



LUND UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT

Master of Science in Business Administration with specialization in
Globalization, Brands and Consumption

UNDERSTANDING EXTREME CONSUMER CULTURES

NERDERY, WEARABLE TECHNOLOGY AND THE POSTMODERN SOCIETY

MASTER THESIS

Authors: Dardan Durmishi	Supervisor: Sofia Ulver
& Mathias Thorneman Miller	Research Field: Consumer Culture Theory

26th of May 2014

Academic Year 2013/2014

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	4
2. Theory	8
2.1 Understanding Postmodernity and Consumer Culture Theory	8
2.1.1 Postmodern Consumption – The Evolution of Consumer Society and Culture	12
2.1.2 Relationship between the subject and objects	16
2.1.3 The body – On the borderlands between the subject and objects	19
2.1.4 Technological embodiment - Erasing the dualism	21
3. Methodology.....	23
3.1 Philosophical considerations	23
3.2 Research design	24
3.3 Data collection	25
3.4 Interview design	27
3.5 Observational design.....	27
3.6 Interview reflections	29
3.7 Theoretical sampling and participant reflections.....	29
3.8 Making sense of the data	31
4. Analysis.....	33
4.1.1 Morpheus; the pioneering spirit.....	33
4.1.2 Anderson; the fussy nerd.....	35
4.1.3 Neo; the real – authentic nerd.....	38
4.1.4 Jones; the in-between enthusiast	41
4.1.5 Smith; the altruistic enthusiast	44
4.1.6 The underground meet-up	46

4.2 Rise of the of Nerds.....	49
4.2.1 Technology - a long life passion	51
4.2.2 Nerdery has become a noble thing	54
4.2.3 Opportunity for self-expression	56
4.3 Living the dream; a socio-dynamic tale.....	59
4.3.1 A birth given right	59
4.3.2 Cyborgs and chimeras	61
4.3.3 A price to pay?.....	63
4.3.4 Recalibrating social relations	66
5. Discussion.....	69
5.1 Postmodernity 2.0	69
6. Conclusion.....	72
6.1 Reflections on future research.....	72
7. References.....	74
8. Appendices.....	81

1. Introduction

It's 7.13 am, and I gently get woken up by my vibrating MultiSense-bracelet. At the same time, the light in the bedroom brightens slowly, but forcefully, up through the orange-blue morning tones to full *then-its-up-level*. The EEG-sensors in my pillow have throughout the night measured my brain waves and my sleep quality, and since I beforehand have asked to be waken around seven, half eight, the device assesses that I am sleeping so lightly here at almost quarter past seven, that it is better to wake me up now then to give me those extra fifteen minutes of sleep. I mark with a push on the bracelet, that I am now awaken and to take a general status on my body's condition. I am told that for the third night in a row I have slept a little bit less than I am supposed to in order to be in a top shape, and therefore I ask the system to give me a little ping tonight, so that I can consider of going earlier to bed. Together with the numbers from the weight, which is the first thing I jump onto, when I get up in a vertical position, it becomes today's first status report. I turn around in front of the intelligent mirror, which is equipped with a camera and among other things it can assess if I generally look healthy, or if there is any moles I have to keep an eye on. Today, I also take a small blood test with a needle, which I do periodically. It sends the result wirelessly to my MultiSense-bracelet, which assesses if my blood sugar level is optimal, or whether I should perhaps need a little vitamin supplement. I have an appointment for implanting a little chip to extract data from my blood in my forearm, which will spare me from the needles, but first I have to go to my doctor for a last check-up.

After the first logs of the day I decide to go directly to the gym. I put on a tight suite, which is equipped with flexible circuit and sensors that, among other things, it can track my muscles' electrical activity and follow the movement of my limbs around the room while I do my exercises. Together they can give a surprisingly accurate guess on, how much I am lifting, or if I am doing the exercises wrongly, i.e. lift equally with both. For the same reason I have asked my HealthAssistant to be more precise so that, while on the edge of aggression, it reminds me to take two more minutes at a higher tempo on the treadmill, and that I should without objection lift, maybe two, more on the bench press. In order not to become too serious, I have sat

the voice on my ear-phone-chip to occasionally interrupt the podcast-listening with training inputs on scharzeneggerian: Pump your iron and build ze perfect muscles!

Suddenly home again, lightly used and dung hungry, I take on my discrete, but competent, InfoGoggles and start making breakfast. Through the glasses' inbuilt mobile phone, camera, monitor, microphone and speakers I have constant access to the extra layer of information on the glass of the goggles, which gives the impression that reality is equipped with product labels, guides and relevant data on nutrition, expiry date – and messages about whether I am about to buy more milk. Before I take a shower my HealthAssistant asks me if I would like to make an assessment of my mood and stress levels and my general sense of whether I am feeling good. Later, it also tells me about the today's meetings and messages, and since the weather forecast shows rain, then it is probably a good idea to leave five minutes earlier so that I don't come late for work, because I then have to fiddle with the raincoat and tackle a heavy bike traffic at H.C Andersens' Boulevard.

Although the depicted scenario (inspired by Nissen, 2013) may seem futuristic, unreal or perhaps even dystopian, this reality can be plausible within a foreseeable future (Featherstone & Burrows, 1995; Lupton, 2013). To increase understanding of this “world of tomorrow” this research paper aims to develop theory within wearable technology in consumer culture. The paper will explore and deepen the understanding of wearable technologies influence on consumption practices and it's embodiment in contemporary postmodernism.

Wearable technology is an abstract term that is defined as a device that is a computer or other electronic that is small or light enough to be worn or carried on/in one's body (Oxford Dictionary, 2014). By the introduction of these devices theorist, screenplay writers and marketers have made various utopian and dystopian speculations on its impact on personal and social life, cultural identity and the body itself (Poster cited in Featherstone & Burrow, 1995). The contemplation of wearables aiding/transforming humanity has been in existence for centuries. The first documentation of the phenomena is in the short story “*The man that was used up*” by Edgar Allan Poe (1839), which tells the tale of a man with extensive prostheses. Since then, numerous publications have emerged on the topic, and in more recent history, films where *Bladerunner* (1982), *Robocop* (1987), *Terminator* (1984) or the 2014

movie *Her* are among the most known. The general theme is often revolving around the juxtaposition and problematizing of the organic and inorganic, a dualism that is argued to have blurred in postmodernity (Haraway, 1991; Featherstone & Burrow, 1995). Thus, bringing *Man* and *Machine* closer than ever, and at the same time the way the body is perceived as an object of subjectivity and objectivity (Corrigan, 1997; Featherstone, 1991b; Turner, 1992; Foucault, 1977).

Fueled by immense technological breakthroughs, wearable technology has recently received significant attention. Established technology producers and newcomers have all flocked to wearable technology giving the market a wide array of choices (Mangalindan, 2014) to measure, enhance, develop and make you more efficient in almost every aspect of your life. Wearables promise to revolutionize our reality in aspects stretching from bone-anchored hearing aids (Cochlear, 2014) to online skiing goggles (Oakley, 2014). Some of the more recognizable consumer products are Nike's Fuelband (Nike, 2014), Google's GoogleGlass (Google, 2014) and Fitbit's bracelet (Fitbit, 2014). Wearables are predicted to rocket sales of \$1.5 billion by 2014 (Juniper Research, 2014), and even predicted to overtake tablets (Suciu, 2014). In short, "*We are moving into a world where technology has become an integral part of our everyday lives*" (Telstra Exchange, 2014)

The presence and diffusion of wearables is increasing in both implication and usability within contemporary postmodern consumer society, and yet very little is known about the phenomena. The majority of the practical knowledge within the field is restricted to the producers and dedicated consumers. Whereas, the theoretical knowledge appears to have been largely confined to the field sociology with a fixation on the health and the medicinal industry (Lupton, 2013,2013b; Leng, 1996; Freud, 2006; Chrysanthou, 2002). Moreover, the understanding of virtual reality and the body in symposium is largely arguing that technology will not be able to challenge physical social relations as our preferred mean of operation (Featherstone 1995; Stone, 1991, Rheingold, 1994, Wiley, 1995 cited in Featherstone 1995). But can this still be true today?

In sum, the current theoretical background within the field appears to be bleak, and with a particular industry in focus. Sparse attention has been deployed to the understanding of the self, social, cultural or consumption. The concern is also

expressed in the literature; (In relation to wearables) Yet thus far there has been little detailed social or cultural analysis of their production, content, function or use (Goggin, 2011; Krieger, 2013)

Upon this basis it is found necessary to elaborate the understanding of this phenomena through the scope of consumption theory as humanity moves closer to bridging the fusion between sci-fi and contemporary civilization.

Inspired by Arnould and Thompson (2005) a Consumer Culture Theory approach will be applied to facilitate rich, powerful and meaningful examination of consumer meanings. Hence, postmodernity (Featherstone, 2007; Jameson, 1984a; Firat & Venkatesh, 1995; Lyotard, 1986) with the corresponding classical consumption theories such as Baudrillard's theory of representation (Allan, 2011), the system of objects (Corrigan, 1997), or Debord's society of the spectacle (Debord, 1995) formulates the foundation of the theoretical discussion. Moreover, the relation between the subject (individual) and objects (goods) in the realm of consumer society is best understood through the notion of hedonic consumption coined by Hirschman and Holbrook (1982). Then, the human subject and its objectified body will be discussed in terms of a two-sided implication: *Der Körper* and *Der Leib* (Corrigan, 1997). From there, the evolutionary process of human subjectivity and objectivity is brought to a stage of a post-bodied and post-human state of mind where its dualistic implication is faded in the realm of the technological embodiment and the theory of cyborg (Featherstone & Burrows, 1995; Haraway, 1991)

More specifically this paper aims to comprehend the following:

- *How do consumers of wearables negotiate and navigate reality in contemporary society?*
 - *What factors and motifs drive consumption and does it come with at a cost?*

The research will be developed through a combination of five in-depth interviews and one observation. Additionally, the use of postmodern constructs will be applied to make sense and develop new meaning of the data. Hereunder, key concepts within consumption theory and cyborg theory. By application of this mixture the paper will provide clarification within the development and cultivation of wearable consumer culture. Thereby taking the first step towards a holistic and extralogical comprehension of the motifs, drivers, and consequences the cultivation process of wearable's unleash upon contemporary civilization.

2. Theory

In this section we take departure on theoretical understandings of postmodernity, hereunder the evolution of contemporary consumer societies. Classical postmodern theories lay the foundation and the background for discussion, while the contemporary consumer theories establishes the common ground for the extreme consumer practice of wearable technology.

2.1 Understanding Postmodernity and Consumer Culture Theory

The classical social theory of modernity is designed to explain a particular point in time and place. It was built for understanding the late 19th and earliest 20th century in Europe (Corrigan, 1997; Featherstone, 2007; Branch, 2007). We do not live in those times and places anymore, say rigid class hierarchies, industrialization, urbanization (Webber, Tönnies, Simmel) but instead we live in a time and place where class is very complicated, we live in postindustrial service economies (Featherstone, 2007; Corrigan, 1997). We are born in cities, we did not move to the city. In many ways postmodern theory should be relevant to making sense of our lives today rather than modern theories, because it deals with the contemporary society and the times we live in. These are very complex times and therefore require complex theories (Baudrillard, Lyotard, Debord, Jameson, Lyon, Featherstone etc.). To begin with, it is important to clarify the differences between the different terminologies of postmodernity, postmodern theories, and postmodernism (Featherstone 2007).

First, in explaining postmodernity would be to depart from a perspective of, say a historical period or the so called “*periodizing concept*” of Jameson (1984a), and look at societies over the last fifty or sixty years (Featherstone, 2007). In other words would be to say it is the “contemporary world”, in which we currently inhabit, and not the 19th or 20th century. Another explanation would be to depart from Lyotard’s (1986-7:209) definition of “Postmodern” as being simply a mood or a state of mind, where the *postmodern condition* describes the changes in knowledge and the move to the post-industrial society (Featherstone, 2007:33). Second, the most straightforward

way of thinking about the postmodern theory is all about a way of understanding the postmodern society and culture. In other words, if postmodernity is a chunk of time (a bit of history), postmodern theory is a way trying to understand that society and culture (Featherstone, 1995, 2007). Postmodern theories are not as rational as a lot of modern theories (Firat & Venkatesh, 1995). Rather than pretending to have all the answers, which potentially modernist or modern theorists of society and culture do (usually from a positivist epistema), postmodern theorists tend to be more upfront about the fact that they don't have all the answers (Featherstone, 2007; Firat & Venkatesh, 1995; Corrigan, 1997). They do however have a lot of questions. Last but not least, postmodernism is closely related to postmodernity and postmodern theory, but one definition of postmodernism might be that it is a particular approach of practicing things (e.g. art, architecture, literature, theory) that have postmodern characteristics (Featherstone, 2007).

A theory that takes a particular importance in postmodernity is the theory of "representation" through images and signs (Featherstone, 2007; Corrigan, 1997). Our lives are saturated with images, as matters of cause, e.g. TV, cinema, massive billboards, in other words everywhere we look there are images. They are hard if not impossible to escape, which in itself is an interesting thing to think about historically the way the image has taken on a particular significance in contemporary times. Now, in postmodern theory we see some serious attempts to get grips of the importance of the image. Important attempts to recon with the way the image have become a part of our social and cultural realities (become part of the fabric of our world) are beside others Jean Baudrillard (1975) with his work in "*The mirror of production*" (Allan, 2011).

In following Carl Marx, Baudrillard (1975) sketches out three stages in development of capitalism (Allan, 2011; Corrigan, 1997). In the first stage, while referring to feudal societies, Baudrillard emphasizes that the majority of what is produced is also consumed by its producers (Marxist view). In other words you have situations like subsistence farming where the small amount that is left over is sold or exchanged in the marketplace. Here, we have the predominance of what is called the *use value* over *exchange value*, meaning what something gets used for is more important than what it is useful for (Allan, 2011; Corrigan, 1997). In the second stage, which Baudrillard (1975) talks about as a phase of industrial production, everything

that is produced is sold as a commodity on the market. Here, *exchange value* dominates over *use value* (Allan, 2011; Corrigan, 1997). This explains the basic story of capitalism, where the value of something in the market place becomes more important than what it is being used for. In the third phase Baudrillard (1975) talks about abstract categories like knowledge, happiness, love, and states that they themselves become commodified (Allan, 2011; Corrigan, 1997). Things that previously were thought to be outside of the market place are now brought within. This is essentially what Marx talked about in *commodity fetishism* - when commodities seem to take abstract values, and Baudrillard is simply building upon this (Allan, 2011; Corrigan, 1997). This relates further to Jameson's (1984a) idea where postmodernity describes the commodification of culture and representation in the context of consumer capitalism (Featherstone, 2007). Like Jameson, Baudrillard (1983a) tries to build on Marxists theories of capitalism in order to account for the emergence for mass culture and the technologies of mass reproduction, so that the distinction between the real and appearance becomes erased (Featherstone, 2007).

Baudrillard's theories on the image - "*The system of objects*" (Allan 2011; Corrigan 1997) derive, beside other, also from another French intellectual called Guy Debord whose collection of his earlier work (1967) has been gathered under "*The Society of the Spectacle*" (Debord, 1995), which according to Baudrillard it has become a "society of the significance" (Firat & Venkatesh, 1985). In his book, Debord (1995) emphasize few hundred points on the society of the spectacle. To mention just a few, Debord (1995: 12-13) in his first point states that (1) life in modern societies presents itself as an immense accumulation of spectacles (here spectacles as an experience – e.g. a spectacular experience), and all that once was directly lived has become a mere representation. There is an idea here that the real or the experience we have of the world is no longer of an unmediated one, instead our experience of the world is always mediated, where we always engage with the world through representations (Debord, 1995). Secondly, (4) the spectacle is not a collection of images; rather, it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images (Debord, 1995). This is a complicated way of saying that the theory of the spectacle is a theory of the social – it is not about what we merely see but how we relate to one another as social beings. Finally, in point (5) Debord (1995:12-13) states that the spectacle cannot either be understood as a deliberate distortion of the visual

world or as a product of technology of the mass dissemination of images. It is far better viewed as a *weltanschauung* (a world view – a way of seeing the world) that has been actualized, translated into the material realm – a worldview transformed into an objective force. In other words, Debord (1995) denies the new reality of spectacle as being a distortion of the visual world, but rather a birth of a new kind of reality. This reality describes the development of capitalism of the late 20th century to a stage where commodities are no longer material in the old-fashioned sense, but rather images or symbolic representations (e.g. buying a FC Barcelona shirt means one buys the symbolic meaning behind it – its representation image of the Barcelona football club). This explains quite clearly how in consumer capitalism we are engaged in a form of symbolic exchange. Culture has become commodified because images contain symbolic value. Thus in a contemporary post-industrial society we are increasingly caught up in the production and the circulation of images rather than material goods (e.g. people that work in the creative industries, promotion, advertising doing work online). This is an increasingly important part of contemporary Western societies (Featherstone, 2007). However, surely some things (goods) consist of material substance e.g. smartphones – but the whole object in itself and the technological infrastructure build within is to support the image and create immaterial symbolic connection (here the material is secondary to the symbolic value). In addition, Douglas and Isherwood (Corrigan, 1997) emphasize how the uses of goods have now changed to a cultural practice. Goods are seen as social meanings, which make and maintain relationships - e.g. food is not good for eating but for thinking, or we don't eat human flesh because it doesn't have nutrition, but because what it means to us (Corrigan, 1997).

Furthermore, Baudrillard (1968, 1975, 1983a) and Debord (1995) are not about more than just a critique of consumers (Allan, 2011; Corrigan, 1997; Featherstone, 2007). Their argument is about how signs and symbols have created a new kind of reality with a transformation of the culture. Therefore the core dynamics of a postmodern society is not the mode of production but the mode of consumption (a shift of emphasis from producing to consuming). This is in many ways similar to the three stages of capitalism – the process of increasing commodification. The way Baudrillard thinks about this (process of increasing commodification) is in terms of stages in representation itself (Allan, 2011). Baudrillard divides the history of

representation into four stages to get to the condition of pure simulation. In the first level of representation, Baudrillard argues that the sign is thought of as a reflection of a basic reality (Allan, 2011). Here the sign or the image is thought to be identical to the thing it refers to (e.g. a picture of a shirt refers to a shirt). The second level of representation, Baudrillard states that the sign masks and perverts a basic reality (Allan, 2011). Here, he is referring to the ideology of false consciousness, meaning the image is simply a lie that conceals the truth. In addition to this, Cova (1997) states that the consumer “wears different masks, for different occasions”, while emphasizing on Featherstone’s (1991) statement that everyone construct their life like a work of art, which leads to an aestheticization of everyday life, and thus an aestheticization of consumption (Cova, 1997: 305).

Moreover, in the third level, Baudrillard states that the sign masks the absence of a basic reality (Allan, 2011). Here we see that the idea of a belonging and a sense of community between oneself and other members does not really exist. The basic reality is absent, and all we have is just an idea of it or in Baudrillard term - a simulation of it (Allan, 2011). The fourth level of representation is more or less an intensification of the third level. Here, Baudrillard states that the sign bears no relation to any reality whatsoever. It is its own pure *simulacrum* (Allan, 2011). Here we got a situation in which the simulation or the fantasy takes on a life of its own. We can no longer in fact make a distinction between things and their representation, and thereby we are only left with *simulacrum*, which according to Baudrillard refer to nothing but themselves (Allan, 2011). These simulations Baudrillard argues can become more real than reality itself, or as Allan (2011) defines *hyperreality* as: “*a postmodern condition, a virtual world that provides experiences more involving and spectacular than everyday life and reality*” (Allan, 2011:311).

2.1.1 Postmodern Consumption – The Evolution of Consumer Society and Culture

It is without doubt that consumption and for that matter consumerism plays a central role in the daily life of 21th century. If we had to imagine some kind of apocalyptic scenario whereby economies, distribution networks, or information systems were destroyed, think how impossible it would be for us to live our lives. Contemporary societies are not built in such a way as to survive a catastrophe like that. We are too linked in to consumption. Most histories of consumer society start with Marx's ideas

on *commodity fetishism*. As previously established, commodity fetishism has to do with the separation of use value from exchange value. Later, Weber (1948) wrote about the competition among status groups organized around modes of consumption – as in contrary to Marx’s modes of production (Corrigan, 1997). Veblen follows up with *the theory of the leisure class*, which is based on the idea that consumption was wrapped up within a social display of wealth, and therefore was to do with the maintenance of social status (*conspicuous consumption* – the rise of the leisure class) (Corrigan, 1997; Featherstone, 2007). Further, this also relates to the use of commodity and practices of consumption to construct identity (Cova, 1997), and the transitional process of the self-concept in symbolic consumption practices (Schouten, 1991).

McCracken (1998) goes as far as to say that consumption was obvious even under the rule of Queen Elisabeth of England (consumption springs from *politics*), where the nobels competed between each other as an ideal way of catching attention (Corrigan, 1997). In addition, Corrigan (1997) states that the beginning of consumer society starts with the economic boom (prosperity) of England in eighteenth century (citing McKendrick et al., 1982), and from “the heart” (citing Colin Campbell – Romanticism and Consumer Ethics) or “the idealist way”, which explores the ethics leading to consumption (Corrigan, 1997).

Moving further with early consumption theorists, we encounter the Austro-Hungarian György Lukács, who provides a more sophisticated term on the commodity fetishism called *reification* (Featherstone, 2007; Allan, 2011; Debord, 1995). Reification is another jargon term for “thingification”, which has to do with the transformation of social human relation into things as if they were objects that can be exchanged. Then, both Baudrillard with the emphasis on the sign (Allan, 2011), and Debord (1995) with the *society of the spectacle* are interested in the way in which the visual becomes incorporated into commodity production. In other words this is the turning point from thinking about human relationship as mediated by objects (Marx) to human relationships as mediated by images (Baudrillard & Debord) in the context of consumer culture. What’s interesting here is that Baudrillard places his emphasis on consumption rather than production as an overriding feature of contemporary class societies. From here we become consumer citizens, where we relate to one another as

consumers (Featherstone, 2007; Allan, 2011). People are mobilized as consumers in hyper-real social contexts, where the sign replaces the commodity (e.g. iPhones are empty signifiers to be filled with meaning). Thus, the basic purpose of commodities (Baudrillard cited in Corrigan, 1997) is to communicate, which represents a universal system of signs (a cultural system).

Frederic Jameson (1979) is also interested in a way that capital has colonized culture (Featherstone, 2007). He makes the claim that the contemporary culture is the very element of consumer society itself. No society has ever been saturated with signs and images like this one (Featherstone, 2007). On the other hand, Anderson Lyon in his book of “*Postmodernity*” (1999) provides a different but evolutionary view on postmodern sociology, culture and consumption. He recognizes a beginning of a shift in sociology with an increase importance of consumption, ideals, values and symbols, whereas taste and style becomes absolutely central in this reckoning (Lyon 1999:95; Ekström, 2010). Later on, Lyon (1999) goes on to argue that shopping is not just about fulfilling a basic material need, but becomes a significant element of contemporary culture. Sociologically, then we need to think about consumption as something beyond the merely consumption aspect of it and not just as a practice reduced to commodity exchange. In addition to this, Celia Lury (2011) just like Douglas and Isherwood (Corrigan 1997) sees things as objects that have social life, and in a way in which the material culture is an integral part of society (Clarke, 2013). This emphasis on the cultural significance of objects involves thinking about the specifically postmodern aspects of consumer culture. In defining consumer culture, Featherstone (1995, 2007) states that the culture of consumer society is “*a vast floating complex of fragmentary signs and images, which produces an endless sign play which destabilize long-held symbolic meanings and cultural order*” (Featherstone, 1995:75). While following the same philosophy as Baudrillard and Debord with the focus on signs and images, consumer culture for Featherstone (1995) is a creative and dynamic one, where social relationships become shaped and articulated. This definition of consumer culture can be related to the fragmented depthlessness of Jameson (Featherstone, 2007), or the hyperreality of Baudrillard (1975), or the postfordist models of consumptions (Kumar, 1995), which marks changes in the production processes, work place arrangements, and lifestyle practices from the concept of Fordism. Here, Holt (1997) has a particular interesting view on

lifestyle changes through a poststructuralist approach. Holt (1997) concludes with a contribution to the revitalization of lifestyle research by proposing five principals of his poststructuralist approach: (1) contextual cultural framework, (2) consumption practices, (3) lifestyle as symbolic boundaries, (4) lifestyle as a collective construct, and (5) lifestyle as social construction (Holt, 1997:344-347).

In citing Bauman (1990), Lyon (1999:85) states that consumer conduct of the present day has to do with how we think (cognitive) and our ethics (morality), and it is the thing that organizes us and holds us together (*the focus of systematic management*). Further, Lyon (1999) continues to describe the contemporary consumer culture as an incorporation of ideas, values, and pleasures into a “capitalist” organized social system - so pleasure is now not something that takes place outside the capitalism but within (Lyon, 1999:85). On the other hand, Bauman (1990) states that consumer society announces itself as a free and equal society (we can be who we want to be and we can chose what we want to chose) but in reality it is not equally and free because we all got different amounts of capital. In addition to Bauman (1990), while giving a historical background on the evolution of postmodernity, Cova (1997) states that the bonds and inherent rules of the past two centuries are breaking up and the individual have never been so free in their private and public choices as today, but also, never so alone and cut off from the spirit of community. Bauman (1990) further explains that the ostensible of freedoms of consumerism conceals the profound “unfreedom”, where the idea of consumer choice is an illusion for those who got no money to spend. Finally, Bauman continues that the ideology of consumer society means you don’t need to fill that you don’t have any money, and living beyond ones means has become increasingly acceptable in our culture where one can consume beyond his/her capacity through the use of debt (Bauman, 1990).

In summing up the evolution of consumer society, Firat and Venkatesh (1995) in their “*liberatory postmodernism*” identify six major different views of consumptions in postmodern and modern societies. First, in contrary to the modern economic view of consumption (the rule of reason and the establishment of rational order), postmodern consumption is seen as a cultural process that include aesthetics, language, discourses, and practices (Firat & Venkatesh, 1995:240). Second, while modernism (in the emergence of the cognitive subject) renders the consumer

participation in a rational economic system with no emotion, symbolic or spiritual relief (Angus, 1989), postmodern consumption “reenchants the human life” and liberates the consumer from a repressive rational and or technological system (Firat & Venkatesh, 1995:240). Third, while modern consumption reduces the world into simple categories e.g. subject vs. object, male vs. female, producer vs. consumer, postmodern consumption sees the division of these categories as unsuccessful historical attempts to legitimate a part of the truth (Firat & Venkatesh, 1995:240). Cova (1997) backs this up by stating that the postmodern consumer is hard to define, if not impossible, as they can consume in many different ways with no classification and are very unpredictable (dualism erased). Fourth point of Firat and Venkatesh (1995), state that modernism (in realism, representation and the unity of purpose in art and architecture) consist of three different views on the consumer: (1) the producer creates value while the consumer destroys it, (2) the consumer is treated as a commodity, (3) the consumer “is always right”. On the other hand in postmodernism, consumption is viewed as a value-producing activity (Firat & Venkatesh, 1995:242). Fifth, modernism (in the emergence of industrial capitalism) emphasizes rationalism, functionalism and universalism (Jencks, 1987), while postmodernism moves toward expressive forms, symbolic representations and the mixing of the genres (Firat & Venkatesh, 1995:242). Last but not least, modernism is criticized by feminists for being grounded in the foucauldian view of power and regimes of truth, whereas postmodernism and where these feminist critique of modernism expose the modern construction of the consumer-self as the mind separable from the body, the individual separable from social and human subjects in control over objects (Firat & Venkatesh, 1995:242). Therefore, postmodernism not only reveals the paradoxes in the modern construction of the consumer, but proposes radically different perspectives of what a consumer is (Firat & Venkatesh, 1995:242).

2.1.2 Relationship between the subject and objects

In postmodern consumer culture, the bond between the individual (*the subject*) and the goods (*objects*) has experienced a tremendous theoretical growth and has been viewed from many different angles. In the previous sections, we established a shift from *mode of production* to *mode of consumption* with the corresponding theoretical approaches of, beside others, Baudrillard (on *the system of objects*) and Debord (on

the *society of the spectacle*) - both looking at the significance of symbolism (images and signs) as a key parameter of the contemporary consumer society.

As a starting point to another and more abstract view, Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) departs from a relational approach between the consumer (subject) and goods (objects) to theorize a new idea of consumption, framed under the term of *hedonic consumption*. Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) emphasize that hedonic consumption “*designates those facets of consumer behavior that relate to the multi sensory, fantasy, and emotive aspects of one’s experience with products*” (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982:92). They seek to examine the hedonic consumption by comparing it with the traditional consumption approach through four areas: *mental constructs, product classes, product usage, and individual differences* (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982:94-99). The first stage of the relation between *the subject* (consumer) and *objects* (goods) starts with a division of the multisensory imagery into two parts; the *historic imagery*, which involves recalling an event that did occur in the past, and *fantasy imagery*, which occurs when the consumer produces a multisensory image not drawn from prior experiences (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982:92-93). Further, components such as *cognition, emotion, and connotation* play a significant role in the discussion of the category of *mental constructs* (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982:94-95).

First, in the category of *mental construct* authors proposes that emotional desires such as love, hate, or jealousy will dominate the utilitarian motives (the economic view of traditional consumption approach through rational and deductive reasoning) in the choice of products (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982:94). In addition to and as a complementary work, Holt (1995) emphasize on the term of *consuming as experience*, which underlies the subjective emotional reactions to consumption objects. Further, Belk, Ger and Askegaard (2003) tap into one particular aspect of emotional consumption that is more or less the core of passionate consumption characterized by desire. Here desire is seen as the motivating force behind much of contemporary consumption (Belk, Ger & Askegaard 2003). Bettany (2007) in her study of Afghan Hound breeding and exhibition culture extends the theory by looking at the relation between the subject and object from a perspective of post-humanist. Bettany (2007) states that CCT has experienced an ontological shift in terms of

object-meaning-subject relationship, where in earlier consumer work, the whole relationship was over determined by the object (object determined the social), while in the current CCT the opposite is true, the “social” determines the object. Here the subject ascribes meaning to objects, subject while using objects engage into practices, and subjects’ experiences and identities are derived from objects (Bettany, 2007:44). On the other hand, Woodward (2011) proposes a new way for theorizing aspects of consumption practice relating to subject-object relationships, by departing from DW Winnicott’s (1953, 1971) early work on “transitional object”. Woodward emphasizes on the importance of objects and aesthetic experiences, which usually are desired for their capacity to surprise, challenge, provoke, and transform through non-verbal means – in other words aesthetic moments are not thought, but felt (Woodward 2011:378).

Second, in hedonic consumption, consumers imbue a product with subjective meanings, where the symbolic and intangible attributes of esthetic objects such as smartphones or in our case wearables can be key determinants of brand selection (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982:94).

Third, practices of hedonic consumption are based not on what consumers know to be real but rather on what they desire reality to be as *the projective fantasy* (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982:94-95). Here hedonic consumption plays the role of the imaginative construction of reality, similarly to the *hyperreality* of Baudrillard (1975), or more or less *the displaced meaning* term of MacCracken (Corrigan, 1997), in others words, a gap between the lived reality and some sort of ideal, and where objects act as bridges to meanings that cannot be attained in the here and now. On the other hand, Jenkins, Nixon and Molesworth (2011) depart from a phenomenological account to place imagining ahead of consumption. In their study, Jenkins, Nixon, and Molesworth (2011) found that goods (objects) either helped individuals (subjects) envision common cultural desires in positive imagined futures (successful relationships, happiness and love), or were dismissed in favour of preferred emotional experience. Further, they emphasize that imagination help us actualize the aspects of life, and allows us to focus on the outcome of our everyday engagement with culture (Jenkins, Nixon & Molesworth 2011:277).

In sum, in contrary to the sematic view of traditional approach, measuring of hedonic consumption is done rather from an emotive and imaginable reaction to products. For example, in the category of *product class* the hedonic approach emphasizes on emotion laden, subjective products that can be experienced (e.g. ballet, music, theater etc.) rather than as in the traditional view of package products like toothpaste, cereal, beer, cigarettes etc. (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982:95-96). Further, the essence of *product usage* in hedonic consumption is based on experiences, meaning the psychological or the symbolic experiences that accompany product usage rather than a *decision making process* as in the traditional approach (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982:97; Holt, 1995). Finally, in the category of *individual differences*, contrary to the traditional behavior based view (e.g. brand loyalty, high rate, low satisfaction etc.) in the hedonic approach subcultural groups are defined priori. Here differences in ethnic background, social class and gender, cause product to vary greatly in the emotions and fantasies they stimulate in a consumer (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982:99), which in the end produces a dynamic process of identity reconstruction or rather known as the roles in transition during the process of the self-concept (Schouten, 1991).

2.1.3 The body – On the borderlands between the subject and objects

With postmodernity the idea of *the self* prospers (Forty, 1986, cited in Corrigan, 1997, Ekström, 2010). From here human subject was not to be found in the mind only - *I think, therefore I am* (Descartes cited in Corrigan, 1997), but also in the body - *I eat, drink, sleep, and have sex* (Corrigan, 1997). This paradigm shift of *the self* meant also that the body became a subject of natural sciences (e.g. with medicine), whereas the mind or the *Geist* was the topic of the humanities or social sciences (Corrigan, 1997). Therefore, Corrigan (1997) argues that on the one side we have *nature-body-environment* and on the other we have *society-mind-culture*, whereas both sides did not pay much attention to what happened on the other side. Furthermore, in following Weber's approach where sociology is said to be interested in social actions, Corrigan (1997) goes on to state that body (on the *society-mind-culture* side) became invisible to the sociological gaze. The reason for this is because social actors are understood in terms of consciousness, knowledge and meaning – not embodiment, and therefore not worthy of investigation for sociologists (Corrigan, 1997).

The civilizing process of appetite and the paradigm shift of food intake through quantitative regulations (see Mennell, 1987 & Elias, 1994, 1939, cited in Corrigan, 1997: 116-120) supported the process of human subject development in a coherent manner. This meant that in postmodernity, the need for expressing the internal and external body from an individual level grew tremendously (Turner, 1992; Featherstone, 1991b cited in Corrigan, 1997:56). First, food and diets targets the body as a lived experience (*Der Leib*) or its foundationalist nature – the feel good about yourself state (Turner, 1992), which through advertising promotes an ideal body type or shape (Corrigan, 1997). Second, it targets the external body (*Der Körper*) or the anti-foundationalist approach where the body is viewed as a *Machine* (Turner, 1992), or a discourse and a system of symbols (Corrigan, 1997). Furthermore, on the dieting body Corrigan (1997) states, “we may diet for all sorts of reasons, but in the end we seem to want our machine to be in impressive condition (a healthy diet). In addition, he points out to the particular practice of aerobics and elite sports as good examples of machine metaphors, with their bodily indicators – a phrase itself machine-like-measured and evaluated, and their diets closely controlled.

Turner (1992), as cited in Corrigan (1997:50), has three different orientations to the body: *having a body*, *doing a body*, and *being a body*. Having a body and being a body represent the inner self – subconscious position of a human subject (*Der Leib*), which is about control of desire, passion, interests of social stability (asceticism) or the control of expression of emotion in a hedonistic way (Campbell in Corrigan, 1997). On the other hand, *doing a body* is more related to the external view of body (*Der Körper*). Here, the body is viewed as an object of proper representation to the world, meaning we wash, we comb our hair, we use cosmetics, and we train it. Finally, Michel Foucault (1977, cited in Corrigan, 1997:152) sees the body as an effect of discourses and knowledges acting upon it. In other words, the Foucauldian approach (Foucault, 1977 cited in Corrigan, 1997:150) looks at the ways in which human populations were surveyed and hence controlled through new practices, disciplined in detail and in depth (*the disciplined body*).

Last but not least, in viewing body as an object Corrigan (1997) states that the body is: “*An aesthetic object of complex social significance to be painted, clothed, plucked, shaved, pierced, tattooed, and corseted: a political object to be trained, disciplined, tortured, mutilated, and locked away; an economic object to be exploited, fed and reproduced: and a sexual object to seduce and be seduced*”.

In sum, body is understood as two sided, it is ours and not ours, it can be experienced subjectively or objectively, and it is natural and cultural at the same time (Corrigan, 1997).

2.1.4 Technological embodiment - Erasing the dualism

The idea of technology influencing and changing humanities, culture and future is nothing new. Sometimes presented in a dark and dystopian manner, while at other times as a tool for further development of culture and humankind.

Cybernetics (Weiner, 1948 in Featherstone & Burrows, 1995) is a term coined to express the unity of the human mind, body and the world of machines and essentially attempts to melt them together. Since then a surge of attention have been given to matter expressed in terms as cyberspace, cyberbodies and cyberpunks, which have let some assert that we are entering a new era (Mark Poster cited in Featherstone, 1995). Poster argues that this new media has a profound impact on the way we conduct social, cultural and our bodily life. With this change the possibility of the post-bodied and post-human condition takes form. Numerous authors like Plant (1993) (cited in Featherstone & Burrows, 1995) or Kellner (1995) (cited in Featherstone & Burrows, 1995) have examined and contributed to the exploration and understanding of the technology induced *transhuman* form, but no other authors have had as great an impact on successfully bringing the theorized cyborg into postmodernity as Haraway (1991).

Introduced by Donna Haraway (1991) the Cyborg myth characterizes an important construct within postmodernity. Essentially Haraway’s (1991) Cyborg myth is most accurately addressed in her quote:

“it is about transgressed boundaries, potent fusions, and dangerous possibilities which progressive people might explore as one part of needed political work”
(Haraway, 1991:154)

Although Haraway addresses numerous topics in her work her primary focus is to draw attention towards the blurriness of an array of boundaries, hereunder; Animal/Human, Machine/Human, Mind/Body, Nature/Culture etc. Most important in the perspective of this paper is the ‘cybernetic organism’, which manifests the fusion of machine and human. Haraway argues the Cyborg exist in two forms, the literal and the metaphorical. In terms of human bodies that hosts technology, and a being of social reality and fiction. Haraway elaborates and perceive us all as chimeras, as being neither one thing nor the other, but in a constant state of simultaneous multitude. Hereby opposing dualism, compartmentalization and binarism, fusion a critical link to postmodern theory. As Betcher (2001) puts it *“(Haraway) offers a way of valorizing the monstrous hybrid, disabled, mutated or otherwise ‘imperfect’ or ‘unwhole’ body.*

3. Methodology

In this section the reader will be presented with the methodological considerations employed in this paper. Through organic development the structure of this section will take point of departure in the Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) guided choice of research philosophy. The reader is presented to the research design, data collection and interview and observational design. Afterwards reflections upon interviews, sampling and participants are argued. Concluding this section the reader will be familiarized with the theoretical principles employed to make sense of the data.

The spirit of this section is inspired by Professor Peter Svensson at Lund University (2014):

“The world has enough doers! What we need are more thinkers”

3.1 Philosophical considerations

Ontological considerations relates to the assumptions about reality (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2012:18-21, Bryman & Bell, 2011). By application of Consumer Culture Theory the employed research philosophy is deemed to reside within the realm of ‘multiple truths’. An example of such an ontological stance label is constructivism (Bryman & Bell 2011), alternatively put by Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson (2012) and referred to as relativism. Irrespective of stance name, the ontological substance remains equivalent, as such it is what the stance entails and express that is perceived significant. Both stance referrals denote a presence of interpretation and understanding of the symbolism, myths and legends. These factors are of the utmost importance through a scope that is permissive and allows us to stare through the kaleidoscope that makes up the great unknown. This argument is brought further by Thompson (1997), whom adds the need to grasp essential expressions of meaning through self-interpretations, culture and language experienced via the individual in their own unique reality. Essentially this calls for the analysis to

be richly contextualized, and it is paramount to examine what other contextual dynamics in an field might foster identity formation (Scaraboto & Fishcher, 2013)

Summa samarium the paper will exert particular emphasis upon the experience of the subject and the importance of the infinite co-created realities and truths through the stance of constructivism.

Epistemology is described by Bryman & Bell (2011) as what constitutes acceptable knowledge in a specific discipline, or as Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson (2012) perceives it; the assumptions we practice to inquire into the world. Epistemology must therefore be understood as choices that are not free standing decisions but rather interdependent and in divorceable with the researchers perception of reality (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2012; Bryman & Bell, 2011). Through application, this implicitly entails what constitutes acceptable and suitable knowledge is to be sought within the perception of reality, hence the constructivism. Ipso facto, the data collection at hand must be pursued by exploration and understanding the wearable technology and its cultivation and affect on postmodern consumer society as the paper aims to operate inductively within a CCT approach (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). Thereby a world-view with corresponding assumptions about acceptable knowledge gathering has been established or, as Kuhn expresses; “*a paradigm has been established*” (Bryman & Bell, 2011: 24).

Having established a philosophical point of departure the next step is to determine how the research will be approached.

3.2 Research design

To meet the prerequisites and expectations of the paper this section will argue the chosen research design within the paradigm of constructivism. The research design is of paramount significance as it constitutes the guidelines for an effective and efficient research (Malhotra, 2010). Given the paradigm and research topic, explicit attention is directed towards the exploration and identification of the cultivation and meaning of wearables. To accommodate this prerequisite Malhotra (2010) argues the employment of an exploratory design. The strength and suitability of exploration lies within the designs inherent versatility and flexibility. By approaching the research open-minded

not knowing or having a predetermined goal in mind it is believed that otherwise overlooked notions may be identified. After all, this application is meant to allow for the paper to reach “*the point of the process is to develop or at least begin developing theory*” (Eisenhardt, 1989:548).

3.3 Data collection

Lead by Malhotra (2010) an exploratory design with a defined focus on the wearable’s implications, the scene is set for the securement and identification of wearable induced symptoms. Turning to Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson (2012) they argue a series of methods, each with its unique variations of focus, but all within the paradigm of constructivism. However, all implying either extensive preexisting documentation (Archival research), of which little is available, or vast amounts of disposable time (Etnography) or a broader scope (Narrative) than the rationale of the current paper tolerates (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2012). In the quest for suitable means of data collection qualitative interviews are presented by Bryman & Bell (2011). By employing qualitative interviews Bryman & Bell (2011) argues a detectable potency of this method is its ability to go beyond the researchers imagination and venture into previously uncharted territory. Thereby proving ideal for a theory generative paper. As suggested by Malhotra (2010), in-depth interviews can serve as a strong instrument to extract qualitative data with (McCracken, 1988). On this basis it is believed that the qualitative in-depth interview correspond with the underlined reasoning of the paper as it allows for continuous adjustment. Additionally, this allows for superior and significant thematic identification, as respondents are presented with the opportunity to openly utter their opinion, experience, feelings and emotions (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Kvale, 1996). Essentially summed up by Burgess (1982:107):

“ *[The in-depth interview] is the opportunity for the researcher to probe deeply to uncover clues, open up new dimensions of a problem and to secure vivid, accurate inclusive accounts that are based on personal experience.*”

Similarly, Alvesson (2003) offers an extension to Malhotras (2010), Bryman & Bell's (2011) perception of qualitative interviews by the introduction of three main positions an interviewer can assume in interviewing (Alvesson, 2003): Neo-positivism, Romanticism and Localism. Of these three positions, the second option is perceived to align well with operationalized paradigm. Romanticism is deemed fitting due to its keen focus on bringing meaning, ideas, feelings and intentions to the surface during interviews (Alvesson, 2003). The latter position, Localism, is noted as an apt complimentary position. Localism advocates importance on the local, on the specific situation and its co-creation (Alvesson, 2003). By application of localism at this point in the data collection the researcher has already primed the data and the perception of it for an iterationary process.

Supplementary sources of relevant data were acquired predominately through the Internet. The data collection process was continuous and spun across a broad variety of channels. Reflecting the inductive approach the collection of data was a continuous process that step-by-step complimented and developed the understanding of the topic as the paper progressed. The principal data acquisition was collected through Lund University's LUB Search, wherein known CCT infrastructure was utilized (JCR, JCC, CMC, JM, EJM, MT, ACR). However informative, the weakness of this initial systematic approach was that the topic rapidly became broad and lost focus (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2012). It did however provide a notion of potential research gaps and relevant authors, and facilitated an alignment between research and existing literature (Patriotta, 2003). The research's further development proceeded through following references in relevant articles. Industry and community sites such as Quantifiedself, Mashable and Google+ were employed to establish a common ground and terminology within the field of wearable technology. Lastly course textbooks were included. In general the literary sources included are deemed to uphold an acceptable level of validity as they are either: Submitted to peer-review and/or academic publishing with exception of the industry and community sites. However, these sites' sole purposes were to develop the researchers acquaintance with wearables.

3.4 Interview design

Paradoxically, the application discussed above (in-depth interview) also threatens the research as the in-depth interview may fall victim of a lose focus and sight of the purpose with the paper. To quarter this issue Bryman & Bell (2011) argues the transformation of the interview to a semi-structured interview. The purpose of the transformation to semi-structure is not to assert complete control, nor is it to unconsciously lead respondents towards desired conclusions, but rather to keep sight of the goal. In praxis this implies follow-up, probing and specifying questions (Bryman & Bell, 2011) and the utilization of an interview guide. In layman terms this explicitly implies that the interviewer assumes a position of great sensitivity towards the unfolding reality the interviewee offers. The interviews are performed face-to-face, as Bryman & Bell (2010) suggest that this is proceeds alternate variation in terms of understanding and sharing the respondents' reality. The semi-structured in-depth interviews were made possible through the accomplishment of an interview-guide (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The guide's specifics were inspired by Kvale's (1996) *nine questions guide*. Thereby facilitating opportune circumstances for the interviewees' worlds to be captured. In addition the respondents were asked to bring along their wearables to act as a visual aid, and means of explanation. Often the device induced emotional narratives whereto the respondents were able to clarify meaning. As such the wearables were acting as a visual aid much like photography's, which McCracken (1988) argues to help and induce the development of a common understanding.

3.5 Observational design

In addition to the in-depth interviews an unexpected and exceptional opportunity presented it-self for the research team in form of an invitation to an underground wearable technology gathering. Upon concluding the interview with respondent Smith, the research team was extended an invitation to an underground meet-up for wearable technology enthusiasts. Although this opportunity represented a unique possibility to capture a glimpse of the world of wearable consumption the research team were faced with a number of concerns.

Firstly, the meet-up was scheduled towards the end of the writing process. Secondly, the mere thought of such an opportunity had not been considered in terms of methodological and ethical implications. Thirdly, the problem that observations are unable to open the meaning of individuals lived experience (Costello, 1996).

Upon careful consideration the team accepted under the following methodological assumptions. However, due to the practical and theoretical implications of the invitation the event will be perceived as supportive rather than leading data. As such, the event is understood as a means of confirm/disconfirm notions obtained via the interviews. The participation in the meet-up is perceived as a Micro-ethnography (Wolcott, 1995). Expressed as a one-time only phenomena-elaborating event allowing the researchers to experience first-hand glimpse and fragmentations of physical interaction amongst the enthusiast (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Bryman & Bell (2011) argues that with the assistance and corporation of a gatekeeper, such as Smith, the probability of acquiring relevant and valuable data amplifies. Similarly, Collinson (1992b) and Kanter (1977) experienced a noticeable positive outcome from employing gatekeepers in ethnographic research. Theoretical consensus advocates that the gatekeeper acts as a validating, smoothening figure bridging researcher and environment. Hence fostering a 'natural' setting. Hereby the researchers participation and potential ulterior motives become explicitly expressed, in this case through an official announcement on the group's online forum. Subsequently an observer classification had to be addressed. To evaluate the implications Gold's (1958) scheme of participant observer roles were consulted. Lead by the circumstances, and the desire not to intervene or impose unnecessary input or focal distortion. In Gold's scheme these wishes results into a role as participant-as-observer (Gold, 1958; Bryman & Bell, 2011). Due to the setup of the meet-up it was deemed unsuitable to record the event, and the documentation was done through the use of field notes (Bryman & Bell, 2011). See rich description in section 4.6 *The underground meet-up*.

3.6 Interview reflections

To lever the potential fruitfulness of the interviews several preparations were made prior to their actualization. An inherent fright that faces constructivist researchers are interviewees whom subconsciously develop underlining tones of taboo or even feel the experience is actively deconstructing their ego; fertilizing the grounds for a developing reluctance and unwillingness to answer wholesome and truthfully (Malhotra, 2010). To circumvent this risk projective questioning (Malhotra, 2010; Kvale, 1996) was briefly entertained, however quickly abandoned, as it was perceived that a step down this path might lead to misleading behavior, thereby raising an array of ethical questions (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2012). Instead the research team assumed the binary stance, and great effort was divided towards “openness and truthfulness” regarding the purpose, intentions and potential [dis]advantages by participation (Reason & Bradbury, 2001). Explicitly this implied a rather extensive ‘wooing’ process of the interview prospects. Briefly it entailed long and descriptive email correspondences and time consuming ‘inlets’ to the actual interviews. In addition to ensuring fertile grounds for a potential reciprocal corporation Bell and Bryman’s (2007) ten key ethical principles are perceived intact. Explicitly underlining *informed consent* and *avoiding deception* through *honesty and transparency*. Astute ethical practitioners with keen knowledge of the Swedish school system would argue that Bell and Bryman’s fifth principle; *ensuring confidentiality of data*, is breached. However, it is believed that the nature of this paper in combination with the complete *honesty and transparency* (respondents were made aware of the procedure) provides reasonable ethical mitigating circumstances. Therefore this method was found most suited, as it is believed that the quality of data is interwoven with trust and the ethical decisions researchers take along their research.

3.7 Theoretical sampling and participant reflections

As argued in the previous sections the means to reach the purpose draws upon the foundation of constructivism, and it can therefore be stated without doubt that the philosophy of this paper is not to develop generalizable material. The papers ontological and epistemological nature prescribes inherent focus on the transparency of data and quality of interpretation to evaluate validity and reliability (Bryman &

Bell, 2011), whereto focus should be directed towards section 3.6. To acquire participants for the interviews the research team was largely ‘sailing uncharted waters’. Expressed in terms of no/very little available existing research to neither rely upon, nor does the discourse have any well-known personas (in or around Copenhagen). Therefore potential respondents were sought out by backtracking through niche web blogs, articles and through acquaintances. Bryman and Bell (2011) refers to this initial research method as ‘opportunistic’. This resulted in multiple leads, whereof many were discarded along the initial questioning process due to lack of devotion and interest. Eventually suitable respondents were acquired and interviewed. These respondents then assumed role of an ambassador of sought, and lead the team towards other potential respondents. This method is also referred to as the ‘snowball’ method (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2012). Hence, the research team had little influence on diversifying the respondent group in accordance to Granovetter’s (1973) demographic requirements: gender, age, education, economic strata, and weak ties. The metamorphing sampling process resulted in five conducted interviews. See interview respondents profile below in table 1.

Table 1. Interview profiles – The names are fictive and employers masked to protect respondent identity.

All participants lived in or around the greater Copenhagen area.

Age	Name	Marital status	Profession	Employer	Education
42	Morpheus	In a relationship	Journalist	A Danish Radio station	BA in Comparative literature
24	Neo	In a relationship	Student	A Digital Media Agency	Cand. IT & Communication
29	Smith	In a relationship	Entrepreneur	A Wearable Tech. Company	BA in Global development
33	Anderson	Married	Program director	A Danish TV Network	BA in Danish
29	Jones	In a relationship	Managing Partner	A Digital Media Agency	MSc Business & Communication

The interview profile selection criteria of which participants were selected upon; whether the participant was deeply engaged and had first-hand experience with wearable technology. Additionally, the research was aimed towards a diverse group of respondents, as this was believed to provide an enhanced possibility of unique and differentiated worldviews.

Approaching the sampling the research team largely dependent on Glaser and Strauss (1967:45):

“...the process of data collecting for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes, and analyses his data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his theory as data emerges.”

Hereby implying the application of an iterative sampling approach whereby the research team initiated with one version of a semi-structured interview guide, which then developed, proportionally with the conclusion of interviews (Spiggle, 1994). Thereby fostering an organic development in interview conduct, terminology, ‘does and don’ts’, but also a constant development of the researchers perception of what constitutes relevant theory. Essentially resulting in a refinement of ideas rather than seeking an enhanced sample size (Charmaz, 2000). This notion is supported by McCracken (1988) as well as by Bryman and Bell (2011) whom argue on a key virtue; the correct amount of respondents should be a reflection of theoretical saturation. By employing this trail of thought for guidance the five respondents were selected. However, the research team remains ambivalent to as whether additional respondents could have enriched the paper. Regardless, time constraints were an omni-present restricting factor for further engagement.

3.8 Making sense of the data

To extract meaningful and valuable information from the interviews and observation the research team turns towards understanding the broader cultural meaning through the respondents (Spiggle, 1994). In decoding cultural meaning, symbolic codes, cultural themes and motifs, the analysis of this paper will rest upon three main pillars.

First the data will be analyzed by employment of a hermeneutic approach. Thompson (1997) refers to this as “*The quality movement, which seeks to place the voice of the consumer*”. Thompson (1997) argues that hermeneutics are exceptionally well suited for long interviews. Essentially the approach allows for the respondents to co-authors the paper. By voicing the respondent without filter the emergence of; plot lines, goals, motives, anticipated futures and existential themes can surface. This is manifested within the analysis in an initial introduction to the respondents. In this initial phase the respondents are voiced one by one on the basis of the transcribed recordings. Additionally, meaning is subscribed to everything that is not said, and to body language, as this remains a key advantage of the face-to-face interview (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2012).

Secondly, the analysis will rely on labeling or categorizing chunks of data in forms of passages in the transcripts (McCracken, 1988). In this section the identified categories that were acknowledged by voicing the respondents are transcended above the individual and gathered in a commune pool of themes. Near interchangeable themes are merged and presented under two main titles which represents the incarnated conceptual classes (Spiggle, 1994).

Third and last, the data is taken beyond the point of identification and moved into a state of complex conceptually integrated theory (Spiggle, 1994). Strauss (1987) denotes this phase of analysis to be one, which attempts to map relations between patterns on a conceptual level.

Through this three-step-rocket analysis the paper aims to arrive at an interpretation from an emergent, holistic and extra-logical understanding, wherein consumption stories are brought to life.

4. Analysis

The following section is dedicated for analysis of the in depth interviews and the club meeting observation. The empirical data is analyzed and mirrored in the theory presented in section 2. The section follows the structure presented in 3.7.

Firstly, the five selected interview respondents will be given voice by application of a hermeneutic approach (Thompson 1997). By application of hermeneutics the reader will become intimate with the respondents and their perception of the wearable movement. Secondly, the club-meeting observations will be presented in rich and descriptive text to relay its spirit. Thirdly, a categorization of the respondent testimonies is performed, moving beyond the individual and into overall themes. The themes are merged and presented within two main thematic abstracts. Lastly an integration of themes across the abstracts is presented in the discussion (Spiggle, 1994).

4.1.1 Morpheus; the pioneering spirit

Morpheus is 42 years old and currently lives in the North end of Copenhagen, Denmark, with his girlfriend. Their apartment is decorated after the rules of minimalistic Scandinavian modernism. In his daily life Morpheus is employed at a Danish Radio station as a journalist and host. He describes himself as a full-blown technology freak, but he enjoys an array of interests; a lifelong passion for physical training and health, and a scotch enthusiast are all signifiers for Morpheus.

Morpheus' passion for wearable technology begun after his colleague and friend Føhns introduced him to the concept in 2010. Føhns brought the idea to Denmark after attending a conference in San Francisco. For Morpheus this became a turning point, and he has not looked back since that day in March 2010 where he *“Just grabbed it”*.

“A trend that crystalizes many things that are happening right now, like something with smartphones, something with mobility, something with digitalizing in general. Something with the healthcare sector, something with sensors. I think “quantifying-self” gathers many of those things in a beautiful little pill.”

Morpheus perceives himself to be a nerd and is proud of it *“a nerd is a noble brand*. He is strongly drawn to knowing more about himself through measurements of the data and analysis. Morpheus says; *“I think info-graphics and visualization for me is a kind of porno”*. To Morpheus ‘wearable’ technology addresses a number of key issues of relevance for the individual anno 2014. As with a ‘swing of the wand’ Morpheus perceives ‘wearable’ technology to comprise and result the multiphrenia society faces. To Morpheus the wearables became a manner of renegotiating and asserting his identity through an emerging culture *“It is a network, an unofficial union... there is some ‘Fight Club’ about it”*.

“I thought I wanted to write a book. I thought it was more convenient to write about this since, at that time it didn’t really exist, not even abroad – the book about this – although there has been written some article and a lot of TV produced about it, but a book was missing: The BOOK!” - Morpheus

On sabbatical leave from work Morpheus fuelled his passion and manifested the subculture by providing a conjoint manifest. Driven by a feeling of desired progress for the movement, he took upon himself to ‘quench the peoples thirst’ for wearable values.

“I think it became quite obvious that it was me that had to move it further”. In turn Morpheus received increased attention that ascribed him subcultural capital. Thus developing identity and collective identity lifting Morpheus to unpredicted heights within the culture of wearables. The latter of these was never the goal for Morpheus, for him it remains a personal project, where a requirement is feeling good about it, and himself. Likewise this becomes his mantra when advocating the movement to others *“Just think of all the good things it can do for you... I think all these gizmos can help us have an overview or mapping of our everyday life that we otherwise do not have”*.. To Morpheus this means greater degrees of freedom and the ability to invent and reinvent his practices.

Morpheus perception of others is rather controversial, he describes his colleague Føhns as someone not authentically involved as his engagement is on half time. *“For him it was just another story”*. Another example is Christian, a fellow passionate consumer of wearables, whom he perceives to have missed the essence of the movement *“He is just missing the right way to go about it”*. Hereby given a notion of right and wrong and hierarchical order within the group.

Morpheus’ passion tends to influence with other aspects of his life. In his work life he has, at several occasions, experienced that his focus drifts to wearable’s time, and time again. Likewise, in his social life the span of his dedication leaves noticeable traces. Morpheus recognizes that his devotion have left him in situations he previously would have thought to be unconceivable. At times he chooses to depart prematurely from social gatherings because: *“I need to go home now, and it takes also a bit time because I must make those 10.000 steps”*. To Morpheus this connotes a sacrifice that is often seen as odd or somewhat crazy to his acquaintances. Morpheus describes the magnitude of his sacrifice to largely affect his social life, as he states; *“I think the most of my time that it has taken out, it is the time of meeting with people socially out in the physical world”*. But a sacrifice he gladly makes *“it is a deal I am willing to make”*.

For Morpheus a similar symbolic affection exists within the digital world. Morpheus finds the positive side of social interaction within the virtual realm to form a limitless reality at his bidding.

“I am one of those people that see social media as a fantastic thing, because one can have a lot of interaction with other people, without having to sit in front of them four hours straight and drink to death” - Morpheus

4.1.2 Anderson; the fussy nerd

Anderson is an editor and host of the tech gadget program at the largest TV network in Denmark with a cool head and warm heart for new technology. He is also the public face with a fixed "expert" role in Good Morning Denmark (TV2) and a regular guest in the Danish media. For Anderson, wearable technology is at the ‘early movers stage’, and he therefore perceives that it only exist within communities of *“classic*

nerds". He explains this, as *"It is us classic nerds sitting in the office, at home or in the club-room, not people you accidently meet in reality. You meet them on social platforms and communities"*.

Anderson's passion for technology has been a lifelong romance. In later years his personal interest has shifted towards wearables. This is partly because wearable technology is a continues process and an evolutionary branch of technology itself which means that one automatically becomes part of a new branch and partly because, related to the former. Anderson sees himself as a 'first mover type of nerd', which *"hardly finds the passion in the product, but rather the feeling of being first"*.

"First movers like me always run their heads against the wall because there are some barriers or missing functionalities... So only the core stays on it throughout its development... Or I sometimes also feel I leave the tech behind when it becomes too mainstream... and I also think a considerable part of the users of e.g. Google – glasses are just tech. first movers and want to use for the sake of being first movers...they are like "hey look at me, I am wearing the hottest tech right now, I paid a premium, and I Have them, and you don't". - Anderson

The quote above not only describes Anderson as a 'first mover nerd', but also explains how and why. As such, being a first mover is closely related to the emotive condition of simply being "the first" with a need for status recognition and expression of welfare. However, being first for Anderson also entails paying the subsequent price. For Morpheus the price first movers pay is a decrease in momentum and passion when the devices are lacking functionality, which usually exist at the early stage of wearable devices lifecycles. Furthermore, this also implies that first movers are not engaged in wearable technology solely due to the emotional aspect of being first, but for Anderson, functionality, usually *"only for the core"*, plays a key role in this reckoning. The core here is a synonym for the *hard-core crowd*, or the real and authentic *"enthusiasts"* that have a passion for, and an undying belief in the functionality of wearable technology.

Anderson recognizes many agendas across wearable technology and describes it as *"super fragmented"*. First, he identifies first movers as *"the ones that use Google-*

glasses right now, they seem to be the ones that are at the front of the field". His perception of Google-glass users is that of a fool "*well first by putting something as ugly as the Google-glasses on their head, and you stand out when you wear them*". However, "*if you do wear them actively, than I would say it is a clear verification of their authenticity*". Here he is recognizing a second wearable tech. agenda, which points towards the "real-authentic enthusiast" as Anderson many times refer to "*It becomes what you express: You are a first mover of dimensions*" and you are part of the buzzword movement: *Wearable! Inside the nerd world!*"

Third, Anderson identifies self-trackers as being "*extremely passionate about the data that the product provides*". In contrary to the first movers, self-trackers seem to have made quite an impression on Anderson since "*They really work hard with this. They are really into this, and it is without a doubt a deep passion, and a lot of hours and energy that is put into this*". Anderson's praise and admiration is firmly grounded in the fact that he himself used to be a self-tracker, "*and was really into it... but over time it kind of died out for me, because all that measuring yourself: how many steps do you take, how many calories do I burn etc.*".

As a super fragmented trend, Anderson predicts issues of critical importance with the potential breakthrough of the wearable technology in a near future: "*the idea and function is so far behind that the real spreading of it is not going to happen before the end of year (2014), and perhaps even later*". He further states that: "*I see it like people who like horror movies. Why are horror movies interesting? There are a number of types of horror movies, but overall horror movies are a wide definition*".

Time, and time again Anderson identifies himself as a first mover and a self-tracker but never as a real-authentic enthusiast. This self-imaginary is partially harbored in the notion that numerous of the existing wearable devices lack full functionality, and partway because he assumes they are too expensive and aesthetically underdeveloped at this early stage of their lifecycle. Therefore, we chose to call Anderson as *the fussy nerd*.

4.1.3 Neo; the real – authentic nerd

Neo is currently a student at the University of Copenhagen studying a Master's degree in Communication and IT. He is a diligent student and exudes explicit determination for his passion within technology. The totality of his life decisions appears meticulously planned to ensure and provide a promise of a prosperous future. Neo partook in an Erasmus-semester abroad at the University of Hong Kong, and he will be amongst the first students to graduate in the fall of 2014. As an established technology forerunner Neo was amongst the first in Denmark to procure a first generation iPhone, and is now part of the scarce crowd in Denmark that owns a pair of Google glasses.

Neo is a real – authentic enthusiast. Not only is Neo a first mover, but he also manages to display immense passion throughout the entire lifecycle of his technological devices (e.g. iPhone, Google Glasses). Initially, the commitment was presumably rooted in the sole purpose of “being first”. However, as Neo's dedication matured he developed his interests beyond the title of first mover, manifested through a vast interest in functionality and the potential the device represents. Thereby evolving his passion and dedication, forming a lasting bond between Neo and his device, only separated by the coming of its redundancy. Neo radiates positive attitude towards a products' potential future, to determine whether a device is a ‘fad or trend’ Neo relies on his gut feeling, which usually serves him right. In addition he relies on his experience: *“My background allows me to both see market potential and the programming part”*.

By mapping out a timeline of his passion for wearable technology, one does not have to go far back to establish the origin of interest. *“I was actually one of the first to get the iPhone, you know the really old one in silver (first generation)...?”* Initially Neo describes his interest as *“(initially his interest) was exponentially growing, and then.. I think.. it has kept a high steady pace ever since”*. Neo's relation to his current favorite device, the Google Glass, is a quite emotionally one. He expresses feelings of *“protective towards them”*. As a direct effect of the poor weather in Denmark he keeps them inside, *“because the receptor can't really take the humidity and the temperature change”*. He further dreams *“of using them more in the*

open, I would really like to take them mountain biking or some other outdoor activity". Due to the scarcity of Google Glasses in Denmark, Neo had to go through a complex process of getting his hands into Google and get a pair of Glasses for himself:

"You actually have to be a US resident to get them, so you need to have them shipped through a US resident to get them here...I was so lucky that one of my colleagues were in the states during the time frame where I had ordered them, and they were sent to someone I know over there, and then he send them to my colleague while she was over there, and then she brought them back home to me in her luggage...Under other circumstances I can not recommend you go through this complex process. It was just because I really wanted them!" - Neo

At the moment Neo uses glasses for a project, which is part of his Master's thesis, where he is *"testing apps, and giving feedback"*, for both peers and Google. The far majority of his work and communication is conducted via Google+, on a Google Glass community platform. Neo is highly involved and a very committed member of the Google Glass community. He further describes his interaction and the spirit of the community in the following way:

"I love the interaction in there... I read and I comment... I like that this is the place where I can get the information and interaction I need...instead of having to use external blogs. Because in the community we know everything right away...and it is actually from us all the blogs and medias get their info. I guess we are the hard core crowd." - Neo

Within a hyper-real realm of the Google Glass community, Neo describes the existence of a mixed community setting, which lies somehow between a network and kind of democratized entity - *"In principle we are equals"* – With no formal hierarchy, but only some members that seem to differentiate themselves:

"There are a few of the guys that have more to say...I mean they have created this kind of aura, or reputation around themselves...They have created a persona which is I think admired by others... They seem like they are a just bit more in contact with

Google, and have maybe met some of the Google directors in real life, and that are always attending meetings”. - Neo

Further, although Neo may dream to have such a status but he is unsure if he could become just as “*hyped*” as some of the others, simply due to the physical distance between Denmark and USA, which creates barriers for attending crucial events. Therefore Neo is content to be where he is and is determined to perceive himself as an ambassador of Google Glass in Denmark. On the other hand, his perception of other users in Denmark is not quite satisfactory.

“What I think really characterizes the users in Denmark is that they are not as good as giving back to the community as they should be. I think at least one just bought them (Google Glasses) to brand his company...which is ...yeah... I don’t understand it”. - Neo

It appears that Neo realizes that his current situation could be expressed as him ‘being a big fish in a small pond’, as oppose to partaking in the global events that would instantly reduce him to a ‘small fish in a big pond. For him the right way of being a community member is by helping other members by answering questions and simply by participating in discussions. Neo places essential focus on the virtue of courtesy. By being welcoming, understanding and generally positive Neo believes that the spreading of wearable culture will flourish. As oppose to the arrogant and stereotypical first-mover, or as Neo describes “*assuming the role of a Guru, or the first mover type, the I am better than you type*”. For Neo, the ‘bad guys’ of the community are those whom are not humble about it and try to brand themselves or their companies. Exemplified by attaching a link of their website to each and every update of theirs “*...that is not cool! That also results in no support, no likes, no comments no nothing*”, says Neo. Instead ‘good’ members usually proceed as follows; “*hey guys, just made this yesterday evening, try it for fun, and here is the code, play with it. These guys get all the attention!*” says Neo.

When exposing his family and friends to the culture of wearables, Neo emphasizes, “*They are often very excited about it... But completely unfamiliar for them... The old often have a lot of trouble understanding it... But it’s the future, and maybe that is just easier for us young to understand*”. Here he plays the role of an

instructor by letting them try his Glasses in an attempt to develop their cognitive capabilities and becomes a subconscious habit. *“I suppose that is the most important. Just try and let them try them on”*. It is more or less like teaching a human being to walk or swim for the first time, it is all about learning by doing. This kind of response is quite normal in a beta version of a product which usually is very nerdy or complicated in the beginning of its lifecycle, however, Neo believes that with the simplification of it, and the beautification of it by the fashion industry e.g. Rayban or Oakley ventures into the wearable technology sector, then it could become a lot more interesting and user friendly for even the *“real people”*.

Neo has an ambivalent relationship to the term nerd. He recognizes the existence of nerdery in every aspect of life as he states, *“I could also be a knitting nerd, shopping nerd, going-out-on-the-town nerd”*, whereas he cannot seem to understand why *“this male sitting in front of the computer, drinking cola and eating chips”* is the only one stereotyped for being a nerd. Overall, Neo strongly advocates any kind of nerdery. He also seems to make the impression that he understands himself as a ‘true’ and ‘correct’ member of his own community. Neo perceives himself as being in the middle, found somewhere in between the so-called hard-core or *“hyped”* nerds and the *“real people”*. But rather than simply ascribing himself as average he extends to the title of mediator. Ensuring the understanding between real people and the hyped. Like a liaison officer *“translating”*, but between realities. Neo perceives himself as not being as nerdy as some of his friends that are more of the *“hyper”* types of nerds. *“I mean they are nerds to a level where it can sometimes be difficult to talk with them...they are socially challenged, because they speak a completely different language”*. Although, it is here suggested that Neo is not as *“hyped”* as some of his friends, he implicitly underlines his self-proclaimed role of mediator, and as such perhaps an individual caught between worlds.

4.1.4 Jones; the in-between enthusiast

Jones is 29 years old and is the managing partner at a well-known digital media agency in Denmark. With an entrepreneurial spirit Jones set of his career life quite early starting at the age of 20 as a project manager at a publishing company, to become an owner of a consultancy agency one year later, and co-founder of another

business venture in 2009. He holds a master's degree in Business and Communication from Copenhagen Business School. When Jones is not knee-deep in work he can be found in his two-floor apartment on Frederiksberg, where he lives with his longtime girlfriend and employee. The two recently bought the apartment and have ever since kept busy decorating and incorporating various electronic gadgets like automated windows, rain-detectors, integrated alarms and internet-door locks.

Jones' passion for wearable technology has grown steadily throughout his lifespan. Originating in his early days when he was just a kid and used to read sci-fi comic books. *“as a little kid I was caught up right at the beginning with my favorite comic books where among others, the sci-fi stories brought by Marvel Inc”*. The sci-fi protagonists like Superman, Spiderman and Robocop with their technological embodiment and their supernatural abilities made an impression of heroism and appear to have assumed status of role model for Jones. His view on wearable technology and its future course is also associated with the same kind of heroic perception *“I most certainly think that when it develops to a stage where it becomes a part of us, like literally melt together with our flesh and blood through, yeah I think by the help of nanotechnology then I most definitely think that we will for sure become super humans”*. However, Jones also believes that wearables will help us accomplish more in less time, and that is why we will become super-humans in a “natural way”. Thus, putting an extra effort on time and the way in which technological inventions e.g. the invention of the telephone aided the transformation of society into a *conspicuous leisure class*:

“The same way will wearable technology help us, although the phone at that time was more of a radical shift for the society, say riding a horse all way from the sender to the receiver of the message, to shift to something so simple as to turn-dial the number of the receiver on a classic telephone machine and be able to talk from a very long physical distance”. - Jones

For Jones, wearable technology brings *“mixed feelings between something that serves me and something that co-operates with me in achieving a goal”*. Mostly, he sees wearables as a *“supporting element”*, helping him overcome his *“human weaknesses”* as if it was his own *“hired servant”*. He further continues *“I think it's*

too early for us [humans], maybe not for all of us, to have a kind of close relationship with machines as we're used to have with other people, but yeah it can still play with our feelings". Here he addresses a kind of anger and disappointment that overcome humanity when technology fails, comparable with the cliché of a "typical nerd goes crazy and throws his keyboard away or smashes it on the table". Jones' also acknowledges that positive feelings overcome him. This is primarily associated with freedom and happiness like that of a kid playing with its toys "I usually feel that I become a kid, or more or less used to play with technology as kids would play with their toys". In addition to this positive feeling, Jones also talks about being in the "technological zone", in which to him means to "feel free, no worries, sit alone in my pyjamas at home and go all nerdy".

In an attempt to understand the realm of the so-called "technological zone" and the perception of others that share the same reality, or in this case the virtual game community (of Battlefield), Jones explains this as the following:

"In the end, when you're in the "zone" it really doesn't matter who's your physical friends or how does the person you are playing with or against looks like in reality, or if you know him or not. I think that is because when you're on the zone, at least in the game server, you kind of create a new reality around you and then you see these people as the character they play. It's the same as when you go to the theatre to see a play and you never met these actors before, so you would just perceive them as the character they are playing, and that is what counts to me". - Jones

For Jones "the zone is really about enjoying a temporary moment, even if that moment means you're absolutely disconnected from reality itself". He describes this zone as a "new world" and a "new planet" and perceives the feeling of being within the zone is like travelling to a new world or escaping reality to a new planet or a constructed hyper-reality. For him, a part of the reality that he desires to escape is associated with the "unfreedom" and all the associated multiphrenic factors that usually follows adulthood "you know, get away from all the unnecessary crap that surrounds our everyday lives".

Jones' perception of himself within the community is that of someone being able to see the big picture of things *“I usually share the business aspect of it, or contribute to some software change, or aesthetics and a changes in the design so that it would fit better in the hand, leg, and body in general. Yes, I have a talent for that. I guess I just see the big picture of it”*, while on the other hand he perceives others, and here referring to one individual that Jones compares himself to, as the *“micro processing”* expert, who *“fix coding mistakes, bugs, and talk about viruses that might take control of it in the future”*. In other words, Jones puts this into the following words: *“He's more deeply involved, while I perceive myself as being able to see the big picture. The one holding the telescope, not the microscope as opposed to the other guy”*.

4.1.5 Smith; the altruistic enthusiast

Smith is 29 years old, self-employed and lives with his girlfriend in downtown Copenhagen. Having graduated from BA in Global Development Studies, Smith set of to pursue the entrepreneurial path of his career prospect, where his personal interest would merge with his professional life. With several years of experience as a health and fitness coach, Smith is now also co-founder and CEO of a warable tech. company that professionalizes in providing personalized training plans through the means of wearable technology.

Smith has always had a passion for technology, but more specifically *“the movement”* of wearables (*quantifying self*) caught him up when his personal interest would merge with his professional career: *“I of course think that it is incredibly fun and cool to try these things myself, but also to keep track and influence the way these devices are used professionally”*. He also let us understand that his passion for health and training that brought him into the world of wearables. Smith finds these two realms to compliment each other: *“I think that has also become stronger (referring to his passion for health and training). I am deeper in it, and I am deeper in the wearables. I think it is complimenting each other”*. Ever since, Smith grew interested in wearables, he has experienced a dramatic increase in passion, as he puts it in his own words: *“I would definitely say that my interest in wearable tech has increased dramatically...I mean in my optic this is the future...Because I am very interested in*

knowing more about the future". Thus, portraying himself as an adventurous voyager of the future. Hereby associating wearables with a futuristic agenda. A big part of Smith's motivation for wearables is based on their ability to help us discover the hidden parts of ourselves and simply improve our lives.

Smith considers the current existing wearables as being very simple by nature *"just an accelerometer, a Bluetooth chip and boom you can go"*. He further, explains that this means that many developers get easier access to the market, transforming it into a super fragmented battlefield of devices: *"What happens to the others [when the big players join the game]? Do they disappear? I see this whole thing as a war! In my head it is like a device war"*. For Smith this means that there is no point in 'choosing side' at this time, and thereby acknowledges his neutral position towards choices of brands in wearables. Instead he would rather observe how wearable technology will evolve in general: *"For now I just like to follow everything, it seems to give me a lot to being able to stay on track with them all, and not committing to one device or tech"*. However, despite the fact that he admits *"not to commit to one device or tech"*, Smith seems to be very deliberate in his choice of wearables. He describes his Peeble SmartWatch or his Fitbit as being very functional:

"I bought the Peeble SmartWatch because I thought it was super cool that there was a watch with cool functionality and a lot of opportunities in it...and my Fitbit Flex... is very comfortable, and really works from a functional point of view". - Smith

Smith perceives the general notion of wearable users and developers to be altruistic of nature. For Smith it is very important that the wearable movement remains neutral, and works towards a better world for everyone. For Smith authenticity within *quantifying self* is associated with doing it for the greater good of the human kind or as he calls it *"making it a very altruistic project – which I can really appreciate"*. However, he admits, that there are also those who are in the game for the sake of money: *"the ones who are sitting and trying to turn all the pioneers inventions/devices into a commercial product"*. He calls them as the corporate side and states that there are two sides of it or *"two camps"*, but in the end *"the altruistic side is definitely breaking the ground"*.

He goes on to detach himself from an extreme form of involvement, and that would be “*when people take it a step further and get something incorporated in the body*”. However, paradoxically he gives us the impression of being deeply involved within wearables as he explains:

“I am using these gadgets 24-7 and I am trying to find a way to being able to support myself by developing these items...but not just for anything, I really want it to be something concrete that can help people become healthier and happier!” - Smith

4.1.6 The underground meet-up

The prerequisites

The meeting took place at IT University, Rued Langgaards Vej 7, 2300 Copenhagen S. The meeting started at 1600 and it's officially ended at 1800, although 8 participants stayed longer to debate and exchange stories and ideas for an additional twenty minutes. Besides the observant conducting the research for this paper, there were in total sixteen genuine wearable users attending the meeting alongside one PHD sociology student from Lund University, four MSc Sociology students from Copenhagen University. The focus of the observation was placed on the sixteen perceived genuine participants.

The lived encounter

At 15:53 I entered the door to classroom 2A54 on the second floor of ITU. Going to the classroom I passed through the immense structure of glass, steel and futuristic design. At first sight the university appears abandoned, perhaps it is the grand open atrium that centers the structure that exerts a sense of oblivion for anyone who enters through the glass doors for the first time. Making the way towards the elevator your senses slowly start saturate. Leaning on the stainless steel handlebar in the glass elevator taking me from ground floor to the 2nd floor people start to appear everywhere. The more I concentrate on the phenomena, the more people in form of teachers, students, friends and cleaning personnel appear everywhere, almost like

watching an anthill come to live in Spring after a bone chilling Winter. A subtle *pling* lets me know I have arrived at the second floor. Right as I leave the elevator of glass and steel I come face to face with two students dressed in jeans and sweatshirts paddling away on red exercise bikes. In between breaths the two seem to be discussing how to best program a web-shop. As I pass them the hiss from the bikes and the discussion fades only to be replaced by the sound of keystrokes. Along the West corridor of the 2nd floor little islands of sofas, tables and chairs are meticulously placed between the open atrium on the right and the classrooms on the left. Making my way down the corridor I cant help to shake the notion that the islands inhabitants appear as humanoid shells. Drawn into a parallel digital existence, the bodies remain still and lifeless while a different and in contrast colorful world unfolds before them on their laptop screens. 2A54 comes up on my left; a poor handwritten post-it on the door says “Quantified-self”. I check my Iphone to see if I am late, I can’t help feeling that the journey from the entrance to the classroom has been long. My Iphone informs me that the time is 15:53. Luckily I am in good time. It feels unreal that the journey only took 3 minutes, as I look behind me I realize that the whole trip was only about 100 meters. I enter the room, it seems I am only the 2nd to arrive. By the whiteboard the figure of a thin and short young man takes form. The figure is fiddling with his laptop and his Ipad, projecting some sort of DOS code onto the whiteboard via his portable projector. Without a concrete idea of how to behave in this environment I rely on my social background; in an assertive manner I walk towards him, with my hand reaching out, and a smile on my face to greet him in the best way I know. The young man seems a bit uneasy and startled by my approach, in what can only be described as a submissive encounter the young man introduces himself as Tobias. Tobias quickly adds ‘did you have trouble finding it?’ As if to elute the greeting. Before I can utter my answer he informs me that he urgently needs to get back to his program, as he wants the final adjustments to be in order for his presentation. He turns away from me, and returns to his laptop, and it is if his spirit transcends his body and inhabits his computer.

Over the course of the next fifteen minutes twenty people find their way into classroom 2A54, sporadically finding seats in small groups. At 16:07 a tall man initiates the meeting. We are all told to introduce ourselves and give three words that describe us. Although the participants span widely in choice of words they all seem to

relate to general topics of: dedication, foresight, technology and data. Moreover the participant profile also appeared to reflect the profile of our average interview respondent: between 25-35, male, entrepreneur or studying/working within the field of digital technology. Following the somewhat awkward personal presentations the next fifty-odd-minutes were divided towards small talk. The assembly formed small groups of 3-4 individuals. For the next long time I floated from group to group, actively listening in. As oppose to the somewhat dubious beginning to the meeting, the participants now seemed as transformed. Laughter, smiles, and lively debates filled classroom 2A54. Amazing ideas, dreams, personal problems, and worries about work and personal mixed with utter nonsense were on the lips of the participants. At 17:15 the chatter died out on account of the tall man who announced that it was now time for presentations. Tobias, which I first met upon my arrival, now much more confident took the stage and introduced us for his beta version of the thalamic-lab MYO forearm bracelet. A device that is calibrated to the users muscle movement patterns, and can in turn be taught hand gestures which it transmits via Bluetooth to any compatible device or appliance. Following Tobias, several other presented their new devices and software. Following the presentations a critical but constructive debate took place. At 17:55 the meeting was concluded. The tall man asked in plenum if anyone were interested in aiding the organization of future meetings. The ones interested stayed behind and the rest scattered and were gone just as fast as they had arrived. I said my goodbyes, and thanked Smith once again for the invitation.

4.2 Rise of the Nerds

In the following sections, emerging themes from the process of categorization are developed and presented in two overall abstractions (Spiggle, 1994). Together these form the foundation of a theoretical symphony which is manifested in the discussion, where complex and conceptually woven integrated theory is produced (Strauss, 1987).

In essence, we encounter an extended form of symbolic or spectacle consumption practice (Debord, 1995), where the functionality or rather the in-built infrastructure of wearables seems to play a key part in the construction of desire for nerds (Belk, Ger & Askegaard, 2003). Extended because it is believed that the in-depth theoretical understanding of symbolism in consumer society is reinforced by the respondents captured subjective meanings (mental constructs), their use of wearables, and their individual differences (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982). The interplay between the subject (respondents) and objects (their wearables) further fortifies the theory of representation (Baudrillard cited in Allan, 2011) through respondents perception of wearables, their view on the construct of body (Corrigan, 1997) and its technological extension (Haraway, 1991; Featherstone & Burrows 1995).

In most of the respondents opinions, consumption practice of wearable technology currently exist at an early stage of development, which means that wearable devices at this juncture are usually dysfunctional or portrayed as being simple by their nature “*something that only records steps*” (Smith) and “*very expensive*” (Anderson). However, in capturing the essence of symbolic consumption, then functionality seems to be the underlying assumption behind wearables symbolic value (Debord, 1995; Baudrillard cited in Allan, 2011).

Smith expresses his Peeble SmartWatch as a watch with “*cool functionality*” and his Fitbit Flex as “*very comfortable*” and that it “*works from a functional point of view*” – hereof enforcing the meaning of functionality in both examples. Furthermore, Smith also expresses a feeling of excitement and desire (Belk, Ger, & Askegaard, 2003) for when “Push – Strength” app will be launched, hereof displacing meanings (Corrigan, 1997) into a projective fantasy (or hyper-reality of Baudrillard) and how it

will be able to improve his training performance (Allan, 2011), while calling it “magic”- imbuing wearables with subjective meanings, which according to Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) is a key determinant for brand selection (here the brand of Push-Strength). In light of this approach, we encounter Morpheus as a loyal consumer while expressing reluctance towards change of brands because “*then I lose those two and half years of history which I have gathered from these ones*”, hence putting an effort on historic imagery from a mental construct point of view (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982).

Neo goes beyond the mere aspect of passionate consumption (Belk, Ger & Askegaard, 2003) to depict the relationship with his Google Glasses as that of an overprotective parent, while being extra cautious about using them outside his home due to as he explains “*bad weather in Denmark*” and that “*the receptor can’t really take the humidity and the temperature change*”, and also due to the danger of having them stolen. In a similar approach, Jones while being in “*the technological zone*” echoes symbolism in the form of happiness and freedom (Bauman, 1990) while, as he explains “*I usually feel that I become a kid, or more or less used to play with technology as kids would play with their toys*”. Being within the so-called “*technological zone*” also reflects a simulation that has taken a life of its own (Baudrillard’s 4th stage of representation) transforming itself into *hyper-reality* or a reality more real than reality itself (Allan, 2011).

In addition, Jones goes as far as to ascribe a supernatural symbolism to his consumption practice while recalling for historic imageries from his childhood past (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982). First, he ascribes heroic images to the body inspired by his role models and protagonists (Spiderman, Superman, Robocop) of the sci-fi comic books brought by *Marcel Inc.*, in which according to Corrigan (1997) images of body began to spread throughout the world along with the advertisement and Hollywood films to present attractive and ideal bodies. Secondly, while ascribing a supernatural symbolism to the consumption practice, Jones portrays a projective fantasy (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982) of a possible future scenario where, as he explains “*by the help of nanotechnology*” we will become super humans, in the sense of technological embodiment and cosmetic transformations (post-bodied and post-human) in a postmodern consumer society (Haraway, 1991b; Featherstone & Burrows 1995; Featherstone, 2010).

4.2.1 Technology – a long life passion

There is no doubt that all of our respondents, in one-way or another are hedonically involved in consumption (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982). This is best portrayed within a closer examination of their mental constructs with the corresponding internal multisensory images generated from events occurred in their past which usually is expressed in a form of a passion and desire for technology in general (Belk, Ger & Askegaard, 2003). It is also portrayed in a form of projective fantasy and as a displacement of meanings (Corrigan, 1997) “*when Push-Strengs is launched*” (Smith), “*can’t wait to take my glasses out in the nature*” (Neo), “*when we become super humans*” (Jones) and so on. Furthermore, this allows for a grasping of their *consuming as experience* (Holt, 1995) style from the use of wearable devices as emotion-laden products, and their individual differences characterized by the differences of the subcultural groups they belong to (quantifying self, first movers, authentic enthusiasts). In the pursuit to capture consumers’ subjective meanings for technology as a lifelong passion, the four dimensions of hedonic consumption will be revisited, as discussed by Hirschman and Holbrook (1982).

First, in the area of *mental construct*, we too experience the domination and commodification of abstract categories such as happiness, love, hate and fear (Baudrillard cited in Allan, 2011). While referring to his technological moment, Jones echoes feelings of happiness and freedom (similar to that of a kid), but also that of hate and madness when his Fitbit bracelet stops working (negative emotional reactions), which leaves us to acknowledge the presence of paradoxes of technology within wearables (Mick & Fournier, 1998). In a similar vein, Morpheus expresses tracking (a category of the quantifying self) as if controlled and performed with a goal set in mind then it could be a good thing, otherwise one can become a “*slave to tracking*” and create “*bad habits*” from it. Second, consumers fill their wearable devices with subjective meanings, which according to Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) is a key determinant for brand selection. Here, we encounter different meanings ascribed to wearables based on different product categories where subcultural groups of e.g. *quantifying self* like Morpheus and Smith imbue subjective meanings that have to do with health, training, lose weight, get-in-shape, and other positive signifiers for the well-being of human kind. Here Fitbit Flex seems to be the

leading wearable device and the winner of the current battle of devices (Smith) when it comes to the brand preferences. On the other hand, Neo, Jones and Anderson imbue wearables with meanings such as that of a support mechanism (Neo), friend (co-operating for achieving a goal for Jones), and servant (serving a purpose for Jones and Anderson). Third, practices in wearable technology play the role of imaginative construction of reality (similar to *hyper-reality* of Baudrillard) and thus is based on what consumers desire reality to be as a projective fantasy (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982). In Jones' opinion, wearable technology will produce a future, where the human body and human abilities are extended, improved, and strengthened through technological embodiments, and thus become super humans in the super natural sense (Haraway, 1991; Featherstone & Burrows, 1995). For Neo, it is more at the natural level, as he perceives the capability of Google Glasses to enrich our senses and thus be able to perceive reality from a multi dynamic perspective.

In the areas of *product class and product usage*, it becomes visible that although wearable devices consist of material substance (tangible features: design and or aesthetics), its technological infrastructure (functionality, as a symbolic element) classifies these as emotion laden – subjective products, which can be experienced emotionally just like ballet, music, theatre etc. (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982). All respondents seem to take part in the *consuming as experience* (Holt, 1995) through emotional arousal with their wearable devices. Jones, although sometimes referring to wearables as “*just as machines with no reasoning*”, his depiction of escaping reality while in the ‘technological zone’, insinuates that he is possibly experiencing wearable technology purely emotionally (just like kids plays with toys). Further, the symbolic experiences that accompany wearables in a projective future for Jones also induce emotional arousal in the form of heroism, sci-fi and supernatural power and strength. On the other hand, Neo echoes emotions of an overprotected parent with his Google Glasses – the feeling of care and responsibility, while Morpheus and Smith are more or less devoted to the functionality of wearables as it complements another passion of theirs, namely that of health and training.

Within the area of *individual differences* the perception of wearable technology varies based on the different emotional motives found within each subcultural group (quantifying self, first movers, authentic nerds). First, we encounter

first movers with a fantasy of solely being first in which their emotional arousal is temporary and fades with the decrease of functionality and become boring and unchallenging. Anderson is the perfect example of such a *fussy nerd* in which he never seem to carry on, as oppose to the hard-core crowd who stick by their choice throughout the entire technological advancement of wearables. Second, the real authentic nerds are found to be deeply passionate about the functionality of wearables. Here Neo, with a solid understanding of both the commercialization and production aspect of wearables (background in communication and IT), actively engages himself in the developing trend of wearables by testing and programming apps in order to enhance the experience of Google Glasses. Last but not least, the *quantifying self* perceives the consumption practice of wearables from a altruistic point of view. Morpheus and Smith emphasize the potential of wearable technology and its ability to improve human life. Therefore, Morpheus decided to write a book (Høeg-Nissen 2013) and give it to ‘the people’. Smith associates it with doing it for the better of human kind, and calls it “*making it a very altruistic project – which I can really appreciate*”. Furthermore, Smith goes on to state that “*I really want it to be something concrete that can help people become healthier and happier*” So maybe *semi-idealistic...*” and thus expressing puritan tendencies, and that of an idealist perspective in which it is believed that *consumption springs from the heart* (Corrigan, 1999).

In sum, we acknowledge the fact that the consumer society of wearable technology is highly involved in hedonic consumption practices (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982). This is evident throughout the entire above analysis of the four areas expressed in the form of multi-sensory, fantasy and emotive aspects. This means that wearable users enrich and contribute to the development of consumer culture of wearables through pleasure and satisfaction, which according to Lyon (1999) are deeply bound within the economic capitalist system.

4.2.2 Nerderly has become a noble thing

In compliance with the concept of self-schemata (Ekström, 2010, Belk, 1988), the following theme attempts to grasp the meaning of the self from both sides: *the knower* – respondents self-awareness and feeling of being a nerd, as well as *the known* – their self-concept or understanding of themselves as nerds and or enthusiasts of wearable technology.

Apart from Jones who would rather be called an enthusiast, all respondents perceive themselves as being nerds and that being a nerd is a good thing, and even a noble trade for Morpheus. Although, per definition both words echoes similar meanings and in some extreme and slangy versions are also referred to as a geek or a freak, the only difference lies at the intensity of involvement in which the consumption practice of wearable technology is performed (Ekström, 2010). For Jones the term nerd is associated with “*someone lacking social skills*”, while for some other it is still used as an abusive term (Morpheus’s dad). In general, nerderly is portrayed as a positive term, which signifies an industrious and hardworking individual (Jones) involved authentically in the consumption practice from both a professional occupational perspective and that of a personal interest (Morpheus, Smith, Neo). Morpheus explains being a nerd as the following:

“For me a nerd is someone that has a deep professional insight into a relatively narrowed field, where that field is not just related to the work he/she does, but also to his/her personal interest in a way or another”. -Morpheus

Here, apart from the fact that a dualism of interest is ascribed to the term nerd, the field of interest is also characterized as “*narrowed*” in the sense of an extreme consumer practice. Usually, this *narrowed field* is associated with technology, programming and computer science where the image of “*the classic nerd*” is that of a male with thick glasses, long hair, fat dude, wearing a t-shirt, sitting at his computer eating chips and drinking cola (Neo). However, these prejudices are now starting to fade, and as usually most of these nerds end up being one’s boss in the future (Neo) - something that everybody pursues in one way or another. Moreover, it is interlinked with the fact that “*cool people*” (Jones, while associating coolness with having social

skills) are jumping onto the extreme consumer practices, and thereby renegotiating the term of nerd towards that of an enthusiast, a fan and follower by interest in a field or a consumption practice.

Neo goes as far as to identify himself as an advocate for taking up nerdery, while criticizing the stereotypical constructs that represents a classical nerd. He further ascribes extensions to the self-such as that of a translator between the “*normal people*” and his hard-core nerdy friends (Belk, 1988). In addition, being a nerd for Neo means also being authentic, passionate and honest about one’s personal interest and get simply involved in the field or consumption practice for the sake of having fun rather than having commercial intentions, this to Neo represents a bad and fake community member. This is further supported by the opinions of Smith and Morpheus, who seem to have an altruistic/authentic approach of doing it for the better of humanity. Smith further acknowledges, just like Neo, the existence of two sides or camps of nerds while referring to them as the following:

“The ones that are really pouring their heart and soul into it for the greater good of mankind, and the ones who are sitting and trying to turn all the pioneers inventions into a commercial product”. - Smith

In sum, all respondents distinct and set themselves apart from others, in a way wanting to be ahead from the normal people (Neo). Here, we see an extension of themselves (*extended self*) in the sense that respondents vary with respect to the degree to which they identify themselves with their wearable devices (Belk, 1988; Ekström, 2010). This further supports the theory that their identity is constructed by the use of commodities (wearable devices) and practices of consumption (Cova, 1997) and further re-constructed through a transitional process of roles (Schouten, 1991). From here respondents self-schemata is projected into a *possible selves* concept in which a future cognition of *oneself* as “*a hero and super human* (Jones), “*a Google employee*” (Neo), and or “*an altruist*” (Smith and Morpheus) for that matter, is set in motion (Ekström, 2010).

4.2.3 Opportunity for self-expression

The consumer society of wearables announces itself as a free and equal society (Bauman, 1990). This is usually expressed in the form of “*we can be who we want to be, we can chose what we want to choose*”. Smith articulates this form of freedom in the sense that “*when I engage I do it because I want to do it*” or “*I don’t [while answering to whether he gets stressed], it is my choice, a natural step for me*” and “*I haven’t lost any freedom. I mean I chose when I want to be ON*”. In compliance with this, Cova (1997) states that the individual has never been so free in their private and public choices as today. Morpheus too explains this as “*I get a lot out of writing on twitter with other people, on Google+ or discussions, and then I can stop when I don’t want anymore, or chose to do when I want to*”. Furthermore, Bauman (1990) paradoxically states that in reality the consumer society is not free because we all got different amounts of capital. This means that the idea of this freedom of choice as described by Smith and Morpheus can be an illusion for other consumers that have no money to spend. For Neo, the ostensible of freedom within the consumption practice of wearables conceals a profound “unfreedom” as he acts overprotective towards his Google Glasses and states that “*I can’t afford to lose them... I mean if it was in the states I could get a new pair*”. In addition, Anderson acknowledges the fact that wearable devices currently are very expensive and thereby expresses a low intensity of involvement in the consumption practice (Ekström, 2010). Smith on the other hand, demonstrates an extreme intensity of involvement when he says that he has bought all the possible wearable devices he could afford (also through the use of debt), and thereby leaving us to affirm Bauman (1990), that living beyond ones means is becoming increasing acceptable in the postmodern society where one can consume beyond their capacity through the use of dept.

Moreover, with wearable technology and especially with the formation of the digitalized worlds also known as ‘cyberspace’ or ‘virtual reality’ (Featherstone & Burrows, 1995), comes an unlimited opportunity for self-expression. It means that within a process of re-embodiment (Belk, 2013) consumers are usually emancipated from their own physical bodies to take on whatever persona they desure within a hyper-real social context ‘cyberspace’ (avatars). Jones best depict this in the following example:

“In the end, when you’re on the “zone” it really doesn’t matter who’s your physical friends are or how does the person you are playing with or against looks like in reality, or if you know him or not. I think that is because when you’re in the zone, at least in the game server, you kind of create a new reality around you and then you see these people as the character they play. It’s the same as when you go to the theatre to see a play and you never met these actors before, so you would just perceive them as the character they are playing, and that is what counts to me”. – Jones

In this way, consumers become whomever they wish and thereby are also able to erase all kind of prejudices in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, class and physical handicaps while in a process of re-embodiment (Belk, 2013).

Last but not least, the consumer culture of wearables, as a capitalist organized social system, also consists of an incorporation of values, lifestyles and pleasure in general (Lyon, 1999), these are expressed by social actors in the form of behavior. A collection of values, both those of personal and social (in our case personal values of the enthusiasts/nerds and their social communities), which define the desired behavior or end-state for an individual and or society (Ekström, 2010), are graphically portrayed below.



Figure 1. Respondent’s and their community Values

These values further influence the concept of lifestyle, which comprise of how respondents (nerds/enthusiasts) fit their wearable devices and their activities into their daily life (Ekström, 2010). For example Smith and Morpheus with values of *altruism, care, activeness, compassion, self-control, selflessness, health, heart, involvement* etc. (values which characterize their own personality and the community of *quantifying self*), have established a lifestyle in which their personal interest have merged with their professional life. This means that, for them there are “*complete blurred lines*” between work and leisure (Smith), where their wearable devices have become an everyday thing and a natural part of their daily routine (Smith). This can be explained, amongst others, by the high intensity of involvement (Ekström, 2010) into the field of interest, their passion for it (Belk, Ger & Askegaard, 2003) and or the objective with the commitment. However, their lifestyle is further moderated by the available resources and competencies that respondent’s possess i.e. behavioral barriers (Ekström, 2010). Here, Jones’ behavioral barriers are expressed in the form of lack of time due to the reasonability for his business, while for Smith and Neo is expressed in the financial term, and for Anderson mentally (could not take all the tracking etc.).

4.3 Living the dream; a socio-dynamic tale

The following section represents the second abstraction of categories. The captured subjective meanings of respondents are here categorized to depict narratives of a socio-dynamic consumer culture.

4.3.1 A birth given right

Across all respondents a striking, central and recurring theme related to their perception of their passion and how it influences their life. All respondents appeared to be aware, and exude a notion of pride when confronted with the extensive amount of time devoted towards their passion for wearables. For Morpheus this came to expression in his work life as his colleague had to stop bringing the wearables into the scope of their work:

“[Colleague]: we take a break of half a year, and we can get back to it with another perspective on that later, but right now we need to take it easy”. – Morpheus

The notion was also recognized during the underground meeting where Christian presented his personal data set for the previous 1.236 days. For Jones and Smith the separation of work and leisure appears to have almost completely faded. They both dedicate vast amounts of time towards browsing *Mashable* and *Quantifiedself* after work. Describing the action as a necessity to stay updated and to feel adequate. Generally the researchers were lead to understand that there existed little or no period of time where wearables in either direct or indirect form.

These examples point towards a subsequent status construction, which is conferred through the eyes of the beholder (Goulding, Shankar & Elliott, 2010). This notion was intensified during the underground meet-up, where Tobias made an impressive presentation that subsequently positioned him as the evening’s main attraction. Another participant, Christian, also presented his work, but unlike Tobias, he did not enjoy any stardom. Morpheus explains why:

“I think it is a super fun project, but I don’t think it can have success at all, but I have complete respect for his effort and his goal with it, it is a beautiful thought, but it does not have a future, I don’t think so”. – Morpheus

Schouten & McAlexander (1994) suggest that this implies that Christian, although dedicated, is not conducting himself in accordance with ethos that governs the culture, he is simply not acting ‘right’. As such it becomes evident that it is one thing to construct internal status, quite another to construct external status.

It therefore seems that Schouten & McAlexander’s (1994) quote *“Authenticity (for bikers) is a matter of perspective”* is seemingly likewise true for wearable users.

Also exemplified by Neo, who via his status upholds community norms also exemplifies this:

“There are like 100 new users asking stupid questions, where I feel that they should and could have done more themselves” And then he adds: *“But when someone is asking relevant questions, and they have actually tried to figure it out themselves then it is different! Make an effort! Write a long article about what you have done and what you are trying to do, THEN I am motivated to help out! You see the difference?”*- Neo

Here Neo underlines and teaches the newcomers how to conduct themselves within the culture. By a strict ‘unwritten’ set of rules the newcomers are taught that it is essential to invest time and energy to uphold any form of cultural status (Schouten & McAlexander, 1994)

This suggests that the meaning of these actions of practice can be traced to the construction or strengthening of their self-perception (Cova 1997). Bourdieu (cited in Corrigan, 1997) would recognize this displayed dedication as construction of cultural capital as the respondent acquires a high level of knowledge and skills within the field of wearables. By examination of the respondent’s profile (section 3.7) it furthermore becomes clear that they all hold university/business school degrees. This fact only furthers the notion that the respondents may from infancy have had an embodied cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986). This suggests that the respondents’

impressive devotion may in fact be rooted in their habitus (Mauss cited in Corrigan, 1997).

The respondents tend to support this notion, a few examples of this is: Morpheus that since the start 1990's been deeply involved with quantifying himself, whilst building a successful career as a journalist with his own radio program. For Neo the interest started in his early teens, and today he owns a pair of the few Google Glass in Denmark, meanwhile he is about to graduate university and is already involved with several tech companies. Jones started in his early teens by importing products from the UK, selling them to on to hardware stores, along the way he build and sold multiple companies and is today managing partner at his own firm. Meanwhile Jones have acquired a master from Copenhagen Business School. As Jones puts it:

“And then, I also consider time spent on my interest as time spent productively, because what else is there?”- Jones

From these examples it appears compelling to agree with Mauss and Bourdieu, and that the respondent's dedication is not a random occurrence. Bourdieu furthermore suggest that the higher the individual is educated, the higher the potential for commanding cultural capital (Corrigan 1997).

The sum of respondents can therefore be viewed as homogenous in terms of cultural capital. In turn Schouten (1991) adds that people that share common denominators often rely similar world-views, in our case within wearable technology. Moreover, it becomes obvious that they turn to individualism to make a difference, as such confirming a key construct in postmodernity (Firat & Venkatesh, 1995; Featherstone, 2007).

4.3.2 Cyborgs and chimeras

As shown above the sum of respondents and participants tend to blur the lines between dichotomies such as work and leisure, duty and fun. Haraway (1991a) argues that this 'blurriness of boundaries' can be denoted to the fact that we must perceive ourselves as chimeras. By applying this construct, Haraway (1991a) provides a notion

that the wearable user is not stable or natural. The respondents and participants must therefore be viewed as liquid selves whom are impossible to categorize. Perhaps best understood in comparison to the world of physics, where the electron particle can be at two places at the same time. As such each ‘part’ of the respondents contributes and strengthen the other, they understand themselves through wearables and the wearables are understood through them, or what Haraway refers to as ‘self-difference’ (Haraway, 1991a: 22; Lupton, 2013). This belief become evident when inspecting the respondent transcripts:

“So right now it is steps with my Fitbit, and weight with my Withing scale, and then something more fluffy, where I use a social app called lift, where you can set it to track any kind of habit” - Morpheus

In this section Morpheus provides an example of his daily ‘wearable fix’. In other periods of his life he have gone too far greater extends and have analyzed his own stool samples. When reflecting upon Morpheus refers to this period of his as getting a “*data neurosis*”. It appears that Morpheus perceives the experience as a constant negotiation, constantly reviewing the pros and cons, but mostly that is seems to be both at the same time, as Haraway (1991b) suggests.

Jones offers a supporting comment and continues to extend the perspective:

“So when I’m around wearables I have to say that a feeling of a bond and co-operation exists between my Fitbit bracelet and me as a person. Hmm... how can I say this... instead of let’s say me counting 1000 steps in my head and then later write them down to calculate the amount of for example calories burned, then this “hired” servant would do that for me” – Jones

Much like Jones, Smith perceives his Fitbit bracelet as an integrated part of himself, launching him beyond the human boundaries, and hereby aiding him to diminish the distance between body and mind.

“I kind of see my Fitbit as a bow-tie on the finger, a reminder that helps me reach my goals, and not as a bad conscience. I think It helps me be the person I am!” - Smith

Going beyond the ‘self-difference’ (Haraway, 1991a), Jones and Smith ventures beyond the metaphorical level of Haraway’s (1991b) depiction of ‘cyborgs’ and into the literal understanding. By expressing the physical link between human/machine, Jones and Smith ascribes full meaning to the ‘cybernetic organism’ (Haraway, 1991b:149). Hereby confirming Haraway in both her metaphorical and literal perception of the ‘cyborg’ within the realm of wearables. The wearables must therefore be understood as an essential part of the respondents’ means to express themselves. In praxis this is symptomized by incorporation in everyday life, as Smith underlines:

“...A lot of it is connected with making it part of your lifestyle, making using these apps/devices a part of your life” – Smith

Beyond the obvious reason to employ wearable devices in everyday life Haraway have provided an explanation to how this influences the respondents, metaphorically and literally. In continuation Schilling (1993) suggests that the underlying reason for the respondents to focus inwards and experiment with their body is simply to create a sense of identity, in a time where humanity is otherwise cut loose from a stable environment. Hereby suggesting a fusion of the inner and the outer body. Featherstone (cited in Turner, 1991) adds that by this fusion the outer body becomes an apt inner body enhancer. Considering Schillings and Featherstone’s account it becomes evident that the combined explanation of Haraway, Schilling and Featherstone simultaneously contributing and confirming Firat and Venkatesh et al. perception of the individuality in postmodernity. In sum the postmodern wearable user appears to express him-self through the indefinable metaphoric and literal body.

4.3.3 A price to pay?

Having established that the respondents are to be perceived as chimeric individuals in the age of postmodernity, it remains essential to evaluate the respondent’s perception of their ‘position’. Or put differently; do their passion come with a price tag? The respondents devote sizeable amounts of time through their dedication, but how do they perceive it? Does it invoke a multiphrenic and dystopian perception (Baudrillard

cited in Allan, 2011; Jameson, 1991) or a more optimistic and liberating perception (Firat & Venkatesh, 1995) among the respondents?

For Smith, his passion for wearable technology appears to consume the far majority of his time. When asked to explain how he feels about the time he divides towards his passion he replied:

“I mean since I started getting into this (wearable technology) I actually haven’t been on vacation.” And he goes on to say: *“I am now helping people reach their goals through technology! And that makes me happy”* - Smith

From his reply it becomes evident that Smith is conscious about the large amount resources (monetary and time) he allocates towards wearables. He then proceeds to allocate his identifiable negative side effect (loss of vacation) internally. However, he attempts to right the wrong by adding that through his loss others may gain. In sum, through an internal loss there can be an external gain. Per se Smith is consciously part of the fragmentation in society induced by postmodernity (Goulding, Shankar & Elliott, 2010). In addition, Smith expresses that he has altruistic motifs (Geisler, 2008) and perceives his actions as being emancipating of nature (Firat & Venkatesh, 1995).

Jones provides another perspective on the matter as follows:

“It is not like it takes time, well maybe, if one has to think about all the other things as well, like go out with my girlfriend, have dinner with the family, maybe in terms of these things then I sometimes feel I’m lacking on, but yeah I’m not the first neither the last who happened to be busy, so that’s not something new” - Jones

Unlike Smith, Jones appears to struggle in identifying potential downsides of his passion. His list of identifiable side effects is one of ‘victims’. As oppose to Smith, Jones perceives no internal loss, but rather he projects the side effects onto his intimate relations. Lastly he distances himself from the issue by ascribing the identified problem to a normative behavior of being busy. From this it can be deducted that Jones exudes indications of ego-concentration (Cova, 1996), but fails to

depict a conscious sense of the ‘sacrifice’ his intimate relations experience. As such Jones is believed to display vague indications of multiphrenia (Baudrillard cited in Allan, 2011; Jameson, 1991), simultaneously Jones have also employed the wearable movement to emancipate and liberate himself, financially and mentally, and it is therefore believed that he remains torn between the two perspectives, but presumably leaning towards an optimistic perspective (Firat & Venkatesh, 1995).

Less conflicted Morpheus perceives his ‘sacrifices’ as:

“[At social occasions] I say, now I need to go home now, and it takes also a bit time because I must make those 10.000 steps. I think the most of my time that it has taken out, it is the time of meeting with people socially, out in the physical world” – Morpheus

Unlike both Smith and Jones, Morpheus expresses that he is consciously seemingly enslaved by his passion. He is well aware that the wearables often deprive him of time with his friends and family. But uniquely Morpheus does not express any need to assign guilt or excuses. Morpheus can be viewed as an individual whom is severely influenced by social fragmentation, in the sense that he have adopted a very specialized lifestyle, somewhat controlled and thrilled by the wearables. Consequently this has for Morpheus lead to a highly ego-concentrated conduct of life (Firat & Venkatesh, 1995). However, Morpheus sees no foul or harm in it. He adds:

“This is the way that I want to live my life, and that does of cause affect the social and family relations to a degree. But it is a good thing to have a reputation for being a little bit of crazy, so that one can get away with more [Laughter]” - Morpheus

Per se Morpheus perceives his dedication to enforce and assert his choice of lifestyle, as such he fictionalizing his physical reality, contributing to a reconfiguration of lived reality (Cova, 1996).

Lastly, Neo presents a radical point of view:

“No, no absolutely not. I mean some say that you will miss out on the entire .social; you will miss out on enjoying life. But then I think HEY, Marc Zuckerberg probably

enjoys life a lot more than you who are sitting here.. you are 35 and you sit in your little office on Carlsberg or something.. And you just do the same thing over and over again. Compared to that, then I think Marc has a much better life.” - Neo

Unlike any of the other respondents Neo renounces all notion of ‘sacrifice’. Although he does recognize that others may perceive him as rejecting normative social ties and thus opportunities of an enjoyable life, he places great emphasis on an ideal image manifested by Marc Zuckerberg (Founder of Facebook). As such placing great trust in himself and his ambition to reach his ideal. McCracken (Cited in Corrigan, 1997) argues that this behavior can be ascribed to a ‘displacement of meaning’. This implies that the reality Neo ideally desires to inhabit is the one of Marc Zuckerberg, however, as this seems unobtainable in the present the wearable is employed as a bridging object. Hence the wearable comes to embody his actual meaning and ideal. McCracken (cited in Corrigan, 1997) offers further explanation on the matter: Neo may have already attached symbolic or psychological meaning to his wearable or even ascribed emotion laden subjective experience with the product class. Thereby, broadening and strengthening his experience of ‘displacement of meaning’.

In sum it was found that the wearable users were predominately supportive of the optimistic and emancipatory, yet ego-concentrated and fragmented perception of postmodernity. In addition the respondents were largely paying the price for their passion through diminished physical social interaction with friends and family. While most of them were conscious about this ‘sacrifice’, one respondent chose to ignore this fact and related to an ideal future instead of the present.

4.3.4 Recalibrating social relations

In the theme above it was noted that the respondents tend to ‘sacrifice’ their physical relations upon ‘the altar of wearables’. But does this mean that the respondents live solitary lives without reciprocal human interaction? Morpheus perceives the situation as follows:

“I am one of those people that see social media as a fantastic thing, because one can have a lot of interaction with other people, without having to sit in front of them four

hours straight and 'drink to death'. I get a lot out of writing on twitter with other people, on Google+ or discussions, and then I can stop when I don't want anymore, or chose to do when I want to. I really don't miss meeting with people three days a week, like we used to 20 years ago" – Morpheus

From Morpheus' statement it becomes clear that his 'sacrifice' of physical relations have been replaced by a 'virtual reality' (Lanier cited in Featherstone, 1995) that unfolds through social media. Moreover Morpheus places great emphasis on the ego-concentrated (Firat & Venkatesh, 1995) induced by the convenience offered by a global network available at your bidding. Morpheus understands that there twenty-odd-years ago was a normative movement that dictated physical meetings, but that he neither identifies nor misses it. Instead 'cyberspace' and 'virtual reality' have almost entirely replaced it. Baudrillard (cited in Allan, 2011) suggest that Morpheus have submerged himself into a state of hyper-reality. From the third stage of hyper-reality Baudrillard suggest that his passion simulates a reality where Morpheus' sense of community declines, as his engagement with 'virtual reality' increases. As such masking a perceived basic reality.

Less radical, Neo expresses an understanding and confirmation that multiple realities exist, and that he is a translator of sorts, mediating between these realities:

"[Talking about 'normal' people and his 'nerdy' friends] I have to sit and translate between them. And that is because they are more intelligent, or at least they have a different intelligence. They would think a joke about some computer thing would be cool... and even sometimes I don't understand them" - Neo

In Neo's statement he identifies two fragments, whereto he notes a vast distance between the two, so great that he is needed to mediate between them. Turning to Baudrillard (cited in Allan, 2011), Jacobs friends appear to exist within pure *simulacrum*, or in a completely simulated reality, wherein the two fragmentations are so estranged a shared language have seized to exist. The simulation has become more real than reality.

“The ‘zone’ is really about enjoying a temporary moment, even if that moment means you’re absolutely disconnected from reality itself. So yeah, for me it is a new world, a new planet” - Jones

What Jones explains is that when submerged in ‘the zone’ he disconnects from this world and enters a new. As such it appears he transcends the physical reality and enters ‘virtual reality’. Jones’ experience relates closely to the observation of ‘humanoid shells’ that made up the students of ITU. Haraway (1991b) perceives the our devices to be made of sunlight (Haraway, 1991b: 153), as they are pure, light and clean, and their essence is merely electromagnetic waves, which corresponds with the sensation Jones feels when in ‘the zone’. To fully understand the reader can think of a man walking down the street while on his smartphone. Although the man appears to be physically there, he is in fact in another world, sucked in by the ‘sunshine’, which is his smartphone. Thereby providing understanding to the phenomena seen at the observation at ITU and Jones’ experience. To apply Baudrillard’s four stages of hyper-reality to Jones appears impossible. At one point Jones acknowledges reality, and at another he transcends it. It becomes compelling to think of him as liquid, being able to switch back and forth between simulation and representation.

In sum the social lives of the respondents are now lived through virtual reality, wherein they transcend between worlds, and embark on voyages in simulated realities. Although all respondents confirmed the existence of both simulation and representation none had moved into Baudrillard’s fourth stage. This does however confirm the notion of Baudrillard’s hyper-reality and the liquid self of postmodernity, transcending between stages in a potent fusion with technology as Haraway suggest.

5. Discussion

Though the thematic abstraction analysis conducted in the section above, the following constructs and principles are deemed essential to revisit in order to formulate a development in theory in close conjunction with the performed analysis. This paper contributes to theory in the areas of self-identity and socio-dynamics in a contemporary society where the rate of digital technology is the ever intensifying. At closer inspection the research have explored how passionate wearable users consume, perceive reality, and in turn themselves. Enabling discoveries the paper largely draw upon technological embodiment literature and key literature within postmodernity. Hereby providing a broad yet focused understanding of why this largely uncharted cultural fragmentation of wearable users becomes increasingly important to understand.

5.1 Postmodernity 2.0

Through the thematic analysis of the respondent's perception of divided resources and 'sacrifices' to sustain their passion for wearables, the research team noticed inconsistencies between the findings and contemporary theory. Contemporary authors, here represented Cova (1997), Firat and Venkatesh (1995) and Kellner (cited in Goulding, Shankar & Elliott, 2010) suggest that within the perception of postmodernity depicted by Firat and Venkatesh (1995), that *the individual have never been so free, and yet so cut off*.

The first part is often associated with the dissolvent of the class society, and emancipation and liberation through dedication and participation. Whereas the latter refers to the process of urbanization, digitalization, and a general normative movement that has lead to the loss of communities. However, the findings produced through the analysis indicate obvious incompatibility with the latter. It was unearthed that the respondents did not perceive their lives to have been disconnected or cut off from social bonds. To circumvent the feeling of lost social ties through perceived 'sacrifice' the respondents had recalibrated their social lives and largely fulfilled their needs through 'cyberspace' and the potent cybernetic fusion. Hereby conducting lives

they perceived as being socially connected to the exact extent the ego-concentrated individual desired. This paper's finding does therefore suggest a revision of the perspective on (at least) the wearable using chimeric individual in postmodernity. The revision is deemed to follow the optimistic perspective on postmodernity in line with the respondents' perceptions. Thus, the revision should go along the lines of: "*The individual have never been so free and connected at 'its' desire*".

Theoretical reflection upon the suggested revision is perceived interlinked with the influence and possibilities the advances in technology have contributed with on a practical level. Stone (1991), Rheingold (1994), Wiley (1995) (cited in Featherstone & Burrows, 1995) all argued in the 90's that physical social life would remain our preferred means of operation. Their implicit reasoning for this view was related to the physiognomic notion, which is induced by face-to-face meetings. Featherstone and Burrows (1995) quickly joined the movement and added that the face and the body are the only 'true' means of reflecting individual character. Influenced by the immense leaps within technology development, and in particular wearable devices, the respondents of this paper suggest a tendency to a future wherein physical social gatherings may become rarities, rather than the preferred means of operation. As such, it appears that practical developments of 2014 outgrew theoretical assumptions of the mid 90's only to be concluded in a suggestive contemporary theoretical revision.

In direct continuation of the above revision, the research team 'stumbled' upon a related topic in need of clarification. Once again attention is drawn towards Cova (1997), Firat and Venkatesh (1995) and Kellner (cited in Goulding, Shankar & Elliott, 2010). This time attention will be drawn towards the first section "*The individual have never been so free...*". In the analysis of the respondents it was uncovered that the respondents were indirectly and inherently groomed for their current position, this was manifested in the ascription of embodied cultural capital. By recognizing this it becomes compelling to postulate that the proclaimed free individual may in fact not any 'freer than a dog on a leash'. This notion was already in 1990 insinuated by Bauman. Although Bauman (1990) primarily focused on economic capital in his work, he hypothesized that the postmodern human's freedom is ostensible, as the individual appears limited by the inherent or acquired capitals

(Bourdieu cited in Corrigan, 1999), and thereby only providing a feeling or illusion of freedom. Hereby, Bauman (1990) rose profound doubts as to what degree of freedom the individual actually experiences in 'era of liberation'. Moreover, yet another capital related matter requires clarification. Throughout the analysis, the respondents relayed signals, and clear statements whereto they ascribed their involvement and actions to be projections of altruistic intentions. As such insinuating the reinstatement of the pre-modern notion of Social utilitarianism (Geisler 2008). However, underneath this outer layer of ideology and egalitarianism the research team found evidence of a second layer. In this layer, the respondents expressed explicit projections of future success and pleasure, measured in monetary means, and implicit longings and desires for additional wearables. Hereby, it becomes compelling to agree with Lyon (1999) as he states that pleasure is a construct bound within economic capitalist system. On the basis of the conducted analysis the research team is compelled to strongly concur and support Bauman's (1990) postulations of ostensible freedom in postmodernity, and Lyon's (1999) notion that pleasure is bound by capitalism. In the light of these theoretical connections, this paper suggests that the first section is revised to the following: "*The individual have never felt so free*" in extension the papers collective suggested adjustment upon the matter concludes to "*The individual have never felt so free and connected at 'its' desire*".

Theoretical reflection upon the latter suggestive revision is perceived to be comparable to Kozinets (2002) illuminating findings, from his analysis of the anti-capitalistic "Burning man" gathering. Although Kozinets (2002) conducted his research from another perspective, he too found that consumers continue unabated to be the subject of the symbols and regimes of capitalism. Hereby also insinuating that the proposed seemingly endless freedom of postmodernity (Firat and Venkatesh, 1995) is presumably not limitless. Upon the basis the research team perceives it within reason to confirm the notion suggested by the analysis, and to confirm and concur with the insinuation of superficial freedom that Kozinets (2002) have suggest.

6. Conclusion

The findings of this paper show that the consumption culture of wearables is driven by motifs and fundamental interpretations, meanings, and values that are commonly associated and confirmed in contemporary CCT literature. By providing a holistic exploration of the cultivation within the domain of wearables this paper have assigned meaning and ‘uncluttered’ some of the free floating symbols, meanings, and paradoxes that float freely in postmodernity. It was demonstrated that consumers’ negotiated reality by recalibrating their understanding of social ties, hereby circumventing potential socio-dynamic ‘sacrifices’. Lastly it was underlined that social and economic capital remains a potent force within the refinement of cultural and consumption motives and possibilities.

6.1 Reflections on future research

Although this paper have provided indications and rich consumer experiences, the research is left at a point where many stones remain unturned. As a direct consequence of the exploratory and inductive research approach, the research team initiated from a broad perspective, attempting to map and explore the cultivation holistically. Although paramount, it raises questions within several areas, which should be addressed in the event of further exploration.

The principal suggestion for future research entails the obtainment of primary data from an area where the culture of wearables is more common and widespread. A prime delimitating factor for this paper was locating and securing passionate consumers, which was inherently interlinked with the stage of infancy the culture is in. Through the respondents and secondary research it was uncovered that the United States of America enjoyed a greater cultural development within the field, in forms of greater product diversity, more users and established communities. Neo explains that he develops himself by interaction with “*some random people in USA*”. Or as Morpheus perceives the situation “*At least in USA, and it could be that they are those*

one or two years ahead of us, or simply because there are many more people in Silicon Valley". Hereby making the USA an opportune geographical location to gather data. With access to consumers within a greater and more developed culture, more specific consumer demographic research would be possible. In particular it is suggested that emphasis is divided towards the division and composition of capitals (Bourdieu, 1986). Additionally, Sorapure (2003) suggested on the basis of her 'Online-Diary' study, that the individual in the digital age perceives it-self as going through a variation of stages. Within these stages the individual negotiates new meanings to the same experiences. In accordance to Sorapure's (2003) it is therefore suggested that a diversification of respondents is sought after to capture as diverse worldviews, emotions and experiences as possible, thus aiding the understanding of the culture from multiple perspectives. Furthermore, this papers respondents and participants were solely male (5 in-depth interview, 16 at observation), subsequently this meant that no females were voiced. Following Haraways (1991b) example, Plant (1993) argues that the new technology might ultimately benefit women more than men. On the basis of this paradox, it is perceived that the current cultivation of wearables could make for fertile grounds for exploration of the post-gender individual and feministic studies.

Lastly it remains essential to explore the political aspect of the consumption. Kotler (cited in Humphrey, 2010) notes that politics is a key ingredient in the legitimization of a practice for stakeholders to incorporate alongside the social and cultural. With an explosion in hackers targeting private data, such as the recent hacking of LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram etc. (Mashable Team, 2014) lose morals of the employees guarding the data, like the IBM scandal (Ritzau, 2014), and little effective legislation on a global level, consider the NSA surveillance scandal (BBC, 2014). In the light of this it becomes relevant to ask to how the 'cyborg' consumer of tomorrow will respond, and how will it consume?

7. References

Books

Allan, K. (2011), Contemporary Social and Sociological Theory, Visualizing Social Worlds, Chapter 14 – The end of Everything: Jean Baudrillard 1929-2007, Second Edition.

Bauman, Z. (1990), Thinking sociologically, Oxford: Blackwell.

Bell, E and Bryman, A. (2007) ‘The ethics of management research’: ‘an exploratory content analysis’. British Journal of Management, 18 (1) 63-77.

Bryman, A. & Bell E. (2011), Business Research Methods, Oxford University Press, 3rd Ed.

Burgess, R.G. (1982), Field Research: A Source Book and Field Manual. London: Allen and Unwin.

Cairns, R.B., Elder, G. H., Jr. & Costello, E.J. (Eds.) (1996), Developmental science. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Charmax, K. (2000), “The Grounded Theory Method: An Explication and Interpretation”, in R. M. Emerson (ed.) Contemporary Field Research: A collection of Readings. Little Boston.

Collinson, D. L. (1992b). ‘Researching Recruitment: Qualitative Methods and Sex Discrimination’, in R. Burgess (ed.), Studies in qualitative methodology, vol. 3. London: JAI Press.

Corrigan, P. (1997), The Sociology of Consumption, Sage Publication.

Debord, G. (1995), Society of the Spectacle. Translated by Smith, D. N, Zone Books.

Easterby-Smith, M. Thorpe R. & Jackson P. (2012), Management Research, Sage, 4th Ed.

Ekström, M.K. (ed.) (2010), Consumer Behaviour – A Nordic Perspective. Elanders Hungary Kft. Editon 1:1.

Featherstone, M. (2007), Consumer Culture and Postmodernism, Second Edition, Sage Publications.

Featherstone, M. & Burrows, R. (1995), *Cyberspace/Cyberbodies/Cyberpunk: Cultures of Technological Embodiment: Cultures of Technological Embodiment: An introduction*. Sage knowledge

Glaser, B. G., and Strauss, A.L. (1967) *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. Chicago: Aldine.

Haraway, D. (1991), "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century". *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*. New York: Routledge

Haraway, D. (1991b) *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: the Reinvention of Nature*. London: Free Association

Jameson, F. (1991), *Postmodernism, Or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, Duke University Press

Kanter, R.M. (1977) *Men and Women of the Corporation*. New York: Basic Books

Kumar, K. (2005), *From Post industrial to post modern society – New Theories of the contemporary world*, Second Edition, Black Well Publishing.

Kvale, S. (1996), *Interviews*. London: Sage

Lyon, D. (1999), *Postmodernity*, Second Edition, University of Minnesota Press.

McCracken, G. (1988), *The Long Interview*. Newsbury Park: Sage Publications

Malhotra K. N. (2010), *Marketing Research, an applied orientation*. Pearson 6th edition.

Nissen, H. A. (2013), *Det man måler er man selv – Data, Dimser og Drømen om et bedre liv*. Gyldendal. 1st edition.

Patriotta, G. (2003), *Organizational Knowledge in the Marking*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Poe, A. E. (1839), *The man that was used up*: Penguin Books, reprinted in 1986

Schilling, C. (1993), *The Body and Social Theory*. London: Sage

Reason, P. and Bradbury, H. (2001), *Handbook of Action Research: Participative Inquiry and Practice*. London: Sage.

Strauss, A. (1987), *Qualitative Analysis For Social Scientists*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wolcot, H.F. (1995) 'Making a Study More Ethnographic' In J. Van Maanen (ed.), *Representation in Ethnography*. London: Sage.

Academic Journals & Articles

Alvesson, M. (2003) 'Beyond neopositivist, romantic and localists: a reflexive approach to interviews in organisation research' *Academy of Management Review*, 28(1): 13-33

Belk, R.W. (1988), *Possessions and the Extended Self*, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 139-68.

Belk, R. W. (2013), *Extended Self in a Digital World*, *Journal of Consumer Research*. Vol. 40, 477-500.

Belk, R.W., Ger, G. & Askegaard, S. (2003), *The Fire of Desire: A Multisited Inquiry Into Consumer Passion*, *Journal of Consumer Research Inc.*, Vol.30, 326-351.

Bettany, S. (2007), *The Material Semiotics of Consumption Or Where (And What) Are The Objects in Consumer Culture Theory*, *Journal of Consumer Culture*, Vol.11, 41-56.

Clarke, D.B. (2013), *Book Review of Consumer Culture by Celia Lury*. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 13:64, Sage Publication.

Cova, B. (1997), *Community and Consumption – Towards a definition of the “linking value” of product or services*, Vol. 31:3, 297-316, MCB University Press.

Chrysanthou, M. (2002) *Transparency and selfhood: utopia and the informed body*. *Social Science & Medicine* Vol. 54/3. 469-479

Eisenhardt, K. M. (1989), *Building Theories from Case Study Research*, *Academy of Management Review*, 1989, Vol. 14. No. 4, 532-550

Featherstone, M. (2010), Body, Image and affect in Consumer Culture. *Body & Society*. Vol. 16(1):193-221.

Freund, P. (2004), Civilized bodies redux: seams in the cyborg. *Social Theory & Health*, 2 (3), 273-289

Firat, F.A & Venkatesh, A (1995), Liberatory Postmodernism and the Reenchantment of Consumption, *Journal of Consumer Research Inc.*, Vol.22, 239-267.

Goggin G. 2011. "Unbiquitous Apps: Politics of Openness in Global Mobile Communities." *Digital Creativity* 22(3): 148-59

Granovetter, M. (1973). "The Strength and Weak Ties," *American Journal of Sociology*, 78(6), 1360-80.

Haraway, D. (1991a) The actors are cyborg, nature is coyote, and the geography is elsewhere: postscript to 'Cyborgs at Large'. In C. Penley and A. Ross (eds) *Technoculture*. Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 21-26.

Hirschman, E.C. & Holbrook, M.B. (1982) Hedonic Consumption: Emerging Concepts, Methods and Propositions, *Journal of Marketing*, Vol.46, 92-101.

Holt, D.B. (1995), How Consumers Consumer: A Typology of Consumption Practices, *Journal of Consumer Research Inc.*, Vol.22, 1-16.

Holt, D.B. (1997), Poststructuralist Lifestyle analysis: Conceptualizing the Social Patterning of Consumption in Postmodernity, *Journal of Consumer Research Inc.*, Vol.23, 326-350.

Humphreys, A. (2010), Semiotic Structure and the legitimation of consumption practices: The case of Casino Gambling. *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 37. No.3, 410-510.

Jenkins, R., Nixon, E., & Molesworth, M. (2011), "Just Normal and Homely": The presence, absence and othering of consumer culture in everyday imagining, *Journal of Consumer Culture*, Vol.11(2), 261-282.

Krieger, W. H. 2013 "Medical Apps: Public and Academic Perspectives." *Perspectives in biology and Medicine* 56(2): 259-73

Leng, K.W. (1996) On menopause and cyborgs: or, towards a feminist cyborg politics of menopause. *Body & Society*, 2 (3), 33-52

Lupton, D. (2013a) The digitally engaged patient: self-monitoring and self-care in the digital health era. Submitted for publication.

Lupton, D. (2013) The digital cyborg assemblage: Haraway's cyborg theory and the new digital health technologies (preprint). In Collyer, F. (ed) (forthcoming), *The Handbook of Social Theory for the Sociology of Health and Medicine*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan health era. Submitted for publication.

Mick, D.G & Fournier, S. (1998), Paradoxes of Technology: Cognizance, Emotions, and Coping Strategies, *Journal of Consumer Research Inc.*, Vol.25, 123-143.

Plant, S. (1993), Beyond the Screens: Film, Cyberpunk and Cyberfeminism, *Variants*. 13-17.

Sorapure, M. (2003), Screening Moments, Scrolling Lives: Diary Writing on the Web, *Biography*, 26(1), 1-23.

Schouten, John.W. (1991), Selves in Transition: Symbolic Consumption in Personal Rites of Passage and Identity Reconstruction, *Journal of Consumer Research Inc.*, Vol.17, 412-425.

Spiggle, S. (1994) Analysis and Interpretation of Qualitative Data in Consumer Research. *Journal of Consumer Research Inc.* Vol 2. 491-503.

Thompson, J, C. (1997) 'Interpreting Consumers: A Hermeneutical Framework for Deriving Marketing Insights From the Texts of Consumers' Consumption Stories. *Journal of Marketing Research*. Vol. 34. 438-455.

Woodward, I. (2011), Towards an Object Relation Theory of Consumerism: The Aesthetics of Desire and The Unfolding Materiality of Social Life, *Journal of Consumer Culture*, Vol.11(3), 366-384.

Electronic Sources

BBC (2014). Edward Snowden: Leaks that exposed US spy programme. Available Online: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-23123964> [Accessed 24 May 2014]

Bell, K. (2014). Pocket Reveals Prototype of Android Wear App. Available Online: <http://mashable.com/2014/03/21/google-glass-myths/> [Accessed 28 March 2014]

Cochlear (2014). Baha Bone conduction implants. Available Online: <http://www.cochlear.com/wps/wcm/connect/au/home/discover/baha-bone-conduction-implants> [Accessed 15 April 2014]

Fitbit (2014). Official Page of FitBit. Available Online: <http://www.fitbit.com/uk> [Accessed 15 April 2014]

Juniper Research (2014). Official Page of Juniper Research. Available Online: <http://www.juniperresearch.com> [Accessed 15 April 2014]

Ireland, K. (2014). QSEU14 Breakout Session: Telling Stories with Data. Available Online: <http://quantifiedself.com/2014/05/qseu14-breakout-session-telling-stories-with-data/> [Accessed 04 April 2014]

Google (2014). Official Page of Google Glass. Available Online: <http://www.google.com/glass/start/> [Accessed 15 April 2014]

Guldager, D. (2013). Se hvad du ser med Googles briller. Available Online: <http://beep.tv2.dk/nyheder/se-hvad-du-ser-med-googles-briller> [Accessed 25 March 2014]

Kelly, M. S. (2014). How to watch the Moto 360 Smartwatch Event. Available Online: <http://mashable.com/2014/03/19/moto-360-hangout/> [Accessed 28 March 2014]

Mangalindan, JP. (2014). Is wearable technology just for nerds? Available Online: <http://tech.fortune.cnn.com/2014/01/03/wearable-technology-geeks/> [Accessed 25 March 2014]

Mashable Team (2014). The Heartbleed Hit List: The passwords you need to change right now. Available Online: <http://mashable.com/2014/04/09/heartbleed-bug-websites-affected/> [Accessed 24 May 2014]

Mcdermott, G. P. (2014). Why the Moto 360 Smartwatch will kill Google Glass. Available Online: <http://mashable.com/2014/03/20/moto-360-vs-google-glass/> [Accessed 28 March 2014]

Nike+ (2014). Official Page of Nike+ FuelBand. Available Online: http://www.nike.com/us/en_us/c/nikeplus-fuelband [Accessed 15 April 2014]

Oakley (2014). Googles. Available Online: <http://www.oakley.com/airwave> [Accessed 15 April 2014]

Ritzau. (2014). Se og hør-skandale: Nets er tavs om IBM - samarbejde. Available Online: <http://nyhederne.tv2.dk/samfund/2014-05-06-se-og-hor-skandale-nets-er-tavs-om-ibm-samarbejde> [Accessed 24 May 2014]

Suciu, P. (2014). Could wearables become bigger than tablets. Available Online: <http://tech.fortune.cnn.com/2014/04/01/could-wearables-become-bigger-than-tablets/> [Accessed 15 April 2014]

Telestra Exchange (2013). Enter the new era of wearable technology. Available Online: <http://exchange.telstra.com.au/2013/03/04/enter-the-new-era-of-wearable-technology/> [Accessed 15 April 2014]

The Creators Project (2014). Make It Wearable. Available Online: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL6uqON-thyrYdIJxlmFlsmLzAr_yIUCz [Accessed 15 April 2014]

Trier, R. (2001). Ting vi har set I fremtiden...Wearables. Available Online: <http://www.tekno.dk/subpage.php3?article=57&toppic=kategori2&language=dk> [Accessed 25 March 2014]

Ulanof, L. (2014). For Watch Nerds, the Moto 360 is a Sure Bet. Available Online: <http://mashable.com/2014/03/18/the-moto360-circle-design/> [Accessed 28 March 2014]

Warron, K. (2014). Android Wear: Google's Wearables Platform is Here. Available Online: <http://mashable.com/2014/03/18/google-android-wear/> [Accessed 28 March 2014]

Zimmerman, B. (2014). Geek + Nerd = The Geerd Show: Episode 38 – Wearable Tech. Available Online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dYvDm2x6_zI [Accessed 15 April 2014]

8. Appendices

Due to ethical reasons and in order to protect the identity of respondents, throughout this paper the names of respondents have been changed into aliases below. Therefore, the transcribed interviews together with respondents' personal data are separately sent to supervisor and examiner of this thesis. However, below we present only a fragment from the content of the so-called "confidential document".

Appendix A - Interviews

Alias: 'Anderson'; Date: 08.04.2014; Place of interview: Copenhagen

Alias: 'Smith'; Date: 18.04.2014; Place of interview: Copenhagen

Alias: 'Morpheus'; 30.04.2014; Place of interview: Copenhagen

Alias: 'Neo'; 28.04.2014; Place of interview: Copenhagen

Alias: 'Jones'; 29.04.2014; Place of interview: Copenhagen

Appendix B - Respondents Data

Personal data of respondents such as *name, age, residence, marital and household composition, profession, education, employment, and contact information* (email and phone number) are also attached separately and sent together with the transcribed interviews to supervisor and examiner.

"Confidentiality is a virtue of the loyal, as loyalty is the virtue of the loyal, as loyalty is the virtue of faithfulness"

Edwin Louis Cole