dominant),

Successful transition from Low Pre-Adulthood Economic to High Adult

Economic Capital

Stewart's motivation for self reference associates with LCC and motivation conspicuous consumption. In combination these motivations are implicit and pervasive in his self reports. He consistently reports entertainment that reflects his self concept, that is rich successful, dominant and male.

- **Parochialism (High)**

- Likely positively associates with CC (Low), Gender Identity (Traditional Australian Masculine)

High motivation for parochialism manifests in his liking mainstream music drawn from the European classical tradition (eg, Bach and Mozart), American country and western music (eg, Kenny Rogers) and Anglo-Australian rock 'n' roll bands (eg, U2). His traditional Australian male gender identity likely intensifies motivation for parochialism, because he prefers Australian macho' rock bands (e.g., Hunters and Collectors, Screaming Jets, The Angels). Parochialism combines with motivation for originality (a sub-facet of motivation for authenticity, an HCC linked hedonic motivation) in Stewart's accounts of his enthusiasm for this type of entertainment.

S: I like Australian Rock Pub Bands-live bands.

I: So is it the "live-ness" of them that's attractive?

S: No, just the fact that they were actually grass-roots bands; they weren't manufactured bands like these pop stars that's happening now, no pretty boys. They were a group of blokes who got together to create music and play live.

Nowadays they'll get the image first then put a band around it.

Parochialism as dislike of external culture is evident in Stewart's lack of enthusiasm for American comedy.

S: A lot of the American TV comedies I don't like. I find them quite boring.

I: Describe boring.

S: A lot of them use the language to support their joke which is OK if you're in a pub but if you are trying to be funny and generally witty, it's not that funny. I think a lot of Americans are over the top too.

Yet parochialism can manifest as a liking for comedic masculine flavoured videos, whether American or Australian.

[I like] really stupid comedy egg; "Austin Powers" was OK. Things like "Caddy Shack" – those sorts of light-hearted, silly comedies. I liked "The Castle," its dry Australian humor.

- **Univorousness (High)**

- Likely positively associates with CC (Low), Gender Identity (Traditional Australian Masculine), Job Focus (i.e. the finance industry which is male-gendered, business relationship oriented, not associated with cultural issues), Personality (Low Openness to Aesthetics) and Pre-Adult Exposure (Low exposure to performing arts, instead a passion for and competence in, playing sport)

Stewart indicates that he listens almost exclusively to popular forms of entertainment such as "elevator" renditions of traditional classical music (e.g., Bach, Mozart, The Three Tenors), commercial country 'n' western (eg, Kenny Rogers) and Australian rock bands (e.g., Hunters and Collectors, Screaming Jets, The Angels).

Traditional Australian masculine gender identity helps explain Stewart's lack of interest in highbrow performing arts and any evidence of motivation for omnivorousness or cultural exclusivity. Highbrow performing arts are shown to associate more keenly with traditional feminine, rather than masculine gender identity (e.g., Gainer 1993). The impact of male gender identity sheds light on the additional impact of job focus (e.g., Erickson 1996) on Stewart's behaviour. Stewart admits choosing entertainment that allows him to cultivate the business relationships necessary in his industry, that is, finance. The finance industry is (in) famous for having a masculine materialistic rather than a cultured orientation.

A personality with low openness to aesthetics, a sub-facet of openness to experience, likely intensifies motivation for univorousness. Stewart scores 8/32, well below the adult male norm (17/32, lower 2% of the population; Costa and McCrae 1985 pp. 75 and 82). Low scorers are "relatively insensitive and uninterested in art and beauty" (Costa and McCrae 1985, p. 17). Stewart's unsolicited comment about poetry substantiates this conclusion.

S: I'm not into poetry.

I: Can you tell me any reason for that?

S: I was probably force-fed poetry at school. Having to write it and read it. It does nothing for me.

- **Imitation (High)**

- Likely associates with CC (Low), Gender Identity (Traditional Australian Masculine)

Stewart's consumption is limited to listening to rock 'n' roll and sometimes popular classical music CD's while travelling in his car and watching popular television shows (e.g., "Sex in the City," comedy shows on "Foxtel"). Traditional

Australian masculine gender identity likely plays a role. He points out that attending highbrow live performing arts does not fit in with the lifestyle he desires, or the male company he keeps.

We were discussing the other day in the office how we spend our entertainment dollar; we'd rather go to a sporting event than the theatre. It is very difficult to encourage a 37-year old man who lives a fast lifestyle that he should go to the theatre with a group of other blokes, it's not the sort of thing you do. So what we did was sponsor a Canterbury Racing Night Meeting so we'll take a group of 25 to the races on Thursday night. A lot of our major clients have an interest in racehorses.

Stewart reflects that on one occasion he enjoyed live performing arts. Yet he explains that his satisfaction stems from the ambience of the theatre rather than the show itself.

Opera I like. Theatre and musicals are not my cup of tea. I went to "Phantom of the Opera" on a weekend package deal with my wife and actually enjoyed it. I think it was the atmosphere more so because it was an old theatre and it suited the show well.

This quote highlights Stewart's lack of experience and naiveté with live performing arts; he mistakes a Broadway musical, that is, "Phantom of the Opera," for classical opera. These words also illustrate Stewart's attraction to conspicuous consumption; weekend package deals to Melbourne, a city located one hour away from home by plane, are a relatively expensive means of attending the theatre.

- **Individualism (High)**

- Likely positively associates with Self-Concept (Protestant Work Ethic), Personality (Very high, assertiveness, high competence, low compliance), Situational Factor (Non-companionate Wife)

Stewart displays individualism strongly, an HCC linked hedonic motivation. This motivation manifests in self reports of not agreeing with the others in his work place, insisting they take their clients to horse-racing rather than the theatre. He also desists from socialising with his wife. Descriptions of his consumption choices rarely suggest accommodating other's tastes. He reports listening to music and watching television alone. His successful social mobility suggests that he is strongly -inner rather than other directed (see Reisman et al. 2001). His strong need conspicuous consumption, for example sponsoring a horse race for charity suggests that he likes to stand-out.

Further details about Stewart's personality shed additional light on his individualism. Stewart scores highly on competence, as detailed earlier. High scorers sense they are capable, effective and prudent and hence have a strong internal, rather than external, sense of control. Stewart scores highly on assertiveness, a sub-facet of extroversion (22/32), above the male norm (16/32, top 8% of the population, Costa and McCrae 1985, pp. 75 and 81). High scorers on assertiveness are dominant, forceful and socially ascendant (Costa and McCrae 1985; p.17). Stewart achieves a low score on compliance (14/32), below male norms (18.1/32, lower 20% of the population, Costa and McCrae 1985, pp. 75 & 83). Low scores have a tendency not to defer to others wishes.

Stewart is the only subject who expresses motivation for superiority, a sub-facet of individualism. He voices disdain for people who behave in a supposedly unseemly fashion at outdoor concerts.

I'm not a big person on large concerts on the basis of crowds and people tend to get carried away when they go to those things and I don't like being in situations where you've got obnoxious people carrying on because they tend to get aggressive. I'd rather not be there than be confronted by a drunken bum whose carrying on with all his mates or kids screaming and shouting standing up in front of you.

Stewart displays a preference for associating with people of higher status.

Got a friend whose was an ex-Director of the Football Club and is very good friends with John Elliott so he always gets us a table right at the front so we're right amongst all the celebrities so we always have a good time.

Stewart's links his need for superiority to racist sentiments, notably a dislike of Asians.

I go to the casino when I've been drinking but it really does bore me, I don't like the crowds that go there. I find them a very down-market crowd, very sleazy. I was in the Crown Casino in Melbourne, it was very ethnic, and I felt as if I was the only person there that was Australian. Sydney has a lot of Asians. The casino is a different class of people, where at the races, you're mixing with similar types of people to yourself.

Packard (1959; p. 229) asserts that socially mobile Americans, like Stewart, have reasons for being more racist than other people.

Both upward and downward-mobile persons tend to be more prejudiced in their attitudes towards Jews and Negroes than people who are not in motion, socially. Perhaps it is because they are insecure in their own status.

Stewart manifests superiority with mastery, notably successful gambling on horse and dog-racing events. Seeking such activities associates with Stewart's highly self-directed and extraverted personality; he scores very high on activity (29/32) and excitement seeking (28/32) as detailed earlier. High scorers on these sub-facets have high optimal levels of stimulation and typically engage in frequent physical activity and risk taking (Costa and McCrae 1985).

Stewart admits that attending performing arts rarely provides him with the type and level of stimulation that he requires from entertainment. For example, he reports falling asleep at the cinema due to being overly relaxed.

I like going to the cinema but I've have a bad habit of going there, getting too relaxed and falling asleep, which is, not like me. I normally don't fall asleep in public places; I'm always on the go.

He also regularly watches several television programs concurrently to keep himself occupied.

I'm very much a constant changer of channels, trying to find something more stimulating. Quite often I might be watching 3-4 programs at once, flicking backwards and forwards especially when it comes to sport.

In contrast, gambling allows him to reach desired levels of arousal.

Gambling [on race horse] is more about the challenge and the thrill, I'd make \$20,000-\$30,000 trading the market but that's in a day's



work for me. If I go and back a 10-1 winner and have \$500 on it, that's \$5,000 I can make. That's much more exciting to me even though it's much less money.

- **Communalism (Moderate)**

- Likely positively associates with CC (Low) and positively and negatively with Gender Identity (Traditional Australian Masculine)

Stewart exemplifies LCC behaviour by seeking high levels of social interaction during leisure. His traditional Australian male gender identity diminishes communalism in the context of performing arts, rather attending sporting events with other males. Australian males, especially those drawn from non-HCC milieus, typically display an enthusiasm for sport and a dislike of performing arts, especially classical forms. Exceptions occur. He describes a work-related function (predominantly populated by male stockbrokers and bankers like himself) in which he is unsure whether his enjoyment stemmed from jokes told during the show or the large quantity of alcohol he consumed.

I: Have you been to any stand-up comedy?

S: Yes, at the Comedy Club. The Australian Stock Exchange used to have what they call, operator dinners and they were set up for all the operators who worked at the ASX and there used to be a comedy store in Jamieson Street. We use to go there once a year and a lot of alcohol consumed so I don't know whether that made the comedians funnier or not but, they were quite good nights.

Satisfying Stewart's need to be with other males could result in his attending live highbrow performing arts. He explains that he would attend a live classical music performance if he could do so in a relaxed atmosphere with a group of friends.

A symphony concert would have to be [a] social instance like a picnic in the park. You know where you bring a rug and sit down at a picnic in the park... It would be an opportunity to catch up with friends; the music would be second fiddle.

His social ascendancy likely explains the broadening of his musical tastes.

S: I think my taste in music is a bit more diverse nowadays.

I: Any reason for that?

S: I think I've been exposed to a lot more.

I: How do you get more exposed to it?

S: Through mutual friends listening to their tastes, staying at their places. If I hear something I like, I'll go and ask them about it and then go and buy the CD.

- **Familiarity (Moderate)**

- Likely positively associates with LCC, Age (Middle - 37 years), and negatively associates with successful social class mobility.

Stewart expresses little desire to learn about new music or art forms. He names rock 'n' roll bands popular during his youth and early adulthood. Successful social class mobility likely diminishes his motivation for familiarity. His description of learning and then adopting of new music after visiting friends, suggests that he is striving to fit in with his newly acquired upper social class cohorts who compared to him, might have greater motivation for innovativeness via attending performing arts.

## **CONTRIBUTIONS TO THEORY**

Stewart's case (LCC) makes contributions to understanding the impact of CC and complementary variables on presentation of self via attending performing arts, as follows:

- Research Issue 1 is *not applicable*. Stewart has LCC.
- Research Issue 2 is answered in the *affirmative*. LCC associates with a predominance of LCC linked hedonic motivations (8:1) and very few HCC linked hedonic motivations (1:10), notably only high motivation for individualism.
- Research Issue 3 is answered in the *negative*. For Stewart, hedonic motivations observed in process streams regarding attending performing arts do not markedly differ to those patterns observed in the literature.
- Research Issue 4 is *not applicable*. Stewart has LCC.
- Research Issue 5 is answered in the *affirmative*. LCC associates with low attendance at performing arts, except for television.
- Research Issue 6 is *not applicable*. Stewart has LCC.
- Research Issue 7 is answered in the *affirmative*. LCC linked motivation patterns associate with lower levels attendance at performing arts.
- Research Issue 8 is answered in the *affirmative*. Complementary variables likely *intensify* CC (low) influence as follows:
  - Situational factors, such as a stressful lifestyle likely intensify motivation for diversion.
  - Traditional Australian masculine gender identity, self concept (Protest work ethic) and successful social class transition likely intensifies motivation for self reference.
  - A financially successful and dominant self-concept and high adult economic capital likely intensify motivation for conspicuous consumption.
  - Traditional Australian masculine gender identity, a non-culture related masculine gendered job (i.e. finance), a personality low in openness to

aesthetics and low exposure to performing arts and passion and competence in sport during pre-adulthood likely intensify motivation for univorousness.

- Traditional Australian masculine gender identity likely intensifies motivation for imitation as reflected in preference for pop’ music that expresses stereotypical working class masculine values.
- Traditional Australian masculine gender identity likely intensifies LCC associations with motivation for parochialism, reflected in Stewart’s preference Australian macho rock ‘n’ roll bands.
- Traditional Australian masculine gender identity and a gregarious personality likely intensify motivation for communalism.
- Middle age (i.e., 37 years), likely intensifies motivation for familiarity associated with expression of music popular during early adulthood.

Research Issue 9 is answered in the affirmative. Additional variables *diminish* CC (low) influences.

- Traditional Australian male gender identity, a self-concept reflecting the Protestant work ethic including independence from others, and personality sub-facets such as low compliance, high competence personality sub-facets including very high activity and excitement seeking likely diminish the association of LCC and communalism, which is moderate, and associate with high motivation for individualism.

Exhibit 3 presents a summary of Stewart’s presentation of self via attending performing arts.

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Exhibit 3 here.  
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## CONCLUSION

Stewart's case marks an important step towards developing a comprehensive theory of the presentation-of-self via attending performing arts. The model forms the basis for understanding the role of a range of variables identified in the literature as impacting upon this type of behaviour. Thus, the model directs our focus on the nuances that occur in linking specific levels, or value points, across a set variables, (i.e., toward building a contingent theory of lived experience) rather than focusing on the relative contribution of the main effects of each of these variables. Consequently, the contributions of several literature streams become linked and our level of understanding deepens.

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