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Memory-Work: Understanding Consumer Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction of Clothing Retail Encounters

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ABSTRACT

This research investigated the process and meaning of consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction in women's clothing retail encounters. It utilised a 'memory-work' methodology which operationalised storytelling and allowed a detailed examination of consumer experiences of retail encounter in 'real life' situations. The qualitative data was derived from memory-texts provided by nine women in Hamilton, New Zealand. Over a period of four months, each woman wrote five detailed stories based on her experiences evoked from specific themes chosen to trigger satisfying or dissatisfying experiences of clothing shopping for themselves. For each trigger, details of the participant's memory-texts were analysed and compared in group discussions, by the participants as well as the researcher, to obtain both self and social meanings of their experiences.

The memory-texts illustrated how the consumers evaluated and attached meanings to the context and events which occurred in the clothing retail encounters. The analysis of these revealed that the consumer appraised her interactions based on her self identity, experiences and social context. It illustrated that the process of consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction was centred around the evaluation of the self rather than the service/product attributes and performances. This overall appraisal was based on whether or not the consumer was threatened, or had her values enhanced, and thus the extent to which she belonged. The nature and intensity of satisfaction and dissatisfaction depended not only on the consumer matching her goals and values, but was a complex result of the cognitive, affective, and socio-cultural contexts.
To the 'Memories'

Budd W Friend
July 15, 1922 - December 22, 1994
&
Mark S Friend
July 16, 1958 - August 18, 1994
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Alliterative Memory

Frequent Fridays
Rising road
Lakeside loft
Expectant entrance
Warm welcomes
Cosy couches
Natty nibbles
Winning wine
Happy hostess
Convivial companions
Doctoral discussions
Bonny baby
Admiring aunts
Replete respondents
Business begins
Seated shoppers
Taped talk
Memory monologues
Bountiful buys
Attentive attenders
Expedient exits
Exhilarating endeavours
Partner pressures
Negative nasties
Universal unusuals

Dazzling Desiree (Couturier conferences)
Gorgeous Gisela (Brilliant bargains)
Fabulous Frances (Garment grabs)
Sparkling Sweetie (Suspect shopper)
Lovely Lorraine (Astute analyst)

Emotions exhibited
Perceptions prevail
Excited enjoyment
Discourse dissection
Interweaving interchanges
(Despairing decoder!)
Commendable coffee
Delectable desserts
Contented contributors

Satisfaction supreme!!

Sweetie
(Group 2 participant)
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

For many years researchers and business practitioners have endeavoured to better understand consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction. In spite of the phenomenon having been subjected to extensive investigation there are still differing views regarding its conceptualisation, determinants, and relationships to other post-consumption constructs.

Many different models have been advanced in an attempt to understand and explain consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction. Initially it was thought that consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction was determined from product attribute ratings. When this approach provided little insight, researchers started to draw on the social psychology literature to formulate and test models. Most of these have focused on the psychological processes involved (Tse, Nicosia, & Wilton, 1990).

Early research focused on identifying and defining key cognitive constructs comprising the satisfaction/dissatisfaction process. Major emphasis was placed on identifying and examining standards used in the expectancy-disconfirmation model, the dominant paradigm explaining the satisfaction/dissatisfaction process. Other constructs and theoretical frameworks such as performance, equity/justice, desires, and attribution were also proposed and found to explain and/or contribute to the satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement. More recent work has found that consumers use multiple standards and processes, and researchers are beginning to focus more on the integration of these cognitive constructs into a comprehensive model.

Later research has also concentrated on how affect/emotion contributes to and integrates with these cognitive constructs. There is evidence that the nature and process of satisfaction/dissatisfaction are both cognitive and affective in construction. A number of cognitive and affective constructs and responses appear to interlink together to define the process and nature of satisfaction/dissatisfaction. However, it is not fully understood how these affective and cognitive constructs independently contribute and interplay in a dynamic sequential process. Nor is it clear as to how the cognitive and affective responses influence and/or combine to define the satisfaction/dissatisfaction construct. Recent research has illustrated the complexity of both the process and nature of the satisfaction/dissatisfaction. Further research is still required to illustrate the interaction, causal relationships, and joint dependence of the affective and cognitive processes and responses in defining the process and nature of consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Oliver, 1994).
While several researchers (Gardial, Clemons, Woodruff, Schumann, & Burns, 1994; Tse, et al., 1990; Woodruff, 1993) have noted the need for a comprehensive model which incorporates the different theories and paradigms, these and other researchers (e.g., Erevelles, 1992) have suggested the need for a contingency framework to explain how the satisfaction/dissatisfaction process and judgement differ according to the circumstances which underlie the consumer's experience. It is thought that the different type of constructs or theoretical frameworks that occur in and dominate the satisfaction/dissatisfaction process may depend on a number of factors such as the type of product/service, situation and consumer. Such a comprehensive model should consider the "set of conditions that place the system in disequilibrium and the set of activities and social psychological processes that restore its equilibrium" (Tse, et al., 1990 p. 179).

To date much of the research has adopted a predictive, objective, aggregatable model of analysing the consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction phenomenon. It is well recognised that sophisticated analytical methods, such as LISREL, which have been used to test proposed models of satisfaction/dissatisfaction, do not conclusively establish the temporal ordering of the causal sequences of the enlisted constructs (Diamantopoulos, 1994; Oliver, 1994; Westbrook, 1987). Nor do they simulate reality or even demonstrate that one model provides a better simulation than another model (Diamantopoulos, 1994).

Other researchers (e.g., Bitner, 1995; Czepiel, 1990; Fisk & Grove, 1995; Storbacka, Strandvik, & Grönroos, 1994) have suggested the need to examine individual consumer episodes of service encounters to gain a better understanding of (a) the various processes and responses involved, (b) how these different processes and responses independently contribute and interplay in the dynamic process of satisfaction/dissatisfaction and (c) how these components link with other post-consumption behaviour and responses.

Deighton (1992) and Vezina and Nicosia (1990) have argued that it is the consumer's subjective perception of the performance, and not the objective nature of the service/product that forms the basis for her/his evaluative judgements of the encounter. The objective approach used in analysing consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction has lead to emphasis being placed on the internal psychological processes (Vezina & Nicosia, 1990) and the evaluation of the performance of the product/service. How the socio-cultural context and the consumer contribute to the understanding of the satisfaction/dissatisfaction phenomenon have been neglected.

In order to gain a better picture of the process, a number of researchers (e.g., Burns, 1994; Deighton, 1992; Granbois, 1993) have called for a broader conceptualisation of satisfaction/dissatisfaction based on the consumer's construct system which is mediated by her/his previous experience and socialisation. This should incorporate such factors as the consumer's behaviours, values, costs and not just the performance of the product/service, with
which they interact. Whether or not an encounter is considered satisfactory is partially determined by a consumer's experiences in relation to her/his social world and personal identity.

Deighton (1992) and Hunt (1993) have proposed that it is through storytelling rather than quantitative analysis that we will achieve a better understanding of consumers' 'lived' experiences of satisfying and dissatisfying encounters. Consumers' stories reconstruct how they experienced the service/product encounter. Their stories describe how events are linked together in the consumer's experience and explain how and why these events occurred. Each story provides a context from which the consumer gives meaning to the events which occur within her/his experience (Lallijee & Abelson, 1983; Read, 1987).

Following the problems with satisfaction/dissatisfaction theory as outlined above, and considering the suggestions of Deighton and Hunt, this project used a 'memory-work' methodology to operationalise the use of storytelling to examine the specific processes and their attached meanings of satisfying and dissatisfying experiences of women's clothing retail encounters. The method 'memory-work', as developed by Haug and Others (1987), and modified by Crawford, Kippax, Onyx, Gault, and Benton (1992), was used to analyse and interpret 'lived' experiences through self and collective reflections of written memory-texts. This memory-work analysis was carried out with a group of nine women living in a New Zealand city. The detailed reconstructions of their experiences as consumers of clothes shopping for themselves provided the basis on which consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction was analysed, theorised and developed.

Memory-work provided an alternative approach from which to analyse the conceptualisation and process of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction. The in-depth analysis of the memory-texts identified the psychological constructs involved in the process and highlighted the socio-cultural context by which these constructs were given meaning, explaining how they were constructed. This study specifically examined the social-psychological and cultural meanings as they interrelate to the psychological and dynamic processes which determine consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction.

By examining real life experiences the study addressed what 'drives' consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction in a way that could not be determined by quantitative methods. The purpose of this study was not to develop a predictive model of the consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction process. Rather, through the use of a qualitative methodology, this
project aimed to develop an understanding of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction based in grounded theory. Specifically, this study investigated:

1. the conceptualisation and meaning of satisfaction and dissatisfaction to women consumers,
2. the process of creating satisfaction and dissatisfaction, and
3. how the context of a retail encounter affected consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction.
CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the perceived importance, conceptualisation and models of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction. It reflects on the progress and illustrates the need for further inquiry into its conceptualisation and process formation. Although the satisfaction/dissatisfaction phenomenon has been subjected to extensive investigation there are still differing views regarding its conceptualisation, determinants, consequences and relationship to other post-consumption constructs. Finally this chapter suggests that by examining the satisfaction/dissatisfaction phenomenon from a broader conceptualisation and adopting a different methodological perspective it may be possible to further extend our understanding of its meaning, process formation and related consequences.

THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING CONSUMER SATISFACTION/DISSATISFACTION THEORY

This section indicates how the academic literature has linked consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction to consumer behaviours viewed as critical for business success. Specifically, it reviews consumer satisfaction as (a) the key component of the marketing concept, (b) a tool in creating a competitive advantage, and (c) a diagnostic tool for managerial action.

Consumer Satisfaction as the Key Component of the Marketing Concept.
Consumer satisfaction research has flourished in the past two decades in that it has been viewed as a key element in marketing thought and practice (Erevelles, 1992; Yi, 1990).

Peterson and Wilson (1992) noted,

As the cornerstone of the marketing concept, customer satisfaction has been embraced by practitioners and academics alike as the highest-order goal of a company... For a business to be successful in the long run, it must satisfy its customers... [and as such] it can be argued that satisfying customers is the primary obligation of a company... [C]onsumer satisfaction is... the glue that holds various corporate functions together and directs corporate resources allocation. Conceptually, virtually all company activities, programs, and policies should be evaluated in terms of their contribution to satisfying customers. (p. 61)
Non-profit organisations have also embraced this normative or philosophical perspective of delivering customer satisfaction. For non-profit organisations, as for profit organisations, satisfied customers indicate that they have succeeded in their performance of providing the appropriate products/services and hence their existence is justified (Garland & Westbrook, 1989).

**Consumer Satisfaction as a Tool in Creating a Competitive Advantage.**

In light of both domestic and global competition facing many business organisations, customer satisfaction and service quality have been viewed as important tools for creating a competitive advantage (Dabholkar, 1993; Dabholkar, 1995; Gardial, Clemons, Woodruff, Schumann & Burns, 1994; Woodruff, Clemons, Schumann, Gardial & Burns, 1991). There is clear evidence that customer-driven business organisations produce superior business performance (Narver & Slater, 1990).

Many business organisations have taken on an 'offensive' marketing strategy to expand market share and increase sales. They have done this by differentiating their products/services from competitors to attract new customers and/or increase purchase frequency (Bonomo, 1985; Fornell & Wernerfelt, 1987). As such, marketing has tended to focus on acquiring customers rather than retaining customers (Berry, 1995; Schneider, 1980). Some business organisations have, however, found themselves in mature or declining markets where it has been hard to differentiate on price and quality or through advertising (Fornell, Ryan, & Westbrook, 1990). Product/service homogeneity and excessive advertising has meant consumers have become non-receptive (Hansen & Schoenheit, 1986). As such, it has become increasing difficult and costly to attract new customers through advertising and product/service differentiation (Fornell, et al., 1990).

It has been estimated that attracting new customers can cost six times more than retaining current customers (Congram, 1991; Sellers, 1989). Reichheld and Sasser (1990) noted that retaining customers is profitable over time since (a) there is a reduction in operating costs per customer, (b) existing customers may 'trade-up' or be willing to pay a premium price for a product/service they know and trust, and (c) existing customers provide free positive word-of-mouth advertising. Retaining current customers, therefore, has become essential to remain competitive and often explains the differences in profitability among competitors. When a business organisation "consistently delivers superior value and wins customer loyalty, market share and revenues go up, and costs of acquiring and serving customers goes down" (Reichheld, 1993 p. 64). Customer loyalty, therefore, has become an important asset to the business organisation (de Ruyter, 1993).

As it is less expensive to retain current customers than to attain new clients (Fornell & Wernerfelt, 1987; Reichheld & Sasser, 1990), and because satisfaction is viewed as a
determinant of loyalty (Heskett, Jones, Loveman, Sasser & Schlesinger, 1994), repurchase intentions, and word-of-mouth advertising (Oliver, 1994; Westbrook, 1987), business organisations have undertaken a 'defensive' marketing strategy to enhance satisfaction in an attempt to retain their current customers (Woodruff, et al., 1991). 'Defensive' marketing strategies aim at building close and lasting customer relationships which lead to customer loyalty and thus repeated purchases (Blackwell, 1988; Finkelman & Goland, 1990; Fornell, et al., 1990; Varga, 1995). As Gummesson (1995) noted, people find security in a close and trusting relationship and want to do repeated business.

Reichheld and Sasser (1990) reported that when the number of dissatisfied customers who stopped using a product was decreased by five percent, profits were increased by 25 to 85 percent. Furthermore, TARP (1986) reported, satisfying previously dissatisfied customers may result in enhanced customer loyalty and positive word-of-mouth advertising. Reichheld (1993), however, warned that customer satisfaction is not a surrogate for customer retention. While it may be intuitive that increasing customer satisfaction will increase retention and therefore profits, the facts are contrary. Between 65% and 85% of customers who defect say they were satisfied or very satisfied with their former supplier. In the auto industry, satisfaction scores average 85 to 95%, while repurchase rates average only 40%. Current satisfaction measurements are simply not designed to provide insight into how many customers stay loyal to the company and for how long. (p. 71)

Several other researchers (e.g., Storbacka, et al., 1994; Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1993) have also noted that the link between customer satisfaction and loyalty is not straightforward. Kennedy and Thirkell (1988 p. 7) suggested that customers "are prepared to absorb some unfavourable evaluations before expressing them in terms of net dissatisfaction." This possibly explains why some customers defect even though they report being satisfied. From the opposite perspective, Grönhaug and Gilly (1991) suggested that dissatisfied customers may remain loyal because establishing a new relationship is too costly in terms of their investments of effort, time and/or money. Storbacka, et al. (1994) argued that there are aspects of a marketing relationship other than satisfaction which determine customer loyalty. While little is known about the relationship among consumer satisfaction, bonding(s), commitment and loyalty (Storbacka, et al., 1994), Liljander and Strandvick (1995a) suggested that consumers may be bonded to the provider in a number of different ways. Of these, the social, cultural, ideological and psychological bonds are viewed as being difficult to manage and measure since they are directly related to the customer's values and preferences. These bonds may lower or raise the levels of adequate service necessary for the consumer to be satisfied or dissatisfied, thus determining the customer's loyalty to the provider (Berry, 1995; Storbacka, et al., 1994).

... the parties [e.g., provider and customer] enter into an interaction with each other. The core interaction consists of an exchange of values and supporting joint activities. Customers do not buy goods and services; they buy offerings which render services which create value. The offerings and the value consist of many components, some of them being activities (services), some being things (goods). As a consequence, the traditional division between goods and services is long outdated. It is a matter of redefining services and seeing them from a customer perspective: activities render services; things render services. This shift in focus to services is a shift from means and the producer perspective to the utilisation and the customer perspective. Its core is mutually beneficial and voluntary relationships where the supplier and the customer remain satisfied. RM is more often focused on one-to-one relationships and interaction, and less on impersonal mass marketing. (pp. 245, 250-251)

Reichheld (1993) pointed out that businesses aspiring to practice relationship marketing must first identify those customers who are most likely to remain loyal and second, must develop an overall strategy to deliver superior value to these customers. Berry (1995) noted,

Targeting profitable customers for relationship marketing involves study and analysis of loyalty- and defection-prone customers, searching for distinguishing patterns in why they stay or leave, what creates value for them, and who they are. Relationship marketing firms need to determine which types of customer defectors they wish to try to save (e.g., price, product, or service defectors) and create a value-adding strategy that fits their requirements and strengthens the bond(s) with loyalty-prone customers. (p. 239)

Marketers must, therefore, gain an understanding of how customers evaluate their consumption experiences in order to create and manage what is valued to remain competitive (Bertrand, 1987; Porter, 1985). As such, business organisations "have been encouraged to pay more attention to consumers' postpurchase evaluations" (e.g., satisfaction/dissatisfaction, quality, and service) (Gardial, et al., 1994 p. 548).

Grönroos (1990b; 1994) proposed a similar mode of thinking with his relationship definition of marketing in that profitability is based on creating a relationship with customers.

Marketing is to establish, maintain, and enhance [usually but not necessarily always long term] relationships with customers and other partners, at a profit, so that the objectives of both parties are met. This is achieved by a mutual exchange and fulfilment of promises. (Grönroos, 1990b p. 138)

Close and lasting customer relationships are thought to provide for on-going exchanges with current customers at lower marketing costs (Grönroos, 1990a). As such, it is the establishment, maintainance and enhancement of relationships which influences and determines
the firm's profitability and thus, survival. Grönroos's relationship marketing focuses on keeping customers and enhancing relationships. To do so, customer satisfaction and service quality must be analysed on the episode as well as relationship level. As Storbacka, et al. (1994 p. 22) explained, the service encounter (or transaction) is viewed as "an element in an ongoing sequence of episodes between the customer and the service firm." While Grönroos stressed the importance of the relationship, Czepiel (1990 p. 13) noted that "encounters provide the social occasions in which the buyer and seller can negotiate and nurture the transformation of their accumulated encounters into an exchange relationship." Bitner (1995) also pointed out the importance of addressing each service encounter in creating relationships.

Service relationships are built and promises are kept one encounter at a time. . . . Every time a customer interacts with a service organization (by phone, mail via technology, or in person) a service encounter occurs (Shostack, 1984). From the customer's perspective, service relationships are built from these encounters; each encounter tests the organization to keep its promises. It is during these encounters or "moments of truth" that customers receive a snapshot of the organization's quality, and each encounter contributes to the customer's overall satisfaction and willingness to do business with the organization in the future. . . . Acknowledging the reality that relationships are built (and destroyed) one encounter at a time creates challenges for service organisations. Although not every encounter is necessarily critical to customer retention, it is not necessarily obvious which ones are critical and which ones are not. (Bitner, 1995 pp. 246, 248-249)

Consumer Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction as a Diagnostic Tool for Managerial Action.

Satisfaction is used by business practitioners as a diagnostic measure for managerial action (Anderson, Fornell, & Lehmann, 1994; Fornell, 1992; Oliver, 1994; Rust & Oliver, 1994). Practitioners use consumer surveys to obtain formal feedback regarding customer satisfaction/dissatisfaction of their products or services (Anderson, et al., 1994; de Ruyter, 1993; Fornell, 1992; Peterson & Wilson, 1992; Rust & Oliver, 1994). This data is then used to diagnose reasons for attained levels of customer satisfaction/dissatisfaction (de Ruyter, 1993; Woodruff, et al., 1991); evaluate various service processes such as performance of employees and facilities (Rust & Oliver, 1994); and, although in an infancy stage, examine the relationship among satisfaction (and expectations), service quality and profitability (Anderson, et al., 1994; Fornell, 1992; Rust & Oliver, 1994). A recent study by Liljander and Strandvik (1995b), however, illustrated that overall consumer satisfaction is a better predictor of repurchase intentions than overall or inferred service quality. Customer satisfaction/dissatisfaction evaluations are also used to enhance sales management and training programs, obtain insights into competitors and, if favourable, promote the company in its advertising (Bertrand, 1989a; Bertrand, 1989b; Smith, 1989). Furthermore, de Ruyter (1993) noted that management of consumer dissatisfaction is important since there is analytical and empirical evidence which indicates that a positive relationship exists between complaint management and profitability (Fornell, 1992; Fornell & Wernerfelt, 1988; Gilly & Hansen, 1985; Hart, Heskett, & Sasser Jr., 1990) and corporate continuity (Anton, de Ruyter, & Wharton, 1992).
Peterson and Wilson (1992), however, warned that although satisfying customers is a fundamentally sound principle, ... measurements of customer satisfaction are not especially informative or diagnostic, principally because of their distributional characteristic. Indeed, examination of the satisfaction literature inevitably culminates in a pervasive yet inescapable conclusion - it is not clear what customer satisfaction ratings are measuring. ... Unless viable unobtrusive measuring devices become available, it is probably not possible to measure "true satisfaction." "True satisfaction" is probably so intertwined with both intrapersonal characteristic and methodological considerations that it may never be possible to disentangle them. Observed satisfaction ratings may always overstate satisfaction because "individuals may need to distort upwardly their evaluations of outcomes that reflect on wisdom of their own behavior or judgement" (Hall & Dornan, 1988 p. 643) or reflect attempts to minimize decision regret. This, though, does not mean attempts to directly measure customer satisfaction should be discontinued. On the contrary, it means that more effort is required to improve the measurement of customer satisfaction. (p. 69)

Summary.
Due to its perceived importance and complexity, much emphasis has been placed on consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction research by both academic and business practitioners to improve the understanding of this phenomenon and to determine what drives it. Indeed, "much of the academic research over the past two decades has been devoted to developing and testing CS/D [consumer satisfaction /dissatisfaction] theory" (Woodruff, et al., 1991 p. 103). In doing so, a number of significant contributions have been advanced in the understanding of satisfaction/dissatisfaction. The following section regarding consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction theory reviews (a) how consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction have been conceptualised within the research literature and (b) the research models that have been advanced to explain consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction. These research models generally address the nature, determinants and consequences of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction as guided by its defined or assumed conceptualisation.

CONSUMER SATISFACTION/DISSATISFACTION THEORY

The importance of satisfaction/dissatisfaction, first realised by academic researchers and later by practitioners, has lead to the inquiry of its meaning and causes and its relationship to other consumer behaviours (Woodruff, et al., 1991). Traditionally, the concept of consumer satisfaction has been viewed as the core of the postpurchase process and as such leads to key postpurchase activities, such as complaining behaviour and patronage (Westbrook & Oliver, 1991). More recently, however, some researchers have questioned whether current satisfaction and dissatisfaction theory and measurement provides us with a 'total' picture of consumers' postpurchase evaluations and behaviours. These researchers suggested the need to broaden our understanding of postpurchase evaluations beyond satisfaction (Folkes, 1984; Holbrook & O'Shaughnessy, 1988) and "to re examine the use of 'satisfaction'-based postpurchase
measurements” (Gardial, et al., 1994 p. 549). The following sections review consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction theory as it has developed over the past two and a half decades.

**Conceptualisation Of Consumer Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction**

**Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction as a Process.**

Consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction has been conceptually defined and examined in a number of different ways. Although satisfaction/dissatisfaction has been construed purely as an outcome (i.e., a 'state' variable) resulting from a consumption experience, Yi (1990) and Tse, et al. (1990) noted that the conceptualisation of satisfaction/dissatisfaction as an evaluation of the consumption process has been adopted by most consumer researchers. The process-oriented approach as compared to the outcome-orientation has been viewed as being more appropriate

... in that it spans the entire consumption experience and points to an important process which may lead to CS [consumer satisfaction] with unique measures capturing unique components of each stage. This approach seems to draw more attention to the perceptual, evaluative, and psychological processes that generate CS. (Yi, 1990 p. 70)

Tse, et al. (1990), however, stated that

this process view is ... difficult to implement through empirical research. Its emergence is in part a reaction to the shortcomings of visualizing a consumer either in a state of blissfulness, or in a state of despair, or in between. But this process view is also an expression of a view of life where a consumer continuously manages the stress (or tensions) intrinsic within the self, and between the self and the environment. (p. 179)

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1 Tse, et al. (1990) explained that when satisfaction is defined as a 'state' variable a consumer is viewed as varying in her/his state of being satisfied (very satisfied to very dissatisfied), happy (very happy to very unhappy), or according to some other descriptor (e.g. pleasant/unpleasant, hell/nirvana). Satisfaction can be conceptualised as being either: (a) an 'objective' state which relates to the meeting of some basic need, the consistency of producing certain product/service properties, or implied marketplace implications (e.g., advertising claims, fairness values); or (b) a 'subjective' state which relates to the how consumers feel about their evaluations. In the objective state, the researcher pays very little attention to how the consumers actually feel, think, and/or behave.

2 Examples of how consumer satisfaction is defined as an outcome include: "the buyers cognitive state of being adequately or inadequately rewarded for the sacrifices he has undergone" (Howard & Sheth, 1969 p. 145); "an emotional response to the experiences provided by, or associated with, particular products and services purchased, retail outlets, or even molar patterns of behavior such as shopping and buyer behavior, as well as the overall marketplace" (Westbrook & Reilly, 1983 p. 256).

3 Examples of consumer satisfaction as a process include: "it is the evaluation rendered that the experience was at least as good as it was supposed to be" (Hunt, 1977 p. 459); "the consumer response to the evaluation of the perceived discrepancy between prior expectations and the actual performance of the product as perceived after its consumption" (Tse & Wilton, 1988 p. 204); "a dynamic flow of multidimensional interactions among mental and overt behavior activities that unfold after the purchase" (Tse, et al., 1990 p. 179).
The Nature of Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction Construct.

Generally, "consumer satisfaction refers to an evaluative response concerning the perceived outcomes of the experiences in the consumer domain, comprising acquisition, consumption, and disposition activity" (Westbrook & Oliver, 1981 p. 94). The evaluative "response" to the satisfaction/dissatisfaction process can be cognitive (e.g., the product/service performed well or poorly, good or bad product, good or bad for me) and/or emotional (e.g., thrilling, pleasing, happy, disgusting to me) (Woodruff, et al., 1991 p. 104). As discussed in the post-consumption literature, the relationship between cognitive responses and emotional responses is uncertain and complex (Gardial, et al., 1994). Affect, however, is central to the construct of satisfaction/dissatisfaction in that the consumer may experience varying degrees of affects in connection with her/his consumption outcomes (Westbrook & Oliver, 1981). Affect also has been recently found by Westbrook and Oliver (1991) to be central to the satisfaction/dissatisfaction process. It is, however, unclear how evaluation and emotion intertwine within the process (Oliver, 1994).

Due to its complexity and thus our inability to precisely define the satisfaction/dissatisfaction construct, a number of different conceptualisations have been used in the post-consumption evaluation literature (Babin, Griffin, & Darden, 1994). Gardial, et al., (1994) noted that generally,

Some [researchers] have conceptualised and measured satisfaction as a quasi-cognitive evaluation (Hunt, 1977; Oliver, 1980a; Oliver & Westbrook, 1982), as more of an emotional response to product usage (Cadotte, Woodruff, & Jenkins, 1987; Day, 1983; Westbrook & Reilly, 1983) or as both (Westbrook & Oliver, 1991). (p.550)

Consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction has been organised along dimensions such as cognitive-emotional and level of event. Level of event, for example, being the evaluation of a specific transaction or an overall global evaluation of product/service/business (Yi, 1990). Walker (1995) conceptualised service encounter evaluations of satisfaction/dissatisfaction as three separate, yet integrated, evaluation stages: customer interactions prior to core service delivery; core service delivery; and customer interactions after core service deliver. Even though customers are primarily purchasing the core service, adequate core service delivery does not ensure satisfaction. Rather, "it is the final evaluation that conceptually defines overall service encounter satisfaction, dissatisfaction or neutrality. . . . Consumers evaluate the total offering" (Walker, 1995 pp. 10-11).

Satisfaction has usually been viewed as a function of both cognition and emotion as captured in Hunt's (1977) early definition of satisfaction.

Satisfaction is kind of stepping away from an experience and evaluating it. You may have a pleasurable experience and then be satisfied as you evaluate that experience. If it were not a stepping away, we'd call it happiness or pleasure or a feeling of warm or something like that. Satisfaction is not the pleasurableness of the experience, it is the
evaluation rendered that the experience was at least as good as it was suppose to be. One could have a pleasurable experience that caused dissatisfaction because even though pleasurable, it wasn't as pleasurable as it was supposed or expected to be. So satisfaction/dissatisfaction isn't an emotion, it's the evaluation of an emotion, and as such it becomes a quasi-cognitive construct, and we would expect the laws of judgement to affect satisfaction. (Hunt, 1977 pp. 459-460)

While it is often assumed that consumer satisfaction is unidimensional, some researchers have argued that it is a multidimensional construct. It is thought that satisfaction and dissatisfaction may be separate constructs since customers can be both satisfied and dissatisfied at the same time, and since both of these phenomena can vary in their level of intensity (Mackoy & Spreng, 1995; Yi, 1990). While there have been some empirical efforts to clarify this issue (e.g., Babin, et al., 1994; Mackoy & Spreng, 1995; Maddox, 1981; Swan & Combs, 1976), it still remains unresolved. Using critical incidents, Swan and Combs (1976) found weak support for the two-construct conceptualisation. However, in a replication study of Swan and Combs's research using larger samples from multiple industries, Maddox (1981) found only mixed support.

More recent research by Cadotte and Turgeon (1988) and Gardial, et al. (1994) has suggested that satisfaction and dissatisfaction may not be on a unidimensional scale. Cadotte and Turgeon (1988) reported that

... certain performance categories have an uneven effect on consumer satisfaction. Some variables (labelled dissatisfiers) can cause dissatisfaction but not high levels of satisfaction. Other variables (satisfiers) can cause high satisfaction but do not seem to generate as much dissatisfaction. A third group of variables (critical) swing both ways and cause dissatisfaction and high satisfaction. The final set of variables (neutrals) seem to have little effect on the upper and lower ends of the satisfaction continuum. (p. 79)

Results from Gardial, et al.'s (1994) qualitative study examining postpurchase evaluation experiences indicated that dissatisfying experiences are less likely than satisfying ones to use an internal comparison standards⁴ and are more likely to be associated with consequences⁵. These results lend some support to Swan and Combs's hypotheses that dissatisfying experiences are associated more with 'instrumental' attributes than are satisfying events. That is, dissatisfying events are associated more with the physical aspects of the product than are satisfying events (Mackoy & Spreng, 1995). Both these studies found that the satisfiers and the dissatisfiers are not the same and therefore, are not unidimensional in nature.

Mackoy and Spreng's (1995) results were consistent with those of Babin, et al's (1994) study which found some support for the two-dimensional conceptualisation of

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⁴ An internal standard as defined by Gardial, et al. (1994) is a comparison made to some internalised ideal or want that the consumer had in mind.

⁵ Consequences indicate a benefit or sacrifice that a consumer makes in relation to the ownership and/or use of a product/service (Gardial, et al., 1994).
Babin, et al. (1994) used, as did Mackoy and Spreng (1995), confirmatory factor analysis to examine whether satisfaction is a multidimensional or unidimensional concept. Babin, et al. (1994) concluded that

at least under some circumstances, dissatisfaction and satisfaction are distinct. ... [That is,] ... a consumer can experience some levels of both satisfaction and dissatisfaction at the same time. Furthermore, ... predictors of one of these emotions [i.e., satisfaction or dissatisfaction] may have little impact on the other. Some things that decrease dissatisfaction for example, may have little influence on satisfaction. ... [It] appears that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are not bipolar but rather exhibit some degree of independence. (pp. 180-181)

As well as addressing this multidimensional issue, Babin, et al. (1994) also examined the conceptualisation of satisfaction/dissatisfaction in regards to its emotional and cognitive components. From an analysis of the post-consumption literature, they identified five distinct conceptualisations of the satisfaction/dissatisfaction construct: Satisfaction as Cognition; Satisfaction as a Reaction to a Cognition Judgement; Satisfaction as a General Emotional Response; Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction as a Multidimensional Reaction; and Satisfaction as a Multidimensional Affective Response. The following sections describe these five conceptualisations as Babin, et al. (1994) illustrated them from the satisfaction/dissatisfaction literature, and how evaluation cognition and emotion are positioned within each conceptualisation.

**Satisfaction as cognition.** Many early consumer researchers first defined and measured satisfaction/dissatisfaction as the evaluation to a cognitive process. For example, Hunt (1977 p. 459) described satisfaction as "the evaluation rendered that the experience was at least as good as it was supposed to be," and others (e.g., Day, 1984) have referred to satisfaction as the cognitive evaluation of the comparison process between the experienced products/services performance and the level of its expected or normative performance (i.e., disconfirmation/confirmation process). Recent consumer researchers have also viewed satisfaction as cognition. For example, Engel, Blackwell, & Miniard, (1993 p. 571) defined satisfaction as "a post-consumption evaluation that a chosen alternative at least meets or exceeds expectations." From this conceptualisation, Babin, et al. (1994) suggested that a consumer's post-consumption experience would consist of two components, the satisfaction/dissatisfaction cognitive evaluation and post-consumption emotion.

**Satisfaction as a reaction to a cognitive judgement.** This conceptualisation views satisfaction/dissatisfaction "as the response to an evaluation of a consumption experience rather than the evaluation itself" (Babin, et al., 1994 p. 173). In 1988, as noted by Tse and Wilton, this was the most conventional definition given within the literature.

It is generally agreed that post consumption consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction
(CS/D) can be defined as the consumer's response to the evaluation of the perceived discrepancy between prior expectations (or some other norm of performance) and the actual performance of the product as perceived after its consumption. (Tse & Wilton, 1988 p. 204)

The consumer's evaluation of a perceived discrepancy (i.e., disconfirmation) is a distinct cognitive state resulting from the comparison process and preceding a satisfaction judgement (Oliver, 1980a). Moreover, in this definition, consumption emotions are also viewed as being a separate construct from the consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement and the disconfirmation evaluation. As such, post-consumption experiences are viewed as three separate constructs: the disconfirmation evaluation; the satisfaction judgement of the disconfirmation evaluation; and the consumption emotions.

**Satisfaction as a general emotional response.** Other researchers have conceptualised and measured satisfaction/dissatisfaction as just one of many of the emotions experienced in the consumer's post-consumption experience. For example, Woodruff, Cadotte, and Jenkins (1983) linked cognitive with emotional processing by defining consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction as,

... an emotional feeling in response to confirmation/disconfirmation. ... In most cases, positive emotions (e.g., contentment, delight, pleasure, etc.) should result from a positive disconfirmation and negative emotions (e.g., disappointment, frustration, anger, etc.) from a negative disconfirmation ... (p. 297)

As 'satisfaction' appears as an affective response in some emotional typologies (e.g., Mehrabian & Russell, 1974; Russell, 1980; Watson & Tellegen, 1985), this conceptualisation appears to be realistic and logical. Since a number of these typologies use satisfaction as an indicator of pleasure or positive emotion, "the consumer would probably respond similarly if asked either 'are you satisfied with a product,' or 'are you pleased with a product.' " This conceptualisation would consist of two factors, disconfirmation and post-consumption emotions which are inclusive of satisfaction/dissatisfaction (Babin, et al., 1994).

**Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction as a multidimensional reaction.** This conceptualisation is a variation of 'satisfaction as a reaction to a cognitive judgement'. It differs in that the construct of post-consumption emotions are viewed as being separate positive and negative affective dimensions rather than a singular bipolar factor. Westbrook (1987) noted,

... pleasant affects in relation to product/consumption outcomes, such as joy, interest, and excitement, do not necessarily imply the absence of unpleasant affect such as anger, disgust, and contempt. ... Dual unipolar affective dimensions are particularly appropriate in the product/consumption contexts because they make possible a distinction between ambivalence and indifference, which may not be infrequent reactions in this domain. (p. 266)
In this conceptualisation, Babin, et al. (1994) hypothesised four components: the disconfirmation evaluation; positive affect; negative affect; and satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement of the disconfirmation evaluation.

**Satisfaction as a multidimensional affective response.** This conceptualisation recognises that satisfaction and dissatisfaction may be distinct from each other. That is, satisfaction and dissatisfaction may be two separate constructs. Satisfaction, however, should relate to the general emotion of pleasure (positive affect); while dissatisfaction should relate to displeasure (negative affect). This definition combines the thinking of two prior conceptualisations, satisfaction as a general emotion and satisfaction as a multidimensional reaction. Thus, Babin, et al. (1994) noted that there are three components: disconfirmation; positive affect (including satisfaction); and negative affect (including dissatisfaction).

Babin, et al. (1994) found evidence

... that the satisfaction judgement (evaluation) is distinct from the experience of satisfaction, ... the emotional nature of CS/D, ... [The] ... three factor model positing separate positive emotion (including items typically used to assess "satisfaction"), negative emotion (including an assessment of "dissatisfaction"), and a disconfirmation factor provided the best overall results. (p. 180)

As such, Babin, et al. (1994) noted that

... consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction are similar to other emotions in that they are reactions to an evaluation rather than the evaluation itself. ... This finding tends to support a conceptualization of satisfaction as an emotion (Woodruff, et al., 1983) and raises a question concerning the distinctiveness (or lack of it) of satisfaction compared to other emotions like excitement, anger and humiliation. ... [If] satisfaction (dissatisfaction) is predominantly emotional, it can clearly be affected by things not directly related to expectations and/or performance. Therefore, while the disconfirmation judgement is strongly related to satisfaction and dissatisfaction, residual variation may be explained by other factors generally affecting positive and negative emotional states. (p. 180)

Babin, et al. (1994) concluded that the state of satisfaction and dissatisfaction consist of the emotional response(s) to the evaluation of the experience, rather than the judgement itself.

Additionally, Oliver (1989 p. 13) suggested that "satisfaction is not well defined across consumers." That is, satisfaction/dissatisfaction may mean different things to different people. It also may take on different meanings to different people in different contexts. Oliver (1989 p. 7) proposed that "a number of different product experiences are 'summed up' under the rubric of 'satisfaction.' These experiences represent response orientations to satisfaction." Based on three circumplex models of affect and the success or failure emotions, Oliver (1989) proposed five affective response orientation of satisfaction: contentment; pleasure; relief; novelty; and surprise. For each consumption experience, satisfaction/dissatisfaction is conceptualised as the
primary affect or the combination of primary affect and distinct emotions created by the response mode activated. Oliver (1989) hypothesised that these response mode orientations are derived and distinguished from the others by the level of arousal and the nature of cognition, attribution and emotion activated during the process.

Summary.
Over the years a number of different conceptualisations have been advanced to define and guide past research and measurements of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction. Consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction is usually operationalised as an unidimensional construct, but there is some evidence to suggest that the two may be separate constructs. Recent research has indicated that the nature of the construct(s) of satisfaction/dissatisfaction is composed of both cognitive and affective responses. These issues still remain unresolved. Yi (1990), however, noted that the issue of dimensionality is an important one since it has several implications for marketing theory and practice. There is a need for future research to focus on identifying conditions when satisfaction/dissatisfaction is one-, bi- or multidimensional, and how and when it varies in dimensionality. The next section describes the models which have been used to examine consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction. These models outline the processes of satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation in an attempt to gain an understanding of (a) the meaning (i.e., nature and the dimensionality) of the satisfaction /dissatisfaction construct(s) and (b) the determinants and consequences of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction.

Models of Consumer Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction

Over the past two and a half decades a number of different models have been developed in an attempt to explain satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation. Generally, most of these models have been "concerned with the psychological activities associated with the formation of satisfaction, i.e., the emergence of a psychological disequilibrium" (Tse, et al., 1990 p. 180).

There is general agreement that when a consumer evaluates a product/service during consumption it involves the process of comparison. In the satisfaction/dissatisfaction process, it is thought that the consumer compares his or her perceived consumption experience(s) with an evaluative standard or set of standards, and notes any difference(s) (Cadotte, et al., 1987; Oliver, 1989; Westbrook & Oliver, 1991; Woodruff, et al., 1991; Yi, 1990). As such, satisfaction/dissatisfaction is conceptualised as the consumer's evaluative 'response' to these noted differences.
A number of comparison standards have been suggested: (predictive) expectations\(^6\) (Oliver, 1980a); experience-based norms (Woodruff, et al., 1983); desires (Olshavsky & Spreng, 1989); values (Westbrook & Reilly, 1983); ideals, minimum tolerable, deserved expectations (Miller, 1977); promises (Woodruff, et al., 1991); equity (Huppertz, Arenson, & Evans, 1978); and multiple standards (Cadotte, et al., 1987). Most of these have been supported empirically. Other process models (e.g., performance (Churchill Jr. & Surprenant, 1982) and attribution (Oliver, 1989), however, have been proposed and found to contribute to and/or determine satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation.

Recent research has focused on the integration of these basic models, providing a better understanding of the relationships among identified cognitive constructs in the satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation process. It has examined the nature and role of affective constructs and their interrelationships with cognitive constructs in satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation. As well as providing a historical perspective of the satisfaction/dissatisfaction research, the following sections examine the proposed models and their supportive research.

**Expectancy-Disconfirmation Models.**

According to the expectancy-disconfirmation paradigm, a consumer's satisfaction/dissatisfaction with a service or product results from the service's or product's performance in meeting a set of expectations which are posited as a comparison standard (Gardial, et al., 1994; Woodruff, et al., 1991). Although there is a substantial amount of research which supports the disconfirmation paradigm, there is considerable debate regarding the use of these different types of comparison standards in the consumer's evaluative process (Erevelles, 1992; Woodruff, et al., 1991; Yi, 1990).

Disconfirmation occurs when the actual performance is perceived to be lower than the expected standard (negative disconfirmation) or when it exceeds the expected standard (positive disconfirmation). Confirmation results when actual performance is not noticeably different from the consumer's expectations. Satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation is viewed as a function of the size and the direction of the disconfirmation beliefs (Halstead, 1989). That is, the greater the disconfirmation, either positive or negative, the greater the satisfaction or dissatisfaction, respectively. Confirmation is viewed as being a neutral state.

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\(^6\) There is confusion in the literature regarding what expectations, exactly means. Expectations as referred to by Oliver (1980b) indicate the consumers' predicted expected performance of the experience or product. As such, other researchers have sometimes referred to them as 'predictive expectations' to distinguish them from the other types of expectations (e.g., experience-based norms, values, desires) which exist within the expectancy-disconfirmation paradigm (Yi, 1990). In this dissertation, predicted expected performance will be referred to a 'predictive expectations' and the term expectations will encompass all comparison standards used within the expectancy-disconfirmation paradigm.
Expectation-disconfirmation model. The predictive expectation-disconfirmation paradigm has dominated the area of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction since early reviews and research and has been frequently revisited (e.g., Day, 1977; LaTour & Peat, 1979; Oliver, 1977a; Oliver, 1977b; Swan, 1977). Oliver (1980a) suggested that two constructs, performance-specific predictive expectations and the disconfirmation of these expectations, play an additive role in the formation of satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgements.

The expectation-disconfirmation model has two components, predictive expectations and disconfirmation of expectations, which are conceptualised as two separate processes: (a) the formation of the predictive expectations regarding the product's or service's performance prior to purchase/usage, and (b) the disconfirmation of these predictive expectations after the usage experience (Oliver & DeSarbo, 1988).

Based on Helson's (1964) adaptation level predictions, Oliver (1980a; 1981) suggested that consumers form predictive expectations of the product's or service's performance prior to purchase, and as such, believe that the product/service has certain desired attributes. These predictive expectations are influenced by factors such as prior experience with the product, brand connotations, salespeople's and social reference's communications about the product (Oliver, 1980a).

Once the product/service has been used and its actual performance is revealed, the consumer then compares his/her predictive expectations with the actual product/service performance. The predictive expectations are then either confirmed, or are positively or negatively disconfirmed, resulting in an evaluation of neutrality, satisfaction or dissatisfaction, respectively. The consumer's resultant satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the product/service is then thought to strengthen or weaken his/her attitudes towards future purchase intentions (Oliver, 1980a; Oliver, 1981; Swan & Trawick, 1981) and complaining behaviour (Bearden & Teel, 1983).

Furthermore, as hypothesised by Oliver (1980a; 1981), predictive expectations and disconfirmation of these expectations are thought to have separate effects akin to those predicted by Helson's (1964) adaptation level predictions. That is, expectations are believed to anchor the satisfaction and dissatisfaction judgement. Oliver (1981) suggested this occurs from a framing or assimilation effect.

The expectation level appears to provide a baseline around which the disconfirmation judgements are made; the higher (lower) one's expectations, the higher (lower) the subsequent satisfaction judgement, ceteris paribus. The disconfirmation effects are thought to originate from their associated emotional experiences. The delight of a positive disconfirmation enhances a satisfaction judgement, where disappointment of a negative disconfirmation increases it. Confirmation simply maintains the adaptation level. (Oliver & DeSarbo, 1988 pp. 495-496).
There has been considerable empirical support for this predictive expectation-disconfirmation model (e.g., Bearden & Teel, 1983; Churchill Jr. & Surprenant, 1982 [for non-durable products] Oliver, 1980a; Oliver, 1981; Oliver & DeSarbo, 1988; Swan & Trawick, 1981). In some cases, however, the hypothesised direct effects of disconfirmation and expectations have not been supported. For example, research by Churchill Jr. and Surprenant (1982) (for a durable product) and Barbeau (1985) found that disconfirmation did not affect satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation. Work by Oliver and Bearden (1983), Oliver (1980a) (for the resident but not the student sample) and Churchill Jr. and Surprenant (1982) (for the durable product) suggested that expectations did not serve as an adaptation baseline for satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation. These results indicated that disconfirmation and predictive expectation effects may only explain satisfaction/dissatisfaction for different product and sample types.

Although the predictive expectation-disconfirmation paradigm has gained considerable support over the past two decades, there appears to be a number of conceptual problems with its predominant use in the explanation of satisfaction and dissatisfaction formation (Spreng & Olshavsky, 1993; Woodruff, et al., 1991). As Woodruff, et al. (1983) specifically noted,

... there has been a growing challenge to [predictive] expectations as the baseline for comparing perceived brand performance. At best, expectations-based disconfirmation measures have yielded only modest correlations with satisfaction measures. In addition, several researchers have suggested other kinds of baselines that may be operative. (p. 296)

Even though there is now empirical evidence to suggest that other comparison standards are better predictors in evaluating perceived performance (e.g., Cadotte, et al., 1987; Tse & Wilton, 1988), there has been a pervasive tendency by both academics and business practitioners to overlook other suggested comparison standards and return to the use of predictive expectations as the comparison standard in the measurement of satisfaction/dissatisfaction (Woodruff, et al., 1991).

**Norm-Based Expectancy-Disconfirmation Models.**

Apart from predictive expectations (i.e., 'will be' expectations), a number of researchers have suggested the use of norms (i.e., 'should-be' or 'can-be' expectations) as a standard of comparison in the evaluation of a consumer's consumption experience (Yi, 1990). At the first annual Consumer Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction and Complaining Behavior Conference on the theme, Conceptualisation and Measurement of Consumer Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction, Miller (1977) and Morris (1976) suggested the use of normative comparison standards. Morris (1976) proposed that consumers use cultural and family norms (e.g., a consumer's home

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7 See Cadotte, et al. (1987), LaTour and Peat (1979), and Westbrook and Reilly (1983) for detailed examples of the conceptual problems regarding the use of predictive expectations as the predominant standard to explain satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation.
should have a certain number of bedrooms and bathrooms as dictated by his/her social situation) to evaluate the product's performance. If the product has an undesirable deficit or surplus (i.e., a 'normative deficit') then dissatisfaction results. Thus, satisfaction results when the product matches the norm.

Miller (1977) introduced the 'Ideal' and 'Deserved' comparison standards\(^8\). The 'Ideal' being the "the wished for" or "can be" level of performance and the 'Deserved' being the level it "ought to be" or "should be" in regard to the consumer's investment (Miller, 1977 p. 76-77). Based on a similar approach to modelling product performance against pre-experience norms as suggested by Swan and Trawick (1981), Woodruff, et al. (1983) proposed a model of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction processing using experienced-based norms.

**Experience-based norms model.** Woodruff, et al. (1983) modified the predictive expectation-disconfirmation model in two ways. First, they proposed the use of experience-based norms as a standard of comparison rather than just predictive expectations. These experience-based norms reflect the performance that a consumer believes the focal brand 'should' provide to meet his/her needs and wants (Cadotte, et al., 1987) rather than what the performance of the focal brand 'will be'. As such, consumers may base their comparison standard on other brands as well as the focal brand. In doing so, it was thought that these experience-based norms reflected the 'desired' performance in meeting needs and wants. The desired performance, however, was thought to be "constrained by the performance consumers believe is possible as indicated by the performance of known brands" (Cadotte, et al., 1987 p. 306). While a consumer may abstract some 'ideal' performance that a brand could provide, it was thought that they were more likely to use their experiences with real products in determining the level of performance that they desire (Cadotte, et al., 1987; Woodruff, et al., 1983). This model suggested that

\[\ldots\text{there can be several norms standards against which perceived performance may be compared; both across consumers as well as within the same consumer, each determined by a previous experience with a different product or brand. Also, experience-based norms raise the possibility of multiple standards being used by the same consumer.}\] (Woodruff, et al., 1991 p. 105)

For example, a comparison standard may be based on one or a combination of the following: a "product-based norm" (an average of past experiences with several brands of a product type within a product class); the "best brand norm" (past experience of the favourite brand); and/or "the focal brand" (experience with the purchased brand). Because consumers' experiences vary so widely with different products, Woodruff, et al. (1983) suggested that different norms are apt to be used by different people, even in the same or similar use situations.

\(^8\) Miller (1977) referred to these two comparison standards, 'ideal' and 'deserved', along with two others, 'expected' and 'minimum tolerable performance', as expectations.
The second modification made by Woodruff, et al. (1983) in their experience-based norms model replaced the positive, zero, and negative disconfirmation stage of Oliver's (1980a) expectation-disconfirmation model with the 'zone of indifference'. Woodruff, et al. (1983) specifically explained that the

...perceived performance within some interval is likely to be considered equivalent to the norm. This interval is called the "zone of indifference". ... One explanation for the existence of this zone is that perceptual limitations of people cause some imprecision when the confirmation/disconfirmation cognition is made. An alternative conceptual rationale [to that of adaptive theory used in the expectation-disconfirmation model] is derived from assimilation theory (Olshavsky & Miller, 1972; Olson & Dover, 1979). Perceptions of brand performance which are close to the norm are within a latitude of acceptable performance, and may even be assimilated toward the norm. However, when the distance from the norm is great enough that perceived performance is outside the latitude of acceptance, brand performance is perceived as different from the norm. This difference causes disconfirmation. (pp. 299-300)

Disconfirmation, therefore, occurs when the perceived brand performance lies outside the indifference zone and confirmation results when performance lies within the zone. Woodruff, et al. (1983) further proposed that this zone of indifference may vary in width depending on different use situations. For example, an increase or decrease in consumer's involvement and knowledge regarding the product/service may respectively narrow or widen the size of this zone.

Woodruff, et al. (1983) suggested that the zone of indifference is an important concept in the understanding of satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation. As perceived performance within this zone does not evoke the consumer to consciously evaluate the situation, confirmation is highly unlikely "to lead to anything more than a neutral, or at the best weak, emotional response" (Woodruff, et al., 1983 p. 302). Woodruff, et al. (1983 p. 300) also noted that "perceived performance outside the zone of indifference [i.e., disconfirmation] is unusual and attention-getting" and as such, is likely to be evaluated by the consumer and result in a positive or negative emotional response. Performance outside the zone is probably the exception rather than the norm, thus indicating that a satisfactory outcome may simply just reinforce the consumer choice and use of the brand. This reinforcement may then maintain or strengthen prior brand attitudes and/or intentions to repurchase as suggested by Oliver (1980a). A positive or negative outcome, however, would most likely indicate that the consumer would react in some manner, such as positive or negative word-of-mouth. In regards to the 'zone of indifference' concept, Woodruff, et al. (1983) suggested that it is importance for a company to constantly strive for exceptional performance since it is hypothesised that

...positive satisfaction with the brand will slowly decay through the brand's repeated use or through the introduction of similar, "me-too" brands. In short the brand or product-type norm can become so familiar to the focal brand that the zone of indifference shifts to include it within its range. Consequently, the consumer eventually
will have either a neutral or no emotional response to the evaluation of the focal brand performance. (pp. 300-301)

Most likely due to the complexity of the experience-based model and thus the difficulties in developing key constructs to test it (Cadotte, et al., 1987; Woodruff, et al., 1983), only one study has tested its validity. Using causal modelling, Cadotte, et al. (1987) compared three types of experience-based norms (the product-type norm, the best brand-norm, and brand expectations) in the product domain of restaurants and found that the product-norm model and the best-brand model were better at explaining satisfaction/dissatisfaction than was disconfirmation based on predictive expectations. Results also showed that the best brand-norm standard explained why the data varied according to restaurant type.

In summary, results of Cadotte, et al.'s (1987) study suggested that comparison standards are based on consumer's experiences of other related brands as well as the focal brand, and are "rooted in one's total experience with the focal and related brands." Second, the data suggested the possibility that "all experience with the focal brand and related brands is combined together to form a multidimensional standard" in which the composites may be weighted (Cadotte, et al., 1987 p. 314). Last, their results suggested that the situation is an important factor in determining what comparison standard (or weighted combination) is most important to the consumer in his/her evaluation. That is, "no one standard will always best explain the satisfaction process," but rather it is dependent on the situation (Cadotte, et al., 1987 p. 313).

From their research Cadotte, et al. (1987) further proposed that consumers have different experiences with various brands and thus are likely to use different standards when evaluating the focal brand performance. As such, research should explore which standards are used by the single consumer in given situations. From this research, it may be possible to develop typologies which may improve our ability to explain variations in satisfaction/dissatisfaction, as well as provide a basis for segmenting markets. It may be possible to group together consumers who use certain norms into different market segments for strategy purposes.

Cadotte, et al. (1987) also addressed the issue that the satisfaction/dissatisfaction response is probably not a single emotion. They suggested the need to examine the type of emotions experienced in the consumption process and how these relate back to the norms used in the evaluation process.

Woodruff, et al. (1991) noted that while Cadotte, et al.'s (1987) results were supportive of Woodruff, et al.'s (1983) experience-based norms model, much more research is required to assess whether it is a useful way to conceptualise the nature of the comparison standards. While agreeing that the experience-based norms model has advanced our understanding of satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation process, Spreng and Olshavsky (1993) argued that it is
unlikely that consumers place constraints on their expectations of the product/service performance in regards to what is possible as indicated by the performance of other brands (i.e., "can be" level of performance). Rather, Spreng and Olshavsky (1993) suggested that consumers may expect more than what their past experiences have shown to be possible. Consequently, use of the experience-based norms standard as a measure of satisfaction/dissatisfaction may cause researchers and managers to miss unmet needs of some consumers.

**Value/Desires Comparison Models.**

**Value-percept disparity model.** As an alternative to the predictive expectation-disconfirmation model, Westbrook and Reilly (1983) proposed the 'value-percept disparity' model. They argued that one of the main "problems with the expectation-confirmation model is that it does not provide sufficient differentiation between cognitive and evaluative notions (Westbrook & Reilly, 1983 p. 257). Specifically, Westbrook and Reilly (1983) suggested that the constructs of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction needs to distinguish the phenomenon of satisfaction/dissatisfaction (the accrued felt experience) from the cognitive process that precedes and determines it (e.g., disconfirmation of expectation process).

Westbrook & Reilly (1983), similar to Oliver's (1981) conceptualisation of the predictive expectation-disconfirmation model, viewed consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction as a psychological phenomenon which describes the emotional (or affective) responses of the consumer's evaluation of his/her experience with the product/service. But unlike Oliver (1981), Westbrook and Reilly (1983) proposed that emotions result when a value evaluation is made by the consumer rather than the disconfirmation of expectations. Westbrook and Reilly (1983) viewed values, as beheld by Branden (1966), as "simply 'that which one acts to gain and/or keep' and represent what one regards as conductive to one's welfare." Westbrook and Reilly (1983) continued,

> The process of evaluation, then, consists of estimating the relationship of an object, action, or condition [in the consumer's experience with the product/service] to the individual's values. Essentially, evaluation addresses the question of whether the object, action, or condition enhances or threatens the individual's values. When a value judgement is reached, emotions result... Pleasure is the result of perceived attainment of one's values, while displeasure derives from the perceived negation or destruction of one's values. (pp. 255-256)

As such, the evaluation process of creating satisfaction consists of estimating the 'disparity' relationship which exist between the product/service and the consumer's values. As the disparity between the consumer's perceptions of the product/service and values increase or decrease, dissatisfaction and satisfaction increase, respectively. That is, the smaller the disparity ..., the more favourable the evaluation, and the greater the generation of positive affect associated with goal attainment, i.e., satisfaction.
Conversely, the greater the value-percept disparity, the less favourable the evaluation, the less generation of positive affect, and the greater the generation of negative affect associated with goal frustration, i.e., dissatisfaction. (Westbrook & Reilly, 1983 p. 258)

In summary, the value-percept disparity model "asserts that satisfaction/dissatisfaction is an emotional response triggered by a cognitive-evaluative process in which the perceptions of (or beliefs about) an object, actions, or condition are compared to one's values (or needs, wants, desires)" (Westbrook & Reilly, 1983 p. 258). This value-percept disparity measure differs from the disconfirmation measure of predicting satisfaction/dissatisfaction in that it constrains the measurement of performance to less than or equal to the consumer's values. That is, perceived performance is not viewed as being greater than the consumer's values (Spreng & Olshavsky, 1993). In doing so, the value-percept disparity model suggests that consumers seek attainment of their goals, rather than just the disconfirmation of perceived expectations regarding the product/service. This conceptualisation of satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation is more general than the expectation-disconfirmation model. Evaluations can be based on other aspects of the product/service which were not formulated prior to purchase. In practice, however, expectations and values often coincide since consumers purposely choose and plan to achieve their goals. As such, this model views the expectancy-disconfirmation process as a specific type of value judgement (Westbrook & Reilly, 1983).

While Westbrook and Reilly's (1983) theoretical arguments are compelling, their empirical results were not supportive (Woodruff, et al., 1991). Using causal modelling, Westbrook and Reilly (1983) found that neither the predictive expectation-disconfirmation model nor the value-percept model on its own was a sufficient determinant to explain consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction. Furthermore, disconfirmation was found to have a stronger effect than value-percept disparity. Westbrook and Reilly (1983), however, argued that their measurement of expectations differed from the "pure" predictive expectation measurement used by Oliver (1980a; 1981). Specifically, Westbrook and Reilly (1983 p. 260) suggested that the predictive expectation effect which they found in their model "may be more a product of what was wanted or desired than the likelihood of getting those things" as conceptualised by Oliver (1980a). Westbrook and Reilly (1983 p. 260) concluded that "the processes determining satisfaction may be more complex than typically assumed, perhaps requiring the integration of different theoretical themes." They also argued that there were other measurement errors or difficulties which probably confounded the support for their model. For example, it was possible that the use of a single indicator of value-percept disparity did not adequately represent the construct.

Although the value comparison standard appeared to be a dead end path, others (e.g., Olshavsky & Spreng, 1989; Spreng, Dixon, & Olshavsky, 1993; Spreng & Olshavsky, 1993) have recently taken a renewed interested in its effect on consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction
(Woodruff, et al., 1991). Spreng and Olshavsky (1993) suggested that the difficulties with the value percept disparity model stemmed from the fact that Westbrook and Reilly (1983) did not actually measure the comparison standard of 'values', but rather measured the comparison process. It is from this perspective that they undertook to extend the value-percept disparity model.

**Desires congruency model: A means-end chain perspective.** Olshavsky and Spreng (1989) and Spreng and Olshavsky (1993) proposed a model which utilised consumers' 'desires' as the comparison standard in the consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction process. Desires are defined in their model "as the attributes, levels of attributes, and benefits that the consumer believes will lead to or connect with higher level values" (Spreng & Olshavsky, 1993 p. 171). Product/service attributes are used to fulfil certain desires which are determined from higher-level values as prescribed in Gutman's (1982) means-end chain theory (Spreng & Olshavsky, 1993). That is, consumers perceive that product/service attributes are a means to achieving some end consequence or value which is important to them. Values are defined by Peter and Olson (1987 p. 112) as "the cognitive representations of the consumers' most basic and fundamental needs and goals. Values are consumers mental representations of the important end states they are trying to achieve in their lives." Within the means-end chain framework, higher-level values lead to desires for products that will supply certain benefits, and these benefits in turn specify the attributes and levels of attributes desired in the products (Gutman, 1982). As such, means-end chains are hierarchical cognitive structures which allow meanings that are associated in the consumer's mind to be linked together. According to Olson (1995) meaning, in means-end chain theory, is not viewed as being...

...fixed or absolute, instead meaning is fluid and constantly changing. The means-end chain approach accommodates fluctuations in meanings by recognizing that certain connections between concepts may be salient in one situation, but not in another. Meaning also varies across time as consumers learn new connections and discard others. Thus we should expect that meanings of concepts such as quality [and satisfaction] will vary from one measurement occasion to another. Because the concepts in a means-end chain are not fixed or absolute, the means-ends approach acknowledges the relative nature of meaning. (p. 190)

'Desires' within the means-end chain framework can be conceptualised at various levels. In the value-percept disparity model, Westbrook and Reilly (1983) utilises higher-level desires which define a consumer's life goals. These life goals are the 'values' that guide the consumer's behaviour. Whereas in the 'desires congruency' model, 'desires' are conceptualised at the lower-level of product attributes which derive their meaning through consequences attributed to them (Spreng & Olshavsky, 1993). Since the means-end chain suggests that these consequences derive their valence and importance from consumers' values (Gutman, 1982), Spreng and Olshavsky (1993), in their 'desires congruency' model, proposed that
the consumer's perception of the relationship between a product's performance and his/her values is an important determinant of satisfaction. Satisfaction results from a product meeting or exceeding the consumer's desires at attribute or benefit level, and dissatisfaction occurs when the product outcome does not match the consumer's desires. (p. 171)

Spreng and Olshavsky (1993), as did Sirgy (1984), viewed the outcome of this comparison process between desires and performance (i.e., 'desires congruency') as a distinct construct. This construct represents the consumer's subjective assessment of how closely the performance of the product/service matches his/her desires.

Similar to the value-percept model, but unlike the predictive expectation model, the 'desires-congruency' model allows any aspects of a product/service to affect satisfaction/dissatisfaction, not only those attributes which the consumer was aware of prior to purchase or usage. As consumers experience or use the product/service, they most likely learn about new attributes which they compare with their desires (by going through the means-end process to higher-level values) in the formation of their satisfaction/dissatisfaction evaluation (Spreng & Olshavsky, 1993).

The 'desires congruency' model addressed Cadotte, et al.'s (1987) criticism of the predictive expectation disconfirmation and extends the experience-based norms model. It does not suggest that desires are based on the focal brand, or that they are even based on past experiences with the product. "Instead, the standard the consumer uses in his/her desires for certain attributes, levels of attributes or benefits, and these desires are based on the consumer's higher-level values" (Spreng & Olshavsky, 1993 p. 172). Spreng, et al. (1993) also viewed, as suggested by Westbrook and Reilly (1983), that expectations and desires (i.e., values) may often be highly correlated since consumers select product/service attributes purposefully to achieve their goals. Spreng, et al. (1993), however, argued that while desires include expectations, expectations are not inclusive of desires as a comparison standard used in the consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation process. That is, "while expectations are beliefs about the attributes or performance levels that will occur in the future, desires are beliefs about the product attributes or performance that lead to higher-level values" (Spreng & Olshavsky, 1993 p. 172).

Through a laboratory experiment and causal structural modelling, Spreng and Olshavsky (1993) tested and compared the relative effects of the desires congruency and predictive expectations disconfirmation. Their results indicated that the desires congruency explained a considerable proportion of the satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement, whereas disconfirmation of predictive expectations had no effect. Spreng and Olshavsky (1993) suggested, however, that there is need for further testing to understand the cognitive process which underlie satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgements. They proposed that other standards or determinants of
satisfaction (e.g., experience-based norms, equity) could be subsumed into the desires construct, thus, it would not be necessary to specify each of these as independent antecedents of the satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement. There would, however, be a need for a more comprehensive theory to understand when and how each of these standards influenced satisfaction/dissatisfaction.

**Ideal comparison standard.** As mentioned earlier, Miller (1977) first raised the possibility of the 'ideal' comparison standard. Ideal product performance "represents the optimal product performance a consumer ideally would hope for. It reflects what performance 'can be' " (Tse & Wilton, 1988 p. 205). It is thought that ideal performance may be based on learning from previous product experiences, advertisements, and word-of-mouth communications (Liechty & Churchill Jr., 1979; Miller, 1977). Sirgy (1984) later proposed a construct based on the 'ideal' performance. His definition of the 'ideal' appears to be similar to that of Spreng and Olshavsky's (1993) 'desires' construct. "Ideal product performance involves a desired level of product-outcome expectation" (Sirgy, 1984 p. 30). While he tested for ideal performance by manipulating desires through the instructions in an experiment, he did not actually compare the desires against a product/service performance (Spreng & Olshavsky, 1993 p.170). Instead, Sirgy (1984) compared the congruency between the 'expected after purchase' and the 'ideal before purchase'. He found that consumers felt dissatisfied when the expected level was less than the ideal level of performance, and that they were satisfied when the expected performance was equal to or greater than their ideal before the purchase. Sirgy, however, found that while the 'ideal' standard was a direct determinant of satisfaction and dissatisfaction, it was less important than the other factors he tested; that is, the congruity between (a) new product performance after usage and expected product performance, (b) new product performance after usage and the performance of similar other products before purchase, and (c) expected product performance after purchase and deserved product performance after purchase and usage.

Tse and Wilton (1988), in contrast to Sirgy (1984), found that ideal product performance did not directly affect the consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement. Rather, it had an indirect negative effect through perceived performance. These results suggest that the ideal performance may be used as an anchor which would evoke a contrast effect on the evaluation of the experience.

During in-depth interviews with health club members, Gardial, Woodruff, Burns, Schumann, and Clemons (1993) reported that participants used some internalised 'ideal' or 'want' which they had in mind as a comparison standard. "For example, 'it is important to me that the locker rooms be immaculate' " (Gardial, et al., 1993 p. 73). While these consumers' responses regarding 'what they wanted' were vague and could be viewed as predictive expectations, it does "suggest that consumers have some understanding of what an experience should ideally be
like," and there is no reason to think that consumers may want more or less than what their experience suggest should happen (Woodruff, et al., 1991 p. 105).

**Equity and Justice Comparison Models.**

**Equity models.** Howard and Sheth (1969 p. 145), in their classical model of consumer behaviour, defined satisfaction/dissatisfaction as "the buyer's cognitive state of being adequately or inadequately rewarded in a buying situation for the sacrifice he has undergone." This definition suggests that satisfaction is not only explained through the confirmation of consumers expectations, but also in regards to the consumer's costs, i.e., his/her inputs into the exchange (Day, 1977). Howard and Sheth's (1969) model indirectly implied that there must be fairness and justice in the balance of the buyer's rewards (outcomes) and costs in an exchange for it to be considered satisfactory. The degree of satisfaction/dissatisfaction, thus, should depend on the perceived disparity between the negotiated and the actual outcomes in relation to the effort (costs) in the exchange (Cardozo, 1965).

Miller (1977) also suggested that researchers need to consider and measure equity as a determinant of satisfaction/dissatisfaction when he proposed the 'deserved' expectation. He viewed 'deserved' expectations as the level of predictive expected performance based on the buyer's prior experiences in relation to the perceived costs.

A number of consumer researchers (e.g., Fisk & Coney, 1982; Fisk & Young, 1985; Huppertz, 1979; Huppertz, et al., 1978; Mowen & Grove, 1983; Swan & Mercer, 1982) have argued that consumers analyse their experiences in the exchange process to determine the extent that they are equitable or fair. That is, the consumer compares his/her inputs (e.g., time, money, shopping effort) and outcomes (e.g., benefits and liabilities received from exchange) to those of the marketer or other customers to determine if the exchange has been equitable or fair (Swan & Oliver, 1989). Although equity models have received less attention in the marketing literature than the expectation-disconfirmation paradigm (Oliver & DeSarbo, 1988), equity has

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9 It should be noted that the term equity is not used consistently in the literature. "There are a large number of terms in English that have been employed as synonyms for equity in its most generic sense: just, rightful, fair, impartial, equal, lawful, legitimate, dispassionate, appropriate, considered and so forth. Some of these apply primarily to the outcomes of human transactions; other principally to the procedures that produce such outcomes. . . . Equity has [also] been afforded a number of more specific meanings. . . . In sociology the construct of equity has been used to justify the legitimization of authority. . . . [Equity has been viewed] as providing a moral basis for the premise that those in authority have the right to demand obedience; those subject to authority, the obligation to obey. . . . In social psychology a somewhat different and more specific definition of equity dominates most contemporary research and theory. Beginning with Homans's (1961) notion of distributive justice, and including its formalisation by Adams (1965), equity has been defined as one of several specific rules that may be employed to determine what is a fair distribution of outcomes. Namely the rule of equity asserts that one's outcomes should be proportional to one's input or contribution. . . . Equity, in its most generic sense, refers to those decision rules that humans employ to define how and when a just and fair distribution of valued resources obtains between actors. The rules themselves may be more or less codified, and may be quite general or specific to a particular relationship. The value of the resources distributed may be positive or negative, that is, they may
been generally accepted as an alternative way of conceptualising the comparison process in satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation (Swan & Oliver, 1989; Woodruff, et al., 1991).

Oliver and Swan (1989a, 1989b) viewed expectancy-disconfirmation and equity as being fundamentally different in two ways: First,

in the equity process, one's own outcomes and inputs are compared with those of another party; in the expectancy-disconfirmation, outcomes in general are compared with one's expectations for those outcomes. [Second] ... in equity judgements, the relevant outcomes and inputs are restricted to some form of "justice". The outcomes [actual performance] in disconfirmation judgements can pertain to any element of the transaction (including people, products, etc.). (Oliver & Swan, 1989a p. 26)

Both Oliver and Swan (1989a) and Woodruff, et al. (1991) however noted that equity could be incorporated within the more general expectancy-disconfirmation process. For instance,

... the two party input-outcome relationships in a transaction can be formulized as expectations of equity (or inequity) that would be subjected to later (dis)confirmation. Alternatively, specific disconfirmation may have some role in equity judgements. An example might be the small token "pleasant surprises" buyers frequently get from the salesperson on the delivery of their new car. Buyers may feel that these tokens contribute to the fairness of the deal. (Oliver & Swan, 1989a p. 26)

The major variants of equity theory generally have suggested that consumers will feel equitably treated and thus satisfied when the ratio of their outcomes to inputs is perceived as being fair (Oliver & DeSarbo, 1988). Traditional equity theory¹⁰, specifically suggests that consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction results from the degree of difference that is perceived between the consumer's and another entity's ratio of outcomes and inputs. That is, if the consumer perceives his/her outcome-to-input ratio equal or proportional to that of an exchange entity's (e.g., seller, another customer), the exchange will be considered fair and satisfactory. Whereas, if the consumer experiences either negative or positive inequity, he/she will be dissatisfied. Contrary to equity theory predictions, consumer researchers generally have hypothesised and found that dissatisfaction results only when consumers perceive negative inequity for themselves (Yi, 1990). Positive inequity (favouring the consumer) appears to be viewed by consumers as being fair and satisfactory (e.g., Mowen & Grove, 1983; Oliver & Swan, 1989a; Oliver & Swan, 1989b) (Yi, 1990). Consumer dissatisfaction, therefore, results when the ratio of the consumer's outcomes and inputs in the exchange are seen as

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¹⁰ Early equity work in consumer research was based on traditional equity theory derived from social psychology (see Adams, 1963; Adams, 1965; Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978; Walster & Walster, 1975). Later equity research in consumer research (e.g., Oliver & Swan, 1989a; Oliver & Swan, 1989b) has, however, been viewed from contemporary equity theory (Oliver & Swan, 1989b).
unfavourable. Consumer dissatisfaction and satisfaction are generally thought to increase as their ratio of the outcomes to inputs decreases or increases respectively.

The traditional equity construct is viewed as a two step process. First, the consumer compares his/her and the other party’s inputs and outcomes separately. Second, these two outcomes are compared. The consumer then judges whether this equity construct is fair, or just, according to a 'distribution rule' which then yields an equity cognition (Oliver & Swan, 1989b). In making this equity judgement, Oliver and Swan (1989b) suggested consumers use,

\[ \ldots \] passive interpersonal norms that have been acquired through various forms of socialization. \[ \ldots \] [Accordingly] these can be viewed in the context of the exchange partner (i.e., salesperson) or in the context of institutional procedures and their fair application to all customers generally. (p. 374)

As such, equity theory suggests that dissatisfaction results from the belief that a social norm has been violated. This norm indicates that each party in the exchange should be treated fairly or equitably (Mowen, 1990).

Equity theory also suggests that when consumers perceive an exchange as being fair or just, their evaluation of it provides them with a sense of well being, such as contentment (Oliver & Swan, 1989b; Swan & Mercer, 1982). On the other hand, when consumers experience an inequitable exchange they will feel stress; whether they are the victim or the beneficiary. An inequitable relationship is thought to create stress because people have internalised norms which prescribe what is equitable, and how they should feel and act if an inequity arises (Swan & Mercer, 1982). Specifically, negative inequity is thought to result in distress, resentment, and vindication (Austin & Walster, 1974; Walster, et al., 1978), whereas positive inequity is thought to result in embarrassment or guilt (Anderson, Berger, & Zelditch Jr., 1969).

Furthermore, equity theory predicts that consumers will seek to reduce stress by restoring actual or psychological equity (see Cohen & Greenberg, 1982; Walster, et al., 1978). For example, the consumer may 'restore' an inequity by correcting any errors in an exchange either made by herself/himself or the seller. This may be done by (a) distorting what actually happened in the situation, and/or (b) lowering the future outcomes of the exchange partner by complaining,

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11 In contemporary equity theory, this proposed traditional two step equity process is altered recognising different settings influence the process. The way in which the elements of inputs and outcomes combine together is referred to as an 'integration rule', and is seen to be different in contemporary equity theory than traditional theory. See Oliver and Swan (1989b) for details regarding suggested resultant modifications to traditional theory in reference to the consumer's equity evaluation process.

12 A 'distribution rule' is also referred to in the equity or justice literature as an allocation rule/norm/principle, decision rule, distributive principle. Equity is just one of many of these rules. Other rules include: equality; relative need; and self justified (Tornblom, 1992).

13 See Walster, et al. (1978) for further discussion in regards to resultant affect from an equitable/inequitable exchange.
leaving, not patronising them, and/or negative word-of-mouth (Mowen & Grove, 1983; Swan & Mercer, 1982).

Within the marketing literature, equity theory was first employed by Huppertz (1979) and Huppertz, et al. (1978) to analyse the buyer-seller exchange. Through the analysis of experiments involving role playing, Huppertz, et al. (1978) generally found that fairness ratings declined and inequity reduction dispositions (e.g., leaving, complaining) increased as inequitable levels of price and service increased in the judged retail scenarios. Huppertz (1979) interviewed customers in shopping malls and found they could elicit inputs and outcomes for themselves and merchants regarding past satisfying and dissatisfying situations. Using an expanded list of inputs and outcomes in satisfying and dissatisfying purchase situations from Huppertz, et al.'s 1978 experiments, Huppertz, (1979) predicted that a satisfied consumer's ratio of inputs to outcomes would be equal to that of the merchant's input to outcome ratio. For the dissatisfied consumer, his/her ratio of inputs to outcomes would be less than the merchant's. While neither of these two hypothesis were confirmed, approximately two-thirds of the dissatisfied consumers reported taking some action (e.g., complaining, returning the product) to alleviate the problem(s). In a second experiment, Huppertz (1979) did find evidence of higher consumer ratios and lower merchant ratios for the satisfying situations. Only less than half of the dissatisfied consumers, however, reported taking action regarding the perceived problem(s). In this second experiment, Huppertz (1979) asked subjects to estimate an overall measure of outcomes and inputs for both consumers and the merchants. The ratios computed with these overall measures of input and outcome provided a better measure of inequity than the method of summing the outcomes and inputs. This suggested that equity is a subjective concept rather than an objective calculated construct, or that significant factors involved in the objective measurement were absent and need to be identified.

Huppertz (1979) also reported the consumers' and the merchants' input and output scores separately across satisfying and dissatisfying situations without forming equity ratios. In the analysis of this data, they found in Experiment 1 that all consumer and merchant input and output scores for the satisfying situations were significantly higher than those of the dissatisfying events; and for Experiment 2, only the consumers outcomes and the merchants inputs were higher. This indicated that the traditional equity calculation (i.e., integration rule of equal proportion) may not be the appropriate conceptualisation of the equity construct.

Fisk and Coney (1982), Fisk and Young (1985) and Mowen and Grove (1983) also used role playing experiments and found that consumers could express their satisfaction/dissatisfaction with hypothetical inequitable situations. Fisk and Coney (1982) reported that consumers were less satisfied and had reduced subsequent predictive expectations of service quality towards an airline scenario when they were informed that other customers waited less time to board than themselves. Their work suggested that even a relatively small amount of disparity in an equity
judgement could cause substantial dissatisfaction and that different levels of a variable (e.g., a 30 and 90 minutes wait) may have disproportionate effects on the level of dissatisfaction created. Fisk and Coney's research, however, found that an inequitable price did not lead to dissatisfaction or lowered predictive expectations. They suggested that the subjects may have blamed themselves rather than the airline for paying too high a price. In an extension of their 1982 study, Fisk and Young (1985) examined the effects of both predictive expectations and equity on satisfaction/dissatisfaction. They found that equity and disconfirmation of predictive expectations were both independent variables, and that inequity also affected future intentions and predictive expectations. These results, however, were only found amongst those subjects who had little travel experience. More experienced subjects appeared to temper equity expectations with predictive expectations.

Mowen and Grove (1983) also examined the effects of satisfaction/dissatisfaction when the consumer discovered that he/she had spent more money and invested more time and effort in searching for a car than another customer. They too found that inequity affects satisfaction. Their results suggested that other processes (i.e., self-justification and self-evaluation), in addition to equity cognition, may occur during postpurchase evaluation. That is, in order for consumers to protect their egos, consumers avoid self blame by justifying their actions (suggesting they do an extensive search) and/or comparing their actions to similar others' actions (i.e., social comparison). Whenever possible, they projected the blame onto the seller and/or the product/service itself, rather than themselves.

While early equity research relating to consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction focused on equity measurements of consumers' comparisons with other customers, later work (e.g., Oliver & DeSarbo, 1988; Oliver & Swan, 1989a; 1989b; Swan & Oliver, 1985) compared the consumer's inputs and outcomes with those of the exchange partner, such as the salesperson or retailer. Oliver and Swan (1989b) suggested that, because parties in a consumer-retailer exchange play different roles and have dissimilar inputs and outcomes, these exchange parties determine whether the exchange is 'fair' in terms of their performance on 'expected role' dimensions. Furthermore, because it is difficult for these parties to judge the other's economic and psychological outcomes, it is thought that they use culturally determined distribution rules rather than any specific input-outcome ratio to determine justice. Oliver and Swan (1989a), however, pointed out that it is not just a 'role' assessment, since consumers' outcomes and inputs are compared to another's outcomes and inputs in the formation of their justice judgements. Moreover, contemporary equity theory suggest that these justice rules pertain to all parties in the social system or exchange environment. As such, all interpersonal comparisons in a retail encounter can be facilitated and considered appropriate using distribution rules in the justice evaluation process.
This later research (Oliver & Swan, 1989a; 1989b; Swan & Oliver, 1985) also examined the relationships and the strengths among equity, disconfirmation of expectations, and satisfaction/dissatisfaction. Swan and Mercer (1982 p. 4) first noted that consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction included "both the equity cognition of a fair/unfair purchase and the disconfirmation cognition of the product being better/worse than expected." Swan and Oliver (1985) later found that both constructs, inequity and disconfirmation, had an independent and additive effect on satisfaction. In 1988, when Oliver and DeSarbo (1988) analysed their experimental results of stock investment outcomes at the individual-level, they found a cluster of individuals who used equity and a cluster who used the disconfirmation experience as their main determinant of satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation. Furthermore, at the aggregate-level, both disconfirmation and equity were found to be separate determinants of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction and disconfirmation was found to be the more important of the two.

A more recent empirical study by Oliver and Swan (1989a), using causal modelling, indicated that equity\textsuperscript{14} was more important than disconfirmation of expectations in determining both the consumer's satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the interpersonal dimension of the exchange (i.e., satisfaction with the salesperson) and their intention to return. Oliver and Swan (1989a) also found that 'fairness' was an intervening variable between the consumer's perceptions of the exchange parties' inputs and outcomes and his/her consumer's satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement. That is, fairness was the consequence of the consumer's input and outcome comparisons, and satisfaction/dissatisfaction was the consequence of the equity cognition of fairness. Furthermore, Oliver and Swan illustrated that consumers perceive an exchange to be 'fair' not only when the outcomes and inputs are distributed equally within the exchange, but when positive inequity is in their favour. Oliver and Swan (1989b) extended this work by examining the affects of equity and the expectancy-disconfirmation within an institutional concept model\textsuperscript{15}. Specifically, Oliver and Swan examined the consumer's satisfaction/dissatisfaction with a purchased automobile, the auto dealer (i.e, merchant/retailer) and salesperson from whom she/he purchased the auto. Their results indicated that equity was a significant predictor of both merchant and interpersonal satisfaction. Product satisfaction, however, was not directly effected by equity judgements, but was mediated through merchant satisfaction. Furthermore, equity was found to be a more important determinant of

\textsuperscript{14} Oliver and Swan (1989a p. 25) defined equity as 'fairness' where the input and outputs of both exchange partners are perceived as roughly proportional to each other as conceptualised in Messick and Sentis's (1979) "weak proportional equity formula".

\textsuperscript{15} Westbrook (1981 p. 70) noted that retail outlets provide consumers with satisfactions and dissatisfactions that are distinct from the products they sell; and this type of satisfaction/dissatisfaction has been described as 'institutional' concept model. This institutional model deals 'directly with consumers' reactions to the retail environment', rather than through a 'total product' model where the retail environment does not exist as a separate construct. Instead, in the total product model, "the retailer would simply contribute via the store environment to the customer's overall level of satisfaction with the good or service in question."
interpersonal and institutional exchange than disconfirmation of expectations. As these authors pointed out,

previous studies regressing satisfaction on disconfirmation and other variables in the product satisfaction literature (Bearden & Teel, 1983; Oliver, 1980a; Oliver & DeSarbo, 1988; Swan & Trawick, 1981) have found that disconfirmation typically emerges as a primary explanatory variable. However, one must remember that all studies to date have measured product satisfaction and not interpersonal or exchange satisfaction. Disconfirmation may be central to the product satisfaction process, but it may have much less influence in judgements of institutional exchange. (Oliver & Swan, 1989b p. 380)

In a further extension of this work, Swan and Oliver (1989) found that the degree to which a consumer felt satisfied or dissatisfied and fairly or unfairly treated stimulated positive or negative WOM [word-of-mouth]16, respectively, with the product, salesperson, and the automobile dealer. The extent of satisfaction and equity felt by the consumer was also found to directly relate to the 'praises' and inversely relate to the complaints made to the dealer.

**Procedural and interactional justice model.** Much of the current equity consumer research has focused on distributive justice. That is, the focus has been on the perceived relationships between inputs and outcomes, whether the allocations of inputs and outcomes have been distributed equally or fairly in the exchange, and the resultant effects of equity on the consumer's satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement and intentions. Recently, however, consumer researchers such as Blodgett and Tax (1993) and Goodwin and Ross (1990), have advanced the concepts of 'procedural' and 'interactional' justice and distinguished them from distributive justice in the marketplace domain. "Procedural justice refers to the perceived fairness of the procedures, or criteria, used by the decision makers in arriving at their decisions" (Blodgett & Tax, 1993 p. 102). As such, consumers evaluate whether procedures used in an exchange are unbiased and impartial, if both sides of an issue are considered in a decision, and if they, the consumer, are allowed input into the decision. Blodgett and Tax (1993) reported that all these factors are considered important in the consumer's evaluation of fairness when returning a product. Goodwin and Ross (1990) also suggested that consumer participation in decisions may be an important aspect of procedural fairness and thus, consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction. Goodwin and Ross (1990 p. 54) defined procedural fairness as "the extent to which procedures used to determine a distribution of outcomes has allowed for objectivity and consumer representation." Tax and Brown (1994), from a content analysis of consumers' descriptions of complaint situations which occurred across 40 services, identified 10 elements of procedural justice. These elements were: assuming responsibility; speed; convenience (number of people and number of times); follow-up; no resolution; process control; flexibility; knowledge; accessibility; and decision control.

16 In this study WOM indicated word-of-mouth communications involving two dimensions: positive/negative information about the product, salesperson, and merchant and recommendations for/warnings against repurchasing or patronising product, salesperson, or merchant.
Interactional justice relates to the interpersonal treatment people experience in an exchange (Blodgett & Tax, 1993; Goodwin & Ross, 1992), or the "quality of the interaction between parties" (Blodgett & Tax, 1993 p. 101). It "addresses the style with which a decision is implemented" (Goodwin & Ross, 1990 p. 54). Several aspects of interactional justice have been identified in the marketing literature. As summarised by Blodgett and Tax (1993) these include:

truthfulness, respect, justification for treatment (Bies & Moag, 1986), politeness, friendliness, sensitivity, interest, and honesty (Clemmer, 1988). Other aspects of interactional justice include empathy and assurance (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1985), directness and concern (Ulrich, 1984), and the provision of an explanation or apology (Bies & Shapiro, 1987; Bitner, Booms, & Tetreault, 1990). (p. 101)

In a later study by Tax and Brown (1994), two additional elements of interactional justice, effort and cooperative attitude, were identified.

Tyler (1987 p. 343) noted that research from a number of different arenas, including management and psychology, have found that individuals "place great value on being treated politely and having great respect shown for their rights." These are viewed as aspects of interaction which promote and reinforce an individual's positive self image and sense of personal worth (Bies & Moag, 1986; Tyler, 1987). Self-esteem is seen to be enhanced by fair interpersonal treatment.

In the marketplace, many aspects of interactional, procedural and distributive justice are intertwined, making it empirically difficult to examine their independent effects on consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction (Blodgett & Tax, 1993; Goodwin & Ross, 1992). There has been limited empirical and theoretical research conducted on consumer interactional and procedural justice and their affects on consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction and consequential behaviours. It is thought, however, that these separate concepts may help to explain why consumers perceive a lack of justice in an exchange when they perceive their outcomes to be fair (Blodgett & Tax, 1993; Goodwin & Ross, 1990).

A number of studies using various research techniques have found that interpersonal treatment contributed to satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the service encounter. Bitner, et al. (1990) used the critical incident technique, Brown and Swartz (1989), Crosby and Stephens (1987), Day and Bodur (1978) and Westbrook (1981) used survey-based data, Tyler (1987) used both survey and panel data, and Bitner (1990) and Surprenant and Solomon (1987) used experimental data. Although most of these studies only identified general dimensions of human interactions in the service encounter, and/or are applicable to one specific industry, Bitner, et al. (1990) reported specific events and behaviours which were associated with both satisfactory and unsatisfactory service encounters across several industries. Through a content analysis
approach, these researchers found that "employees behaviours relating to cultural norms, such as equality, honesty, and fairness" determined the customers' satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the encounter. Other employee behaviours relating to interpersonal treatment were also reported in this study to determine the customer's satisfaction/dissatisfaction. These included the employee's response(s) to unavailable expected service, unreasonably slow service, other core service failures, special customer needs, customer preferences, admitted customer error, disruptive others, out of the ordinary service, and attention paid to customer.

Parasuraman, et al. (1985), through focus group discussions, and Goodwin and Ross (1989; 1990), through consumer recall of complaint incidents, both found that fair interpersonal treatment enhanced evaluations of service quality and complaints resolutions. Goodwin and Ross (1990) specifically found that consumers believed they were treated more fairly when a company followed set procedures as compared to when procedures were ad hoc or arbitrary. In favourable complaint outcomes, consumers felt more satisfied if they had the opportunity to express their feelings and opinions. In unfavourable situations, consumers felt frustrated if they voiced their feelings and ideas and then did not receive compensation. In an extension of their earlier work, Goodwin and Ross (1992), through a factorial designed experiment, examined the interaction and influence of procedural, interactional, and distributive fairness on consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction and perceptions of fairness. As in their 1990 study, procedural and interactional fairness appeared to enhance fairness and satisfaction perceptions when there was a favourable distributive outcome in response to the consumer's complaint. However, when consumers received no tangible offering in the complaining scenario, procedural and interactional fairness were less effective in enhancing fairness and satisfaction.

Through the manipulation of variables in an experimental design, Blodgett and Tax (1993) found that both interactional (including procedural justice variables) and distributive justice effected a subject's repatronage and negative-word-of-mouth intentions. Their findings reflect those of Goodwin and Ross's (1989; 1990; 1992) studies. Consumers demand both high distributive and interactional justice. For example, high interactional justice (i.e., courtesy, friendliness, and empathy) was not enough to overcome dissatisfaction when a consumer had requested a refund or exchange and it was not granted. Nor was receiving a high distributive outcome such as a full refund satisfactory when it was offset by ill effects such as rudeness and insensitivity. Blodgett and Tax's (1993) results indicated that in such cases consumers are likely to exit and tell others about their dissatisfaction.

Tax and Brown (1994) found, using causal path analysis, that of the three identified justices, interactional justice had the greatest effect on satisfaction in complaint handling, followed closely by distributive justice and then by procedural justice. Furthermore, consumer satisfaction with complaint handling was highly correlated with resultant trust with and commitment to the service.
In summary, research regarding equity and satisfaction/dissatisfaction have indicated that different elements of justice are crucial determinants of perceived fairness, consumer satisfaction and sequential shopping behaviours. These studies "underscore the need to have an integrated view of satisfaction models", particularly "when modelling satisfaction where interpersonal affects are important" (Erevelles, 1992 p. 112).

Other Process Models.

Performance model. While "the primary importance of performance in the satisfaction literature has been as a standard of comparison by which to assess disconfirmation" (Churchill Jr. & Surprenant, 1982 p. 492), it has also been advanced that the level of performance of the product/service directly influences consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction (Churchill Jr. & Surprenant, 1982; LaTour & Peat, 1979; Tse & Wilton, 1988). LaTour and Peat (1979) argued that when consumers are forced to purchase an inferior product, they most likely will evaluate the product according to its unfavourable performance rather than how they expected it to perform. Even if the consumers expected the product to perform poorly, dissatisfaction would result because the product/service would be evaluated on its actual performance rather than its expected performance.

Although there has been little research on performance, those using experimental manipulation (Churchill Jr. & Surprenant, 1982; Oliver & DeSarbo, 1988; Olshavsky & Miller, 1972; Tse & Wilton, 1988; Wilton & Tse, 1983) and surveys (Westbrook, 1981) have generally found it to be a direct, independent determinant of the satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement. Olshavsky and Miller (1972) examined the affect of product performance on product quality rather than on consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction per se, and found that overstated and understated perceived performance had a direct effect on perceived product quality. Specifically, when the subjects were given an overstated perception of the product's performance, they evaluated the product more favourably. Conversely, when the subjects were given an understated perception of product performance it lead to lower product quality ratings.

Using causal path analysis, Churchill Jr. and Surprenant (1982) found that for durable products, satisfaction/dissatisfaction was solely determined by the product's performance and was independent of any predictive expectations or disconfirmation effects. For nondurable products, however, they found that disconfirmation of perceived expectations had the greatest affect on the satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement, followed by expectations and then performance. All three of these factors were found to have separate and independent effects. These results suggested that different processes may be used to determine satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgements for durable and nondurable products.

17 See Tse and Wilton (1988) for other theoretical arguments for including perceived performance as a determinant of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction.
Wilton and Tse's (1983) results were somewhat contradictory to those of Churchill Jr. and Surprenant's (1982). For the durable product (Wilton & Tse, 1983) found that satisfaction/dissatisfaction was related to both the disconfirmation of expectations and its level of performance. As in Churchill Jr. and Surprenant (1982) study, however, the consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement was not found to be independently affected by expectations.

Tse and Wilton's (1988) results also revealed that performance, independent of expectations, influenced the consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement for durable products. Product performance appeared as the dominate effect, but disconfirmation of expectations also had a significant affect on the satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement. Moreover, they found that expectations also directly affected consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction. Their results supported Churchill Jr. and Surprenant's (1982) findings that product performance may outweigh disconfirmation of expectations in determining satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgements. Tse and Wilton (1988) research strongly supports an extension of the basic expectation-disconfirmation model of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction to include an appreciation of the direct influence of product performance.

Oliver and DeSarbo (1988) likewise found that performance and disconfirmation appear to operate as separate effects, as well as together in satisfaction/dissatisfaction process. They suggested that these two constructs jointly occur,

... because performance (as measured ... [in their study]) is an objective variable and disconfirmation, although "objective," is subjective to psychological interpretation. Thus, we have an initial performance effect with a comparative reaction to that effect. (Oliver & DeSarbo, 1988 p. 503)

Examining the individual, rather than the aggregate data, Oliver and DeSarbo's (1988) study showed differences across subjects. A cluster analysis illustrated that most consumers used disconfirmation experiences as their major determinant of satisfaction. This cluster separated into two further groups: those who use disconfirmation as their major determinant of satisfaction/dissatisfaction, and those who mix disconfirmation with performance and, to a lesser degree, expectations. This suggested that these determinants of satisfaction/dissatisfaction may be individual specific, rather than product (durable/nondurable) specific as suggested by Churchill Jr. and Surprenant (1982). For those subjects who did not respond to the performance product manipulation, Oliver and DeSarbo (1988) suggested that the psychological effects of disconfirmation may have dominated their responses. Consequently, there is a need to determine the conditions when both effects will or will not jointly occur and, when they do occur jointly, which will dominate over the other.
Oliver (1989) suggested that durable products or continuously provided services may depend solely on performance evaluations since they are characterised by 'passive' expectations. Disconfirmation would not affect a consumer's satisfaction/dissatisfaction unless performance was outside the range of their experience based norms. Bolton and Drew (1991), however, found of telephone service that while a customer's assessment of overall quality was directly influenced by performance levels, disconfirmation was a more important influence than performance.

These studies have illustrated that product/service performance influences consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction through two mechanisms -- directly through consumer observations of good and bad performance and indirectly through the disconfirmation comparison. Some researchers (e.g., Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982; Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982), however, have suggested that there are some products with no objective or instrumental performance dimensions and as such, perceived performance for these products would not be pertinent.

Attribution models. Attribution theory focuses on the way people identify the causes of an event and how these causes influence affects, cognitions, and behaviour (de Ruyter, 1993). "Attributions are what people perceive to be the causes behind their own behavior, the behaviors of others, or the events they observe" (Bitner, 1990 p. 70). In the domain of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction, attribution theory was first applied in three early conceptual works (Clabaugh Jr., Mason, & Bearden, 1979; Krishnan & Valle, 1979; Valle & Wallendorf, 1977). More recently, attribution theory has generally been used as a framework to explain consumer dissatisfaction and complaining behaviour (e.g., Bitner, 1990; Folkes, 1984; Folkes, 1988; Folkes, Koletsky, & Graham, 1987; Folkes & Kotsos, 1986; Goodwin & Spiggle, 1989). The attribution paradigm mainly used in consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction research has been developed from the work of Weiner and his colleagues (e.g., Weiner, 1980; 1985a; 1985b; 1986; Weiner, Frieze, Kukla, Reed, Rest, & Rosenbaum, 1971; Weiner, Russell, & Lerman, 1979) as they focus on the psychological and behavioural consequences of attribution processing. This is thought to provide fruitful insights into the post-consumption process (Bettman, 1986).

In certain situations it is thought that consumers search for information to explain why they are either satisfied or dissatisfied with a product or service, and to what or whom this can be attributed. Specifically, attribution theory classifies into three main dimensions the causal ascriptions of an individual's success or failure in attaining a goal. These are: (1) locus of causality (Who is responsible? -- Internal versus external source of cause); (2) stability (Is the cause likely to reoccur? -- Enduring versus transitory causality); and (3) controllability (Did the responsible party have control over the cause? -- Inside or outside the perceiver's volitional control). Specific combinations of the three dimensions have been shown to result in regular patterns of causal thinking. For example, when an individual attributes cause to personal effort...
it is classified as internal, stable, and controllable. When the cause is ascribed to luck it is classified as external, unstable, and uncontrollable.

A consumer's response to his/her experience (e.g., future expectations of success, affect, behavioural actions) will depend on the attributions which he/she makes according to these causal dimensions (Folkes, 1988; Oliver, 1989). Kelley and Michela (1980) suggested that future expectations will be influenced by prior attribution processing when the cause is perceived as being stable or unstable. That is, when the cause of an event is attributed as stable, an individual will expect it to occur again under the same circumstances.

Weiner, Russell, and Lerman's (1978) results showed that specific affects (i.e., emotions -- satisfied, dissatisfied, and unsatisfied inclusive) are linked to success and failure situations containing attributions of a specific dimensions. Weiner and his colleagues suggested that the emotion process begins with the interpretation of an event as being either a success or a failure ('primary' appraisal), and this appraisal then results in a general positive or negative affective reaction (a 'primary' emotion). That is, "events are first judged (or concurrently judged) as positive, negative, or neutral vis-a-vis one's desires" which result in a primary emotion such as happiness, sadness, or contentment, respectively (Oliver, 1989 p. 4). These emotions are referred to "as 'outcome dependent-attribute independent', for they are determined by the attainment or nonattainment of a desired goal, and not by the cause of the outcome" (Weiner, 1986 p. 121). Positive affects created by pleasant emotional experiences are invariably outcome-dependent and are not necessarily linked to further search of attributional causes (Weiner, et al., 1979). Thus, emotions such as joy and excitement elicited in the consumption experience are directly linked to the consumer evaluations and behaviour (Westbrook, 1987). If an evaluation is negative, unexpected, and/or important it is thought that a person will search for the cause of the outcome, and then a specific set of emotions will be generated according to the chosen attribution(s). This results in a 'secondary' appraisal and affects involving attribution processing. For example, surprise is produced when the success of an outcome is attributed to luck, and anger is elicited when failure is attributed externally to another person and perceived as being controllable. These emotions are labelled "as 'attribution-dependent,' inasmuch as they are determined by the perceived cause of the prior outcome" (Weiner, 1986 p. 121).

In attribution theory, causal dimensions are thought to play a separate and key role in the emotion process in that they are linked to an unique set of feelings. Each dimension is thought to create a separate set of emotions. For example, internal causes of success and failure are associated with personal effort and personality affiliations and as such are thought to raise or lower self-esteem. Causal controllability is linked to social emotions (e.g., shame, guilt, anger, pity), and stability to feelings of hopefulness/hopelessness. Thus, feelings related to self-esteem, social emotions, hopefulness/hopelessness are thought to be directly influenced by the
causal dimensions rather than by a specific cause. This approach to emotion processing suggests that feelings arise from how the outcome is evaluated or construed (Weiner, 1986).

Alternatively, Higgins (1987) and Higgins, Strauman and Klein (1986) hypothesised that success and failure outcomes may directly lead to differential outcome-linked affects without involving the process of causal attribution. They proposed that disparities which occur between 'acquired self guides' (e.g., 'ideal self' versus 'actual self' and 'ought self' versus 'actual self') may lead to direct emotional responses and impact. These acquired guides for oneself (or another individual) are judged on his/her attributes and performance and are constructed from either the viewpoint of his/her 'own' self or another individual. For example, disparities between the ideal self and actual self from one's own viewpoint about oneself produce disappointment or dissatisfaction. These emotions are associated with not having one's hopes or goals fulfilled. Disparities between the ought self and actual self from one's own viewpoint create affects such as guilt, self-contempt, and uneasiness. These affects occur when a person believes she/he has transgressed a personally accepted moral standard. Higgins, et al. (1986), however, suggested that during the process of evaluation, emotions arise due to both causal attribution and discrepancies of self (or another's) attributes and performance.

Lastly, attribution theory predicts that resultant expectancy and affect will determine the actions of an individual. The emotions experienced as a result of an encounter and those expected in another will explain the motivation for possible future actions (Weiner, 1986 pp. 164-165).

Generally it has been found that if consumers blame either the product or the service (i.e., external attribution) rather than themselves (i.e., internal attribution) for the product's or service's failure to perform, they are more likely to do the following: complain (e.g., Clabaugh Jr., et al., 1979; Richins, 1983; Valle & Wallendorf, 1977); feel angry; have a desire to hurt the seller; feel that they deserve a refund and/or an apology (Folkes, 1984); and resort to negative word-of-mouth (Richins, 1983). Moreover, the consumer's attribution of stability and locus of causality will affect whether she/he expects the product/service to fail again and thus, whether she/her will prefer a refund or exchange (Folkes, 1984; Krishnan & Valle, 1979). When a consumer views the cause of failure as being stable, she/her will prefer a refund over an exchange. Consumers view product/service failure as more stable when they attribute cause to an external source than when it is attributed to themself. Furthermore, consumers become angry when they perceives that a failure is controllable by the seller and they may seek revenge (Folkes, 1984).

In a field study conducted at an airport which examined the relationship among attributions, affects and behavioural responses, Folkes, et al. (1987) found, through a path analysis, that the degree of anger felt by consumers was influenced by their attributions of controllability (control over both the problem and solution) and stability, and their perceived importance of
product/service performance. Moreover, they found that anger directly and indirectly influenced the consumers' propensity to complain and their willingness to use the same service again.

While the majority of the research has examined attribution theory in regard to explaining dissatisfying experiences, research by Folkes (1984), Oliver and DeSarbo (1988) and Richins (1985) has indicated that a relationship exists between satisfaction and locus of causality. Specifically, Folkes (1984) and Oliver and DeSarbo (1988) found that consumers feel more satisfied when they attribute the success of the product or service to themselves rather than to another. Richins (1985), however, found that consumers appear to blame others for their bad experiences with products. Ninety percent of respondents in a household survey placed some of the blame of their dissatisfaction with clothing and appliance on the retailer. This research illustrated that attribution most likely plays a role in the overall satisfaction process.

Recently Oliver (1989) proposed a complete framework which incorporates attribution in the processing of the satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement of a product/service. This framework places causal attribution in a mediating role between the disconfirmation perceptions resulting from the product/services outcomes and the specific emotions resulting from the causal attribution. These specific emotions are thought to combine with the primary affect (i.e., good or bad feelings) that the consumer experiences as he/she consumes the product/service. From this integration of affects, the consumer is thought to make a summary satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement.

As recently suggested in the social psychological literature (see Pyszczynski & Greenberg, 1981; Weiner, 1985b; Weiner, 1986), Oliver (1989) specifically proposed that disconfirmation of expectations does not lead directly to consumer satisfaction but instead results in a search for the cause of disconfirmation and specific attribution. Oliver (1989) suggested that there may be different types of 'satisfaction' that result from different attributions of similarly perceived disconfirmation levels. Additionally, as also suggested in the social psychological literature (see Weiner, 1986; Weiner, et al., 1978; 1979), Oliver (1989) noted that specific attributions result in certain emotion(s) and that these resultant emotions mediate the satisfaction/dissatisfaction response.

In summary, rather than there being a direct link between attribute performance and satisfaction, Oliver (1989) modelled three major linkages in his framework for processing satisfaction/dissatisfaction.

The first of these linkages is the relationship between attribute performance and the related cognition of disconfirmation on attribute processing; the second is the relationship between attribution processing and specific emotions; while the third is the interpretation or translation of emotions into summary postpurchase judgements. (Oliver, 1989 p. 2)
In this framework, Oliver (1989) also expanded on prior models of disconfirmation (e.g., Oliver, 1980a; 1981; Woodruff, et al., 1983) in regard to the intensity of the unexpected disconfirmation. He suggested that disconfirmation can vary according to the level of 'unexpectedness'. Besides confirmation and negative or positive disconfirmation of performance, 'surprise' positive or negative disconfirmation may occur. Surprise disconfirmations are "highly unlikely levels based on experience -- levels that are in some sense totally unexpected or 'surprising' " (Oliver, 1989 p. 3). Using Woodruff, et al.'s (1983) zone of indifference model of confirmation/disconfirmation as the baseline, Oliver (1989) proposed that increasing levels of unexpectedness are required to evoke, first, disconfirmation, and later, a surprise disconfirmation perception. Based on this analysis, . . . the arousal potential of a performance-expectation discrepancy is a function of the consumer's acceptance range (cf. Woodruff, et al., 1983) and the unexpectedness of the product outcome. . . . (a) little, if any, disconfirmation-based processing should occur for the confirming performance levels, (b) ordinary disconfirmation perceptions and moderate levels of processing will occur in the experienced range, and (c) surprise disconfirmation will occur in the unexpected range resulting in much greater focus on the surprising event and larger amounts of further processing. (p. 3)

Bitner (1990), in her model of service encounter evaluation, also advanced that causal attributions of disconfirmations mediates customer satisfaction. Satisfaction then affects the perceived service quality (or attitude) which in turns leads to subsequent behaviours towards the service firm. Bitner proposed, as did Oliver (1989), the sequence of attribution-affect-behaviour rather than the sequence of affect-attribution-action implied in earlier satisfaction research (e.g., Folkes, 1984; Krishnan & Valle, 1979; Valle & Wallendorf, 1977).

Bitner (1990) also suggested that the services marketing mix (i.e., product, price, place, promotion, physical evidence of service, participants in encounter, process of encounter) directly influence three antecedents of satisfaction: expectations; perceived service performance; and attributions of disconfirmations. Bitner experimentally tested, through a role playing method, a small component of this model. She examined how two of the three new marketing mix elements, physical surroundings and employee responses, influenced perceived quality, customer satisfaction/dissatisfaction and future behavioural intentions through attributional judgements of a failed service encounter. By using regression and causal path analysis, Bitner (1990 p. 79) found "support for the attribution construct within the disconfirmation paradigm, confirming the attribution-affect-behavior sequence." When subjects perceived that the failed service encounter was the fault of the firm and/or was likely to occur again they were more dissatisfied than if they believed it was their own fault and/or would not occur again. Employee's explanations of the failed service encounter and the physical surroundings in which it occurred were both found to influence the consumer's perceived attributions of cause, and sequentially their resultant level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction. The
results indicated that by providing a logical explanation for the failure and compensating the customer in some manner, his/her dissatisfaction could be alleviated or soothed. Moreover, it was suggested that by giving attention to the symbolic nonverbal message projected in the service environment it may be possible to enhance the evaluations of the encounter.

**Affective models.** Although a number of early consumer researchers have alluded to affect\(^{18}\) as being an essential component of satisfaction/dissatisfaction, most models have implicitly assumed that the satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement is a result of cognitive processes. Such conceptualisations suggest "that the affective process is complementary to and/or interactive with consumer information processing (see Zajonc & Markus, 1982)" (Muller, Tse, & Venkatasubramaniam, 1991). Holbrook and Hirschman (1982), however, argued that these cognitive conceptualisations may be limiting and partial in that they ignore many of the motives and processes that are part of the consumption experience. These cognitive models are therefore unlikely to address a large proportion of consumers' consumption experiences. Some research (Zajonc, 1980) has suggested that affective processes are more important than cognitive ones (Muller, et al., 1991). Moreover, as noted by Westbrook and Reilly in 1983, to comprehend the nature of satisfaction we must understand it in terms of both the affective and cognitive responses.

As early as 1980, Westbrook proposed, tested and found support for the Delighted-Terrible Scale as a measure of satisfaction/dissatisfaction (Westbrook, 1980b), and examined how intrapersonal affect variables influenced consumer satisfaction with products (Westbrook, 1980a). While Westbrook's early work focused on satisfaction/dissatisfaction as an emotional response, he also suggested that affects should be considered as part of the satisfaction/dissatisfaction process. (Westbrook, 1980a) argued,

Satisfaction . . . is not solely a cognitive phenomenon. Rather it also comprises an element of affect or feeling, in that consumers feel subjectively good in connection with satisfaction, and bad in connection with dissatisfaction. . . . An unresolved issue, however, is whether the affective element precedes, or is concurrent with, judgements of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. . . . If satisfaction is an evaluative response comprising an affect element, it should be influenced by other more general states of affect concurrently experienced by the individual. The presence of appreciable positive or negative effect, unrelated to the product, may well shape the affect evoked by the evaluation process inherent in satisfaction judgements. . . . Increasingly positive or favourable affect is linked to higher levels of product satisfaction. In addition, . . . multiple sources of affect exert their effects on product satisfaction in concert, combining in a more or less additive fashion. The affective influences do not, of

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\(^{18}\) Generally the concept of affect "is understood to comprise a class of mental phenomena uniquely characterized by a consciously experienced, subjective feeling state, commonly accompanying emotions and moods. Many varieties of affect can be concerned . . . . However, several taxonomies have been proposed to classify the variety of subjective feelings into a small set of fundamental, or primary affects . . . . These taxonomies are in substantial agreement on the basic categories of affective experience . . . ." (Westbrook, 1987 p. 259).
course, deny the role of cognitive processes such as expectancy confirmation or disconfirmation, but rather combine with them in the determination of consumer satisfaction. (pp. 49-50)

Westbrook (1980a) generally found that a consumer's satisfaction/dissatisfaction with an automobile purchase (but not with footwear) was partly a function of a broad set of affective influences within the consumer. These included stable personality dispositions, stable attitudinal beliefs towards product or business, and temporary specific sentiments in connection with the consumption product or service. Consumers with higher levels of life satisfaction or with a more favourable attitude towards consumption, for example, reported having higher levels of product satisfaction. Consumers' moods and other dispositions such as optimism or pessimism, however, did not significantly influence their satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement. Westbrook (1980a) noted that these transient sources of affect may not have influenced the satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement, since the static nature of the methodology used in his study may have precluded the observation of these types of emotions. Alternatively, he noted that transient emotions may not relate to overall satisfaction; but rather, may only affect product-quality judgements as found in earlier studies (Axelrod, 1963; Isen, Clark, Shalker, & Karp, 1978). Westbrook's (1980a) results suggested that the role affect plays in the satisfaction/dissatisfaction process may vary by product category. For less important products (e.g., footwear), the satisfaction/dissatisfaction process may not be mediated by the consumer's general affective state. Overall, these and earlier findings by Westbrook and Newman (1978) "suggest that expressions of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction with products may be partly due to the individual, and not to the factors under the control of marketers and public officials" (Westbrook, 1980a p. 53).

Since 1980 a number a researchers have addressed satisfaction/dissatisfaction as an affective/emotional response and have discussed affect/emotion as being part of the satisfaction/dissatisfaction cognitive evaluative process. Examples include: Westbrook and Reilly (1983) in their value-percept model; Cadotte, et al. (1987) and Woodruff, et al. (1983) in their experience-based norms model; and Swan and Trawick (1981) in equity considerations. However, only recently have marketing researchers concentrated on the role of affect in consumers' consumption experiences (Erevelles, 1992). Recent advances in other research areas (see Hoffman, 1986; Isen, 1984; Zajonc, 1980) have suggested that affective variables may contribute to the explanation and prediction of satisfaction/dissatisfaction appraisals and other postpurchase behaviours. A number of researchers (Muller, et al., 1991; Oliver, 1989; Oliver, 1994; Westbrook, 1987) have advanced that the inclusion of affective/emotional responses into current theoretical postpurchase models would extend our understanding of both the process and the nature of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction.

In a field study, Westbrook (1987) examined consumers' affective responses to automobile and cable television service consumption experiences and their relation to the
satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement process and resultant behaviours. Using Izard's (1977) taxonomy of affective experiences, Westbrook found that consumers formed two independent summary affect states which directly influenced their satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement, complaint behaviour and word-of-mouth activity. One of these affective states was based on a positive set of experiences (joy and interest) and the other on a negative set of feelings (anger, disgust, and contempt). In other words, Westbrook illustrated that consumers could feel both positive and negative about purchasing either an automobile or cable television service, and that these positive and negative affects lead to the predicted direction and extent of satisfaction/dissatisfaction, complaint behaviour and word-of-mouth activities. In an OLS (ordinary least square) regression analysis these affective responses were found to account for a significant amount of the postpurchase phenomena, over and above the traditional cognitive explanations. Moreover, these positive and negative affective feelings were not mediated by the expectation-disconfirmation process. In addition to the cognitive process of disconfirmation of expectations, the affective responses which occurred in the product/consumption experience appeared to directly influence the consumer's satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement. Westbrook (1987) also found that dissatisfaction did not completely mediate the affect-complaining relationships. That is, negative affect influenced complaining behaviour both directly and indirectly through dissatisfaction. Word-of-mouth communication, however, was not mediated by satisfaction or any other postpurchase variable but was directly linked to affect.

Using survey data of tourists who visited Toronto, Canada, Muller, et al. (1991) examined, in addition to the disconfirmation of predicted expectation construct, if other identified satisfaction/dissatisfaction process variables were salient in understanding consumer post-consumption emotions. Specifically, Muller, et al. (1991) proposed four sources from which post-consumption emotional/affective responses result. First, consumers are likely to feel affect based on imagery and fantasies expected in their experiences (i.e., pre-consumption expectations). Expectations, as such, would have both cognitive and affective anchors from which consumption is experienced. The affective component of expectations could create consumption emotions in more than one way. Affective expectations may serve as an anchor from which experiences are judged, or they may serve as a 'lens' through which consumers interpret their experiences. Moreover, they could serve as a locus of control in attributing cause to any resultant disconfirmation. A second source of affect could stem from a consumer's emotional normative base of previous consumption experiences from which his/her current experience is then compared and evaluated (i.e., norm-based experience). Performance norms would be based on previous experiences with other brands of product/services, or past

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19 Izard's (1977) classification of affective experiences consist of seven negative (anger, disgust, contempt, distress, fear, shame, and guilt), two positive (joy and interest), and one neutral (surprise) fundamental emotions. This list of emotions was proposed to classify affective experiences in a basic set of fundamental emotions.

20 Westbrook (1987 p. 260) noted that "complaint behavior theoretically is unrelated to positive product/consumption-based affective responses."
performance of the same product/service being evaluated. Third, affect may result directly from the nature of the current experience (i.e., perceived performance). In other words, how the product/service performs may elicit direct affect/emotions. Fourth, affect may be activated when a consumer evaluates disconfirmations which have occurred in his/her consumption experience. When disconfirmation occurs, the consumer may feel surprised, astonished, or bewildered. Most recent research, however, suggests that positive disconfirmation elicits pleasure and negative disconfirmation leads to anger, frustration, and disappointment (Muller, et al., 1991). Disconfirmation may lead to attribution processing which then leads to attributional-dependent emotions as suggested by Oliver (1989).

Through a factor analysis of the tourists’ ratings of six mood adjectives\textsuperscript{21}, Muller, et al. (1991) found, as did Westbrook (1987), that the consumers' post-consumption emotions grouped into two distinct independent factors -- positive and negative emotions. Muller, et al.'s (1991) work, however, indicated that the determinants of positive and negative affect were different. While positive emotions were derived from the consumer's expectations, perceived performance, disconfirmation of expectations and equity norms, negative emotions were only determined by prior expectations and perceived performance. Using causal modelling and OLS regression analysis, Muller, et al. (1991) also found that perceived performance and disconfirmation had considerably more influence on positive emotions than did expectations and performance norms. Positive emotions and perceived performance were found to directly affect future purchase intentions, with perceived performance being the most important of the two. Negative emotions were not found to influence purchase intentions.

In summary, Muller, et al.'s (1991) findings indicated that other factors besides disconfirmation are important in understanding post-consumption emotions. It is, however, unclear how these identified constructs operate and how important they are within the post-consumption experience model. Muller, et al.'s (1991) findings also indicated the need to develop separate distinct mood adjectives, rather than using semantic scales as used in past research to represent emotional responses.

In 1990, Dawson, Bloch and Ridgway (1990) questioned whether retail outcomes such as purchasing behaviour, consumer satisfaction, and future intentions were affected by consumer motives for shopping due to resultant arousal and pleasure emotions experienced. They suggested that while it is the consumer's motives that bring him/her into the marketplace, it is the consumer's constructed emotions in the attainment or nonattainment of these motives that determine his/her level of satisfaction. If consumers successfully fulfil their motives, they will probably experience positive emotional response, whereas, if consumers do not attain their motives, their experiences will most likely be negative. Just as research into life satisfaction has

\textsuperscript{21} The six mood adjectives were touched or moved, delighted, contented, disappointed, angry, and frustrated.
illustrated that mood is a source for assessing happiness and satisfaction (Schwartz, Clore, & Clore, 1983), Dawson, et al. (1990) suggested that retail satisfaction may partly depend on intrapersonal transient emotions. They argued that the consumer's emotional states experienced during the encounter (whether brought to or created in the encounter) mediate his/her motives and determine the retail outcomes.

Dawson, et al. (1990) also suggested, as postulated by Schwartz, et al. (1983), that attributions of retail satisfaction are shaped by the cues provided by the encounter and the normative responses as deemed by society to the specific given situation. Viewed from this perspective, Dawson, et al. (1990) proposed that satisfaction could be considered a sentiment that individuals use to interpret their emotions in the context of market behavior. For instance, pleasure experienced from finding a unique gift may be expressed, when prompted, by a sentiment of "very satisfied." That is, the consumer may reflect not only on the immediate shopping experience, but also on currently felt emotions. The propensity to make purchases also may reflect aspects of the emotional state of a patron at the given point in time. Therefore, differences in satisfaction and related states may be unavoidably contaminated by the more difficult-to-label emotional states experienced while in the marketplace. (p. 412)

Using Westbrook and Black's (1985) typology of shopping motives, Dawson, et al. (1990) reported that consumers with both product-oriented and experiential motives received greater pleasure and were more aroused in their retail shopping experiences than those who were shopping without a purpose. Moreover, those who had gone shopping expecting to experience sounds, sights and people reported being more aroused than those who did not have experiential shopping motives. Those consumers with product-oriented motives, however, achieved greater pleasure but were not so highly aroused.

Shopping trips driven by product-oriented motives were found to be positively related to product and overall satisfaction, meeting of expectations and future intentions. Shopping trips driven by experiential motives were found to be positively related to facility satisfaction and overall satisfaction. The stronger the consumers' motives the more satisfied they were with their experiences. For example, consumers with strong product-orientated motives had high product and overall satisfaction while those with intense experiential motives reported having high facility and overall satisfaction.

Through a path analysis, Dawson, et al. (1990) found some support for transient emotions mediating the relationship between shopping motives and retail outcomes. The combined

22 Westbrook and Black's (1985) shopping motive typology consist of product-oriented, experiential, and the combination of the two motives. Product-oriented motives refer to when the store is visited to purchase needs or acquire product information. Experiential motives are when a store or mall is visited for hedonic or recreational purposes. That is, the store or mall is visited for the pleasure inherent in the visit itself.
emotions of pleasure and arousal were found to perfectly mediate between shopping motives and met expectations. Pleasure created through product-orientated motives was found to directly influence met expectations, product satisfaction, overall satisfaction, and future intentions, but not facility satisfaction. For shoppers with experiential motives, however, pleasure only influenced overall satisfaction. Arousal created through both types of shopping motives was found to relate only to met expectations. This possibly indicates that arousal is strongly related to cognitive appraisals in the evaluation of a consumer's consumption experience. These researchers suggested that arousal may be a significant factor in determining whether consumers actually engaged in evaluations of their experiences, whereas pleasure may be more important in explaining the nature of the satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement. Neither pleasure nor arousal were found to influence whether the consumer actually purchased or intended to purchase something while they were at the market. Nor did the intrapersonal traits of enjoying to shop and stimulation seeking through shopping, confound or affect the transient marketplace emotions of pleasure and arousal. Dawson, et al. (1990) concluded that consumers with product-oriented motives may change their satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgements due to transient emotions experienced, whereas consumers with experiential motives appear to be less influenced by transient emotions.

In a field survey regarding consumers feelings and attitudes towards their most recent automobile purchase, Westbrook and Oliver (1991), using dimensional analysis and Izard's (1977) emotional typology, investigated the interrelationship between consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgements and consumption emotion23. They identified three independent affective dimensions -- hostility (a configuration of negative affect), pleasant surprise (positive affect and surprise), and interest -- which defined the underlying explanations for the satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement. Their results were very similar to those obtained by Westbrook (1987), except that interest appeared as a separate affective dimension from joy. From these three affective dimensions, Westbrook and Oliver (1991) identified five distinctive emotional consumer profiles which described how consumers responded to their product experiences. These consumer profiles were pleasantly surprised, happy/content, unemotional, unpleasantly surprised, and angry/upset. These authors noted,

... a number of qualitative different affective experience coexist with, and are related to, the common, unidimensional satisfaction continuum. Their positioning along the continuum is revealing of the meaning of satisfaction itself. Both happiness/contentment and delight (pleasant-surprise) patterns were associated with similarly high absolute levels of satisfaction, although certain emotional antecedents clearly vary. Hence, there would appear to be two different experiential bases of high

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23 Westbrook and Oliver (1991 p. 85) noted, "Consumption emotion refers to the set of emotional responses elicited specifically during product usage or consumption experiences, as described either by the distinctive categories of emotional experience and expression (e.g., joy, anger, and fear) or by the structural dimensions underlying emotional categories, such as pleasantness/unpleasantness, relaxation/action, or calmness/excitement (Russell, 1979; for a comparison of approaches in consumer behavior, see Havlena and Holbrook, 1986)."

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satisfaction, namely, pleasure linked to surprise over consumption experience and pleasure coupled with high interest. . . . The unemotional pattern was linked to moderately high levels of satisfaction. . . . These consumers appeared to experience automobiles in an unemotional largely cognitive manner devoid of strong feelings. . . . The negatively surprise pattern is associated with lower satisfaction . . . although within the satisfied range. It appears that moderate negative affect is tolerable to some extent, and its negative valence is not translated into dissatisfaction. Similarly observations can be made about the angry/upset pattern, which is associated with the lowest satisfaction of all, and yet even these consumers do not indicate as high a level of dissatisfaction as might be expected from the frequency of their negative affect. (Westbrook & Oliver, 1991 p. 89)

Westbrook and Oliver (1991) also documented that surprise took on both a positive and negative valence. This is consistent with the theoretical perspectives which indicate surprise is an amplifier of accompanying emotions (Charlesworth, 1969; Oliver, 1989). As such, these authors suggested that surprise may have an independent and correlated role in the production of satisfaction/dissatisfaction.

Overall, Westbrook and Oliver (1991) indicated that the satisfaction construct is quite complex in nature. They suggested, as did Oliver (1989), that the satisfaction construct may have a variety of meanings to consumers and it is not a simple additive function of positive and negative emotions which occurs during the consumption experience as described by Westbrook (1987). It is suggested that current satisfaction measures do not adequately represent the affective components associated with consumption (Erevelles, 1992).

Other recent research studies have replicated and elaborated on the role of affect/emotion in the consumption experience (Babin, et al., 1994; Mano & Oliver, 1993; Muller, et al., 1991; Oliver, 1992; Oliver, 1993). Mano and Oliver (1993) expanded on Izard’s (1977) list of possible consumption emotions and revealed that there are either two or three main primary dimensions underlying consumers’ evoked affective responses. The two factor-solution consisted of positive and negative affect while the three factor-solution incorporated positive affect, negative affect, and low arousal and warmth. These researchers viewed arousal as an important modifier of positive and negative hedonic consumption states. They suggested that it is not sufficient to describe the consumption experience as being either just pleasant or unpleasant. Rather, consumption experiences should be described by distinguishing between the different combinations of arousal and pleasantness (e.g., elating, calming, frustrating;
'satisfaction-as-pleasure' and 'satisfaction-as-contentment'). Moreover, they suggested that the degree of arousal produced influences the level of evaluation which occurs within the experience. For example, low arousal (i.e., calmness, quietness, or boredom) elicited from product evaluation reduces post-consumption experience evaluation with that product.

Mano and Oliver (1993) also examined the underlying dimensionality of product evaluation in relation to affect, and how each identified dimensional component contributed to the satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement. First, their analysis indicated two utilitarian (i.e., need and value) and three hedonic (i.e., interest, positivity, and appeal) product evaluation dimensions. While value was strongly related to positive affect, need related more strongly to negative affect, indicating that favourable positive emotions stem from perceived product value while unfavourable emotions tend to stem from lower perceived need. Value related more to affect than did need, suggesting that value has a stronger affective orientation. Providing value to the consumer may therefore result in making them feel good about the product/service, whereas not meeting the customer's needs is more apt to produce negative feelings about a product/service.

When compared to utilitarian components of product evaluation, hedonic dimensions were more strongly related to both affect and arousal, and also had a stronger positive orientation. This suggests that negative feelings are more apt to result from utilitarian than hedonic evaluations and hedonic evaluations are more apt to lead to positive affects than utilitarian evaluations. The interest dimension of hedonic evaluation, as compared to the positivity and appeal dimensions, was more strongly related to arousal components of both positive and negative affects, indicating the importance of being interested in the creation of affect (Mano & Oliver, 1993).

Mano and Oliver (1993) also noted that unlike the hedonic dimensions, the utilitarian dimensions were only weakly correlated to affect. The utilitarian dimensions did however correlate to the satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement and hedonic dimensions. The utilitarian evaluation appeared to be functional and cognitive in nature, representing the instrumental expectations consumers have for a product. From this perspective, the utilitarian evaluation would represent the cognitive phenomenon of the satisfaction/dissatisfaction process.

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25 Mano and Oliver (1993) used the term 'evaluative' to imply a product rating or judgement made by the consumer rather than an indication of affect held towards the product.

26 Need conceptually meant 'vital,' 'needed,' 'essential,' 'fundamental,' 'beneficial,' 'useful,' and 'important,' whereas value encompassed 'means a lot to me,' 'relevant,' 'valuable,' 'matters to me,' 'of concern to me,' 'important,' and 'significant' (Mano & Oliver, 1993 pp. 459-460).

27 Interest conceptually meant 'interesting,' 'exciting,' 'fascinating,' 'interested,' and 'intelligent.' Positivity indicated 'positive,' 'nice,' 'agreeable,' 'pleasant'. Appeal referred to 'wanted,' 'appealing,' and 'desirable' (Mano & Oliver, 1993 p. 460).
When Marro and Oliver (1993) examined the joint interrelationship of the post-consumption experiences of affect, utilitarian, hedonic and satisfaction/dissatisfaction evaluation scales they found a three dimensional solution to its overall structure. The first dimension being a 'good-bad' cognitive evaluation, the second 'overall emotionality', and the third a 'calmness-distress' component. Spacial dimensions illustrated that the utilitarian, hedonic, and satisfaction scales were positioned together on a positive side while dissatisfaction, negative affect, unpleasantness, and boredom were positioned on the negative side. Marro and Oliver (1993) noted,

Satisfaction correlates with pleasure and displeasure (negatively), positive and negative affect and all the evaluative subdimensions. Moreover, it appears to be enhanced for the higher positive arousal states, while dissatisfaction is slightly more influential for the low negative arousal states. ... It [satisfaction] ... generally appears in the center of clusters of positive affect and high arousal variables as if it were attempting to capture all of them. (p. 464)

Marro and Oliver (1993) then examined these identified dimensions within a causal model framework. Satisfaction/dissatisfaction was found to be a direct function of positive and negative affect, and the utilitarian cognitive evaluation. Positive and negative affect were found to be a function of arousal, where arousal was triggered by evaluative judgements of a hedonic nature. Positive affect was also found to be directly influenced by the hedonic evaluation. As such, satisfaction/dissatisfaction is a consequence of both affective and cognitive judgements, where affect emerged as the major mediator of the satisfaction/dissatisfaction process. Marro and Oliver (1993) concluded,

Taken together, the results of the present study suggest that satisfaction response is not easily tied down. It does not respond to pure affect nor does it exist in the absence of feeling. It is apparently a complex human response with both cognitive and affective components. (p.465)

While these studies have determined that both positive and negative dimensions of affect occur independently and can have concurrent effects on the satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement, they do not address the process of how positive and negative affect is created. Oliver (1993) suggested,

The explanation draws on the Bradburn (1969) affect-balance theory... which would propose the simultaneous operation of multifaceted product or service attributes, thereby providing differentially valenced product experiences. ... [These] dual positive and

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28 Oliver (1993 p. 420) noted that 'affect balance theory recognises that "positive experiences of life (e.g., excitement, pleasure) are not inversely correlated with negative experiences (e.g., loneliness, boredom). . . . Affect theory . . . maintains that events in life alternate between positive and negative, and that instances of one do not preclude occurrences of the other. This argument would seem especially relevant to product and service consumption, where numerous and varied attributes exist at different levels of abstraction. Because each attribute is a potential source of pleasure or frustration, the likelihood of positive and negative experience is enhanced, a premise underlying the use of multiattribute models of attitude."
negative affect influences in consumption can arise from dual concurrent positive and negative experiences at the attribution level. That is, a range of multifaceted product features allows for varying experiences with the product or service, some negative, some positive. These experiences become the source of the summary positive and negative affect. (pp. 420-421)

Bettman (1974), however, suggested that the consumer's satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement is not directly determined by the performance of the product's or service's attributes, but rather the consumer's appraisals of the attribute performance of the product/service. This heuristic decision as applied to attribute performance has been labelled 'attribute satisfaction'. "Attribute satisfaction . . . is the consumer's subjective satisfaction judgement resulting from attribute observations and can be considered to be the psychological fulfilment response consumers make when assessing performance" (Oliver, 1993 p. 421).

Oliver (1992; 1993) examined the occurrence of this attribute basis of satisfaction along with the role that affect plays in the satisfaction/dissatisfaction process. Using a "multidimensional scaling analysis (MSD) of the attribute dimensionality of automobile purchases and a property fitting of emotions and satisfaction measures", Oliver (1992 pp. 237, 242) found that "overall satisfaction includes a fairly global summary judgement of attribute satisfaction", indicating that satisfaction is at least in part a summary of attribute phenomenon. Moreover, overall satisfaction as fitted on the resultant two-dimensional joint space plot illustrated that it centred around and encompassed two groups of attributes -- those that provide ongoing 'dynamic' automobile performance such as ride acceleration, stereo quality and image, and 'static' attributes which relate to one-time events or factors of evaluated performance such as price, service, repairs. The mapping of the emotion29 experienced in automobile purchases revealed four distinct sets of emotional profiles -- interest, enjoyment, surprise, and a general negative affect including fear, disgust, sadness, content, guilt, shame, and anger. Satisfaction centred around most attributes, plotting closely to enjoyment. As compared to satisfaction, enjoyment correlated more closely to the dynamic attributes than the static ones, indicating enjoyment is mostly evoked by the on-going dynamic attributes. Interest also appeared to be evoked primarily by dynamic attributes but was associated more with attributes that were less satisfying and enjoyable. Enjoyment appeared to be more closely associated with satisfaction than was interest. In contrast, the emotion of surprise was associated with static evaluated attributes which were not experienced as expected. That is, for static attributes such as price and service, surprise was evoked when consumers received what they did not expect. Last, negative affect correlated closely with static events or factors and were closely associated with dissatisfying experiences. Dissatisfaction, however, was positioned between dynamic and static attributes.

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29 Oliver (1992) used Izard's DES II scale in assessing the consumers' resultant emotions. As this study focused on attribute experiences, he measured both the intensity and the frequency of the ten fundamental emotions in Izard's scale. Intensity as well as frequency was thought to be important since some attribute experiences may occur only once but have considerable impact on overall satisfaction.
indicating that both types of attributes led to dissatisfying experiences. This analysis suggested that the overall nature of satisfaction and dissatisfaction mimics the general affect of enjoyment (pleasure) and negative affect (fear, disgust, sadness), respectively, rather than encompassing any dimensions of surprise and interest (arousal). Surprise and interest may be two separate consumption emotions. As suggested by Westbrook and Oliver (1991), surprise and enjoyment may not be combined results, or enjoyment and surprise may initially be two separate responses which become additive over time. As consumption experiences become more frequent the emotions may accumulate to produce the pleasant surprise dimension. Furthermore, while these results suggested that enjoyment (pleasure) and satisfaction share some commonalities, they do differ, indicating that satisfaction coexist with other consumption emotions which "have separate, but equally important effects on later purchase behavior" (Oliver, 1992 p. 242).

Using a two-stage least square (TSLS) instrumental variable technique for both measurement and structural models, Oliver (1993) confirmed and extended his 1992 work by examining the structure of affective responses and the relationships among consumers' attribute satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgements, positive/negative affect responses, and disconfirmation of expectation perceptions. Examining both a service (course instruction) and a product (an automobile) and using Izard's (1977) DES affect scale, Oliver (1993) results suggested that affect consists of two dimensions -- positive affect and negative affect. Oliver presented evidence that negative affect is composed of external, internal, and situational subdimensions based on locus-of-causality attributional agency, that is, external, internal and situational ascription of cause (see Oliver, 1989). Anger, disgust and contempt resulted from causal ascriptions that were externally attributed to the provider of the product or service. Guilt and shame resulted when blame was internally attributed to self, and fear and sadness resulted from encounters where blame was attributed to situation-specific causes. Results of this study also suggested that there are two subdimensions for positive affect. These results, however, were not consistent for the product and service investigated. For the course instruction sample, both joy and interest (the only two positive affects in Izard's scheme) were found to be subdimensions of positive affect. For the automobile sample, only interest was found to correlate with positive affect, suggesting that joy and interest are two separate constructs. When analysed separately, only joy was found to relate to satisfaction. Oliver (1993) suggested that in the case of the automobile, interest was a state of arousal or activation which may pertain to either negative or positive events, whereas joy was an intense form of pleasure.

In regard to the role of attribute satisfaction/dissatisfaction and affect in explaining the process of overall satisfaction/dissatisfaction, Oliver (1993) found that attribute satisfaction and dissatisfaction judgements for both the product and service sample were directly related to positive and negative affect, respectively, and to overall satisfaction. As found in prior research (e.g., Westbrook, 1987; Westbrook & Oliver, 1991), both positive and negative affect
influenced overall satisfaction in the expected directions. In an overview of the relationship among these components, the consumer's attribute experiences were found to have both a direct and an indirect effect through affect on their overall satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement. For the auto sample, attribute satisfaction was found to reduce negative affect. Attribute dissatisfaction, however, did not reduce the positive affect for either the automobile or the course instruction samples. This implies that attribute satisfaction may have dual beneficial effects, while attribute dissatisfaction may work primarily to cause increased levels of negative affect.

Disconfirmation was also found by Oliver (1993) to directly influence overall satisfaction/dissatisfaction for both samples, indicating that cognition is a necessary component in the satisfaction/dissatisfaction model. A comparison of the regression analysis for the automobile and course instruction samples suggest that the satisfaction/dissatisfaction process for a durable product is more cognitive based than it is for a service. Attribute satisfaction correlated more highly with satisfaction for the automobile sample, whereas affect was more highly correlated with the course instruction sample. Disconfirmation was found to be the best predictor of satisfaction in the auto sample, while affect was the best predictor for the course instruction service. For both samples the combination of affect and disconfirmation was a better predictor of satisfaction than was the combination of affect and attribute satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgements. Adding satisfaction/dissatisfaction attribute judgements to the causal model, however, appeared to increase the explained variance. Disconfirmation emerged as the dominant variable influencing satisfaction, having the greatest structural coefficient in both the auto and course instruction satisfaction equations. Oliver noted that Westbrook (1987) also found disconfirmation was the dominating effect over affective responses and as such, suggested that disconfirmation could be the most important antecedent in a group of independent effects.

In a later survey, Oliver (1994) examined parents' satisfaction with their child's stay at a short-term hospital recovery centre. Using factor analysis and sixteen affects selected from Larsen and Diener (1992) and Watson, et al. (1988) octal dimensional affect solution30, Oliver found three separate dimensions -- positive affect, negative affect and arousal -- which underlie the consumer's consumption affective experience. This research reconfirmed past research (Oliver & Westbrook, 1993; Westbrook, 1987; Westbrook & Oliver, 1991) which was based on Izard's (1977) limited framework of affect. Oliver (1994) noted, however, that arousal

30 Oliver (1994) selected two affects from each short list of emotions used to measure the eight segments of affect space as developed by Watson, et al. (1988) and refined by Larsen and Diener (1992). The respondents were asked to describe on a 5-point scale ranging from never to always how frequently they felt each of the listed sixteen emotions.
appears to be study-specific. In some samples, it appears to align with positive affect as if to suggest that affect is the result (or cause) of such arousal. In others it appears separately... or is associated with low arousal states of inactivity or interest. (p. 20)

Oliver's (1994) research also supportive of Mano and Oliver (1993) findings where positive and negative affect were a function of arousal inherent in the service experience, and of Oliver (1993) results where positive and negative affect were a function of performance in the predicted directions. Oliver's results differed from (Mano & Oliver, 1993) findings in that arousal was negatively related to negative affect, suggesting that low arousal leads to displeasure with the service experience. Oliver's (1994) research showed that satisfaction is a function of both the cognitive variables of disconfirmation and quality, and of affect. Specifically, quality was found to be a function performance. As such, these research findings, along with other research (Mano & Oliver, 1993; Oliver, 1993), have generally indicated that satisfaction/dissatisfaction may result from a two appraisal system as suggested by Oliver (1989).

Apparently two mechanisms operate in the tandem in consumers' minds, one involving the assessment of functional or comparative outcomes (what the product/service gives me) and one relating to how the product/service influences affect (how the product makes me feel). (Oliver, 1994 p. 20)

While Oliver (1994) did not find that quality directly influenced positive and negative affect, (Mano & Oliver, 1993; Oliver, 1993) results indicated that cognition may influence affect as suggested by Oliver (1989). That is, affect is the result of cognition.

Summary.
Since the first conference on consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction in 1976 many attempts have been made to conceptualise key constructs and integrate them into comprehensive models which explain and define the processes of satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation and the overall judgement response. This historical view of the proposed models of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction illustrates how our understanding has developed and progressed over the years. In the early years, major emphasis was placed on defining the standard(s) and/or the cognitive process(es) used by consumers in evaluating their consumption experiences. More recent research has concentrated on understanding how affect/emotion contributes to and integrates within these cognitive frameworks and conceptualisations of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction. Later work has also extended these models to services settings, and offered empirical evidence to support models proposed in the early 1980's (Swan & Trawick, 1993). While these models provide a foundation from which to build our understanding of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction, it is clear the formation process is complex, involving many variables which interact simultaneously. Much work is still required to provide an overall
model as suggested by Yi (1990) and/or gain an understanding of what 'drives' the process(es) of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction.

**AN OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH IN CONSUMER SATISFACTION/DISSATISFACTION**

The prior sections have provided a detailed historical framework and description of the conceptualisations, models, and supportive empirical research, disclosing how consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction knowledge has developed. The following section summarises the research and identifies some of the issues relevant to furthering our understanding of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction.

**Consumer Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction - A Central Concept in Marketing?**

Marketing is taking on a new paradigm, 'relationship marketing', where customer satisfaction is still viewed as the central concept in creating customer loyalty. It is thought that a satisfied customer will remain loyal, purchasing more than other not so loyal customers. In an effort to satisfy their customers, businesses should attempt to add 'customer-oriented value' to their offerings. In doing so, mutual profitable and long term relationships are maintained and enhanced for both the customer and the business organisation. Ravald and Grönroo (1996), however, warned that the "adding more value" approach must be driven by the needs of the customers. While new customers may be attracted and market share increased, long-lasting bonds are not formed if the value added does not fulfil need.

While many marketing academics and practitioners accept the theoretical position that consumer satisfaction is the motivating force in producing critical consumer behaviours which determine business success, others such as Reichheld (1993) have questioned if the existing measures are adequate to reveal these relationships, or if the phenomenon of satisfaction is the strong motivating force posited by theory (Woodruff, 1993).

**Conceptualisation, Process and Measurement of Consumer Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction.**

While consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction has been extensively researched over the past two and a half decades, we are still unclear about the specific nature of satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement, how it is processed and how it relates to its antecedents and consequences. There are still differences of opinion as to how the construct(s) of satisfaction/dissatisfaction should be conceptualised (Woodruff, 1993). Over the years a number of alternative constructs and measures have been proposed and used (Hausknecht, 1990; Yi, 1990). The exact meanings of these constructs have varied from cognitive to quasi-cognitive to affective definitions (Woodruff, 1993). The use of different measures as derived from a particular conceptualisation
questions the validity of the satisfaction/dissatisfaction measure and the comparison of research results (Yi, 1990).

Satisfaction/dissatisfaction was originally thought to be processed from product attributes ratings or factors with those having the highest correlation with the satisfaction/dissatisfaction construct being its main 'drivers'. Recognising that this perspective provided little insight, researchers drew on the social psychology literature to formulate, test, and thus expand their understanding of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction.

**Cognitive perspectives.** A number of different cognitive perspectives such as performance evaluation, the expectancy-disconfirmation framework, the value/desires comparison models, equity and justice theory, and attributions models have emerged to explain the satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation process and construct(s) (Oliver, 1989). As a result of this research there has been consensus that satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation involves comparative processes which result in an evaluative, affective, or emotional response (Oliver, 1989; Woodruff, et al., 1991). There is not yet consensus on how these comparison processes are formed and how the evaluation judgement is rendered.

*Expectancy-disconfirmation theory and comparison standards.* A large number of research studies, for example Oliver (1980a) and Swan and Trawick (1981), have found disconfirmation to be a good predictor of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction. Research such as Bolfing and Woodruff (1988) and Cadotte, et al. (1987) have shown that some types of comparison standards are better than others in explaining consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction. Although some standards have been found to be better predictors of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction than others, no general pattern can be discerned on the dominance of any specific type of comparison standard (Liljander & Strandvik, 1995b). Beyond the fact that consumer expectations are complex in that they may be represented by a number of standards (Oliver & DeSarbo, 1988; Tse & Wilton, 1988), there are difficulties in obtaining independent measures of expectations in service performance (Grönroos, 1993). Predictive expectations has been "the predominate standard used in theory and practice" (Woodruff, et al., 1991 p. 104). This is theoretically a significant issue since the type of comparison standard used in the measurement of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction may alter the relationships between/among disconfirmation, performance and satisfaction (Bolfing & Woodruff, 1988).

*Other cognitive processes.* Besides the disconfirmation paradigm, other theoretical foundations such as equity and value/desires comparison models have been proposed to explain the satisfaction/dissatisfaction process and judgement (Woodruff, 1993). Research by Oliver and Swan (1989b) suggested that in exchanges where interpersonal affects (buyer/seller interactions) are important, equity is a separate and parallel process to disconfirmation. Spreng and Olshavsky (1993), in their desires congruency model based on the means-end chain theory,
advanced that expectations and equity are inclusive in the desires congruency construct and therefore it is not necessary to model each of these as separate independent effects on the satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement. Their research suggested that this may be so. The desires congruency construct was found to explain a considerable proportion of the satisfaction/dissatisfaction response, whereas disconfirmation was found to have no affect.

Integration of multiple comparison standards and processes. Recent research has found that consumers use multiples comparison standards and/or processes simultaneously in satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation (e.g., Oliver & DeSarbo, 1988; Prakash, 1984b; Tse & Wilton, 1988). As such, consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction is viewed as a complex process involving simultaneous interactions that may encompass more than one comparison standard and/or process. Both Tse, et al. (1990) and Woodruff (1993) have argued for the need to integrate theories and determine other processes which expand and describe the interactions that occur in satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation. Some researchers have started to incorporate other constructs and processes such as attribution and affect into the dominant predictive expectancy-disconfirmation model to explain the consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation and response (Granbois, 1993; Woodruff, 1993). For example, Oliver (1989) has proposed that confirmation and disconfirmation of expected performance leads to primary affect, disconfirmation motivates consumers to attribute cause for the unexpected performance which produces specific emotion(s), and the resultant affect and distinct emotion(s) influences the satisfaction/dissatisfaction response. Moreover, Godwin, Patternson, and Johnson (1995) have recently suggested that the process of coping be added within this framework proposed by Oliver (1989).

Gardial, et al. (1994), in finding that satisfaction/dissatisfaction is an integral part of the phenomenon of postpurchase evaluation, argued for the need to integrate several evaluation theories into a broad foundation to understand this larger phenomenon. All three product evaluative theories (multiattribute attitude models, means-end theory, and disconfirmation models) considered in their study contributed to the understanding of the postpurchase evaluation, and none independently explained the postpurchase evaluation. Gardial, et al.’s (1994) research suggested the need to understand how the satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement overlaps and differs from other postpurchase evaluations, and what role satisfaction/dissatisfaction plays in these evaluations and in future consumers’ behaviours and experiences (Woodruff, 1993).

A contingency framework. Several researchers such as Woodruff (1993), Granbois (1993) and Tse, et al. (1990) have echoed the similar conclusion that there may be a need for a contingency framework to understand how the satisfaction/dissatisfaction process and response might differ under different circumstances. Research (e.g., Churchill Jr. & Surprentant 1982; Oliver & Swan, 1989a) has suggested that the dominance of any specific process or comparison standard
may depend on the type of product/service, situation and/or consumer. It is thought that the different types of processes that occur between the product/service experience and the emergence of the satisfaction state might depend on factors such as consumer temperament or mood difference, level of experience with the product/service, knowledge of failure causes with product/service, and difference in the consumer involvement and product meanings (Granbois, 1993). Erevelles (1992) in his review of current consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction models noted,

One of the most important directions for future research in consumer satisfaction may be determining which models are best applicable in different consumption situations and for different products. . . . It is still not very clear which paradigm may best model consumers satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgments in various situations. An understanding of situations in which one model dominates others will give both academics and practitioners a more comprehensive view of the construct. . . . [For example, e]quity theory holds a lot of potential in modeling satisfaction in situations where interpersonal affects are important. Attribution theory on the other hand, may be useful in explaining satisfaction in situations where it is important for a consumer to determine the cause of an outcome, or when the formation of such attributions enhance the consumption experience. (p. 112)

Tse, et al. (1990) also noted, but from the perspective of 'satisfaction as process',

The critical task for consumer researchers is to identify through time what type of consumption contexts may activate what type of psychological and overt activities, for the type of products, and with what results. (p. 190)

Affective perspectives. There has been an emerging belief that affect/emotion rather than cognition may be the central concept in the satisfaction/dissatisfaction process and response - a suggestion originally discussed by Hunt (1977) (Oliver, 1989). Recently, Hunt (1993 p. 40) in his paper, 'CS/D & CB Suggestions and Observations for the 1990's', again advocated this view, "It is emotion, not cognition that drives CS/D & CB." Customer satisfaction may not be possible without emotional fulfilment. According to a number of business consultants and practitioners, as reported by Schlossberg (1993), emotional fulfilment is achieved only by delivering what is truly desired. To do so, the business organisation must

"enhance the customer's sense of self. . . . Understand how the consumer sees himself. . . perceives herself. Satisfy deeper emotional levels." . . "Creating customer delight means meeting . . basic needs, and then going beyond them." . . "It means building into products new qualities like personality, friendliness, fun, and surprise." Believe it or not, those things, and how to do them, are identifiable. They come in the form of images that marketers can translate into "attributes that deliver benefits or barriers that conform to values or feelings in the individual customers." . . They in turn, "create product or service images." . . "[O]nly those images that are linked to personal values carry significant meaning." . . "[Y]ou can't understand a benefit [an image] . . until you understand what it means to a customer's life." . . [It] goes beyond understanding the operational, functional, and result and price dimensions of a product or service. It comes down to positioning against competitors and understanding the "intangibles experiences a particular customer wishes to have by adopting a product or service. It directly relates to the customer's sense of self-interest." (Schlossberg, 1993 pp. 1-2)
There has been growing interest in the importance of the role of affect/emotion in defining and processing consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction (Woodruff, 1993). Recent research has modelled and examined affect/emotion as part of the satisfaction/dissatisfaction construct(s) and process formation.

**Affective/emotional nature of the satisfaction/dissatisfaction construct(s) and its complexity.** Westbrook and Oliver (1991) and Mano and Oliver (1993) have found affect/emotion to be part of the satisfaction/dissatisfaction construct(s) and noted that it appears to be complex in nature. The satisfaction/dissatisfaction construct is neither a simple affective summary of the relative frequencies of positive and negative affect/emotion which occurs during the consumption experience (Westbrook & Oliver, 1991), nor is it pure affect without a cognitive component (Mano & Oliver, 1993). Research by Westbrook and Oliver (1991), Muller, et al. (1991) and Oliver and Westbrook (1993) has indicated that the satisfaction response may have various affective meanings to consumers. That is, a number of different emotional experiences may be associated with the same absolute level on the unidimensional satisfaction continuum. Moreover, Mano and Oliver (1993) and Westbrook and Oliver (1991) have suggested that the affective component may consist of three independent dimensions -- positive, negative, and arousal/interest affect. In itself, the arousal/interest dimension appears to be complex. As well as being an elicited emotion/affect (e.g., surprise, boredom) in the evaluation process, arousal/interest may amplify other negative or positive affect/emotion present or created in the process (Mano & Oliver, 1993; Westbrook & Oliver, 1991). Arousal or interest, additionally, may combine with other affects/emotions creating other specific emotion/affect (Mano & Oliver, 1993), or may determine whether the consumer actually engages in the evaluation of his/her experiences (Dawson, et al., 1990; Oliver, 1993).

Recent research by Oliver (1993) indicated even further complexity of the satisfaction/dissatisfaction construct(s). Oliver's (1993) results suggested a multidimensional structure for both negative and positive affect. For example, Oliver found that negative affect consisted of three factors (external, internal, and situational) which were determined by the consumer's attribution of cause for his/her dissatisfying experience. These attributions lead to distinct emotions, which along with the negative affect, were illustrated to represent the dissatisfaction construct. In another paper, Oliver and Westbrook (1993) using discriminant analysis of linked dissatisfaction to affective/emotional dimensional space, illustrated that the meaning of dissatisfaction varied according to whether the attribution of cause was external or internal. External attribution created the emotions of anger, disgust, distress, and contempt which coexisted on a negative affect dimension. As such, Oliver and Westbrook (1993) labelled these consumers' perception of their dissatisfaction as being 'hostile/upsetting'. Internal attribution of cause, however, created emotions of guilt and shame which coexisted on a separate negative affective dimension. These consumers viewed their dissatisfying
experiences as being 'guilty/ashamed'. Research by Oliver (1993; 1992) also illustrated that the satisfaction and dissatisfaction judgements are different to the post-consumption emotions experienced. The positions where the consumer's satisfaction and dissatisfaction judgements fell in relationship to the dimensions of emotion and affect experienced were different. The satisfaction or dissatisfaction response took on the meaning of those emotions and affects which encompassed it.

### Affective/emotional nature of satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation process and its complexity.

A number of researchers (Jayanti, 1995; Oliver, 1993; Oliver, 1994; Westbrook, 1987; Westbrook & Oliver, 1991) have modelled and found support for affect as a separate process that complements the disconfirmation process in determining consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction and/or postpurchase behaviours and intentions. While Dube-Rioux (1990) found that affective responses were more important than cognitive responses in explaining consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction, other studies such as Oliver (1993) and Westbrook (1987) have reported that disconfirmation was the most important independent determinant, even though affect made a substantial contribution. Research by Jayanti (1995), Oliver (1993) and Mano and Oliver (1993) has indicated that products/services assessed on more tangible/utilitarian attributes, as compared to intangible/hedonic attributes, rely more heavily on cognitive than affective appraisal in determining the resultant satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement. For example, Oliver (1993) found that disconfirmation influenced the satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement of a product more than it did for the service sampled in their study.

Research by Muller, et al. (1991) indicated that the affective/emotional nature of the satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation processes is likely to be very complex. They found that there are many determinants of post-consumption affect/emotions besides the disconfirmation process. These determinants were: expectation; performance norms (equity); perceived performance; and disconfirmation. Additionally, Oliver (1993) and Mano and Oliver (1993) have found that attribute satisfaction/dissatisfaction (a proxy for performance) and product utilitarian/hedonic evaluations, respectively, were direct determinants of both affect and the satisfaction/dissatisfaction response. Quality, however, was found not to directly influence affect, but was found to directly determine satisfaction (Oliver, 1994).

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31 Hedonic appraisal was not directly related to satisfaction/dissatisfaction, and utilitarian appraisal was not directly linked to affect.
32 Quality is viewed by Oliver (1994 p. 17) as an assessment of "performance excellence criteria". That is, quality is a function of "exemplary levels of performance characteristics, those on which the service [product] ... truly excel," and may influence satisfaction/dissatisfaction directly. Oliver (1994) found that satisfaction and quality were both highly correlated to performance attributes, but quality was not affect based. Oliver (1994 p. 20) concluded that quality and satisfaction are different construct -- "quality is more cognitive and performance oriented, while satisfaction is a complex consumption judgement." As such, Oliver also concluded that quality influences satisfaction rather than satisfaction influences quality judgements.
There is also some evidence to suggest that intrapersonal affect (consumer’s mood and dispositions) and shopping motives (product- or experiential-oriented) brought to the evaluation situation influence resultant affective/emotional responses and the satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement. Again, results of these studies are not conclusive, and have indicated that the overall process is even more complicated with yet more variables being added and interlinked within the satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation process. Moreover, other evidence has suggested that the process may vary according to the product/service being evaluated. For example, Westbrook (1980a) found, for consumers who purchased an automobile, that their moods did not influence their satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement but certain stable dispositional affective sources did have a considerable effect. This was not true, however, for the consumers who had purchased footwear. In contrast, Dawson, et al.’s (1990) findings suggested that consumers’ stable dispositions of shopping for enjoyment and stimulation seeking did not effect their resultant affective/emotional and satisfaction/dissatisfaction response, whereas, their shopping motive mood they brought into the experience did influence their responses.

Recent research has also focused on understanding how specific performance benefits or product/service attributes create affect/emotion and influence consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction and other post-consumption behaviours and responses. Cadotte and Turgeon (1988) suggested that the performance of specific types of attributes leads to positive or negative feelings and thus determines whether the consumer will be satisfied or dissatisfied, respectively. Their results, however, indicated that how attribute performance influences consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction is neither simple nor straightforward. While positive (negative) evaluations of specific attributes created satisfying (dissatisfying) experiences, negative (positive) evaluations of these same attributes did not necessary cause dissatisfaction (satisfaction). Some attributes, however, when evaluated positively and negatively created satisfaction and dissatisfaction, respectively.

Other research results (Gardial, et al., 1994; Oliver, 1992; 1993; 1994; Oliver & Westbrook, 1993; Stayman, Alden, & Smith, 1992) have further illustrated the complexity of how attributes influence affective/emotional responses, the satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement, and other consumer post-consumption behaviours and responses. For example, Oliver (1992; 1993) found support that satisfaction/dissatisfaction is an ‘experience summary’ of the appraisal of negative and positive affect created from attribute performance. Moreover, Oliver (1993) found that the positive affect created by attribute satisfaction decreased the negative affect experienced for both the product and service sampled, but negative affect created by attribute dissatisfaction did not always decrease the positive affect experienced. The later, however, was only true for the product and not the service examined. Gardial, et al.’s (1994) results illustrated that consumers utilised product/service attribute information at different means-end levels when
evaluating their pre- and postpurchase experiences. Consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgements were found to be similar to other postpurchase evaluation outcomes. These postpurchase evaluation outcomes were based on benefits received or sacrificed from having and using the product/service rather than on lower-level attribute-based criteria used in evaluating prepurchase experiences. Gardial, et al. (1994), however, noted that when compared to other postpurchase experiences, satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgements were less likely to encompass emotional responses. These results suggested that while the satisfaction/dissatisfaction response is very similar to the consumer's postpurchase evaluation, they do differ. Stayman, et al. (1992) found support that categorisation processes (hierarchical schema-level representations which store and recall information learnt from experiences with products/services) are important in determining consumers' satisfaction/dissatisfaction evaluative judgements. Specifically Stayman, et al. (1992) reported that confirmation/disconfirmation judgements may result not only from attribute-based judgements of whether a product is better or worse than expected (as emphasized in the satisfaction literature), but also from more holistic schematic processes that are based on whether a product is the same or different from schema-based expectations.

From these results Stayman, et al. (1992) concluded,

... [satisfaction] researchers should expand their models further to include cases in which holistic schematic processes are likely to occur. ... [F]uture research is necessary to examine the conditions under which top-down processing (e.g., schema-based) versus bottom-up processing (e.g., attribute-based) is most influential in the formation of posttrial product evaluations. (p. 253)

The interlinking of cognitive and affective/emotional perspectives. Taken together, these research studies have illustrated that the satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation process as well as the construct(s) are both affective and cognitive in nature. This recent research regarding the processes and effects of cognition and affect/emotion, "points to complexity in the satisfaction formation process not fully understood; additional work in the area is needed to address this complexity" (Oliver, 1993 p. 429). "Cognitive and affective processes are likely to be complementary, if not interactive, in their influence on what the consumer does and experiences" (Muller, et al., 1991 p. 18). As noted by Westbrook (1987), the social psychological literature (e.g., Weiner, et al., 1979) has

... suggested the possibility of interplay between cognitive beliefs and affective responses, each evoking the other in a dynamic sequential process. Certain affects might occur early in the casual chain and trigger appraisal of satisfaction, which in turn elicits additional (and different) affects, in turn modifying initial satisfaction appraisal. (p. 267)
Recently Oliver (1994) noted that

\[ \ldots \text{much more work on the independent contributions and interplay of affect and cognition in the satisfaction judgement needs to be performed. It appears that the separate contribution of affect and cognition are established; what is missing is evidence of their interaction, casual relationships, and joint dependence on causal agents in satisfaction formation. (p. 20) } \]

Further investigation is required to disentangle the causal sequence of the affective and cognitive interactions in the satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation process.

**Causal relationships between/among post-consumption responses and behaviours, and the satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement.** Thus far, little research has been carried out to illustrate the causal relationships among affect/emotion, satisfaction/dissatisfaction, and other post-consumption consumer behaviour and responses such as complaining/complementing behaviour, positive/negative word-of-mouth response, future purchase intentions, purchasing behaviour, grudgeholding, and resultant relationships (e.g., trust, loyalty) between exchange parties. Overall, studies that have examined the relationships between satisfaction/dissatisfaction and postpurchase behaviours and responses have been positively correlated. For example, Bloemer, Kasper and Lemmink (1990), Cadotte, Woodruff and Jenkins (1983), Oliver and Bearden (1983), Prakash (1984b), Prakash and Lounsbury (1984) and Swan (1977; 1988) have reported a positive relationship between satisfaction and future purchase intentions and/or loyalty, and studies by Huefner and Hunt (1992), Hunt and Hunt (1990) and Hunt, Hunt, and Hunt (1988) have indicated a relationship between grudgeholding and dissatisfaction. The few studies that have examined the relationships of emotion/affect, satisfaction/dissatisfaction and postpurchase behaviours and responses indicate that emotion is directly linked to future purchase intentions (Dawson, et al., 1990; Muller, et al., 1991), complaining behaviour, and word-of-mouth responses (Westbrook, 1987). While it is too early to say what exact links exist among satisfaction/dissatisfaction, emotion/affect, and postpurchase behaviours and responses, these three studies have indicated that it is complex. For example, Dawson, et al. (1990) found that pleasure only influenced future purchase intentions when the consumer's shopping motives were product-oriented rather than experiential-orientated. Westbrook (1987) found that while negative affect, both directly and indirectly through dissatisfaction, determined the consumer's complaining behaviour, the word-of-mouth response was only directly determined by affective/emotional responses. That is, the satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement did not influence the consumer's word-of-mouth response, indicating consumers voice their experiences which involve noticeable affective elements regardless of their satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement or seller-directed complaint actions. Moreover, Westbrook's (1987) findings indicated that even satisfied customers will complain if negative affects/emotions are associated with the product/service.
Measurement issues. Recent research has moved from describing the data to developing and testing models of consumer satisfaction. Over the years, more elaborate research designs and analytical techniques have been used. This has led to many sources of potential bias in the data such as selection bias, a nonresponse bias, and interviewer bias, a tendency to over sample extreme experiences, and demand characteristics (Yi, 1990).

Causal modelling of satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation process. Much of the recent satisfaction/dissatisfaction research has used Lisrel (Linear Structural RELationships) models\(^{33}\) or a similar covariance structure analysis programme to examine (a) the reliability and validity of how the different proposed constructs are operationalised/measured and (b) the relationships between the linked constructs in the model and the amount of unexplained variance. Lisrel analysis seeks to confirm if the postulated structure is consistent with the collected survey or experimental data by assessing the model fit of both the measurement and structural parts of the model. Good measurement fit of the constructs is a prerequisite to analysing the causal relations among the linked constructs in the model. Model fit depends on quality of the hypothesised measurement and linkages of the constructs in the conceptualised model as defined and developed from theory. For example, omission of important constructs or linkages, or inclusion of irrelevant ones leads to 'specification error' and lack of model fit, indicating the proposed model does not correspond to the 'true' model in the population (Diamantopoulos, 1994). Researchers such as Westbrook (1987) and Oliver (1994) have noted the limitations of structural equation modelling in our understanding of satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation process. For example, Westbrook (1987) recognised that, though . . . [their findings were] consistent with the hypothesised causal sequence of consumption outcome --> affect --> satisfaction, it must be recognised that the true temporal ordering of this linkage cannot be established conclusively by means of correlation analyses. Alternatively, positive and negative response might result from satisfaction appraisal [i.e., satisfaction --> affect]. (p. 267)

Oliver (1994) also noted the limitations with structural linear models in understanding the causal linkages of the satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation process.

Perhaps the greatest limitations . . . beyond the usual caveats regarding static data, small sample restrictions, and measurement error is the possibility that the [Lisrel] model as illustrated . . . and tested . . . is mis-specified. It is well known that alternative model structures will give acceptable fits from the same data set. Of concern . . . is the temporal ordering of the variables. For example, arousal may be a consequent of affect and not a determinant as suggested in (Mano & Oliver, 1993). . . . Additionally, the observed multicollinearity between performance, quality and positive affect which

\(^{33}\) Lisrel is a computer program for covariance structural analysis. Covariance analysis "aims to explain the structure or pattern among a set of latent (i.e., unobserved or theoretical variables), each measured by one or more manifest (i.e., observed or empirical) and typically fallible indicators. . . . In the literature, covariance structure analysis is also commonly referred to as 'structural modelling with unobservables', 'linear structural relations', 'latent variable equation modelling', 'linear structural equation modelling', and perhaps most often, a 'casual modelling with unobservables' "(Diamantopoulos, 1994 pp. 105-106).
attenuated the regression coefficients when all three were resident in the same analysis, suggests that a submodel of effect is operating between the cognitive performance and quality. (Oliver, 1994 p. 21)

Diamantopoulos (1994) concluded his article, 'Modelling with Lisrel', by warning about the meaning that can be interrupted from covariance structure analysis. He did so by quoting a pioneering article by Werts, Linn and Jöreskog (1974 pp. 288-289) regarding covariance structure modelling:

"it is relatively easy to find a structural model which fits the data quite closely . . . it is extremely difficult to demonstrate (a) that a model simulates reality, (b) that it provides better simulation than another model, (c) that the constructs defined in the model have greater explanatory power from the observed variables from which they are derived, and (d) that these constructs are in any sense useful in promoting better research."

Reader beware. (Diamantopoulos, 1994 p. 129)

Objective aggregate level vs. Subjective individual level of analysis. While most consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction research has concentrated on analysing the data at an objective aggregate level, analysis at the individual level is also necessary to obtain a better picture of the various judgements and processes involved (Erevelles, 1992). Jayanti and Jackson (1991) found, for hair dressing services [which involves considerable information input from the customer], that individual differences (perceived risk, involvement and innovativeness) among consumers significantly influenced the satisfaction judgement. When Jayanti and Jackson (1991) compared the fit of the individual difference model to the fit of the disconfirmation model (satisfaction as a function of mutual interdependency between the service provider and customer) and the performance model (satisfaction as a function of the service provider alone), they found that

the individual difference model performs the best compared to the other two. This suggests that, at least in those categories of services where experience qualities are high, consumers input into the service may be significant. . . . [R]esearchers have not considered the importance role played by individual differences on service evaluations. [This] . . . data suggests that we need to take individual differences into account when attempting to explain satisfaction with services. (p. 606)

Bitner (1995), Bitner et al. (1990), Czepiel, (1990), Fisk and Grove (1995), Storbacka, et al. (1994), Arnould and Price (1993) and Deighton (1992) have all argued for the need to examine individual episodes of the service/product encounter to gain a better understanding of the resultant customer satisfaction/dissatisfaction process, consequential behaviours and responses, and the interrelationships of the components involved in the post-consumption experience.
Deighton (1992) has argued that it is the consumer's perception of the 'performance' \(^{34}\) of the product/service which occurs within the episode or encounter, and not the objective nature of the product/service, which forms the basis for his/her evaluative judgement of quality or satisfaction. The consumer's evaluative judgement will therefore vary according to the consumer's subjective experience of the episode or encounter. As described by Deighton (1992),

\[\ldots\] the term "performance" is a frame on perception, not an objective state of nature. An event [in the episode/encounter] may be a performance to one person and a mere occurrence\(^{35}\) to another, depending on whether the observer believes an obligation to exist. When a consumer perceives an event as a performance, s/he can use it as evidence for a judgement of quality or satisfaction. Not all performances are judged the same way, however. (p. 363)

Looking across the proposed satisfaction/dissatisfaction models and conceptualisations, it is clear that the emphasis of previous theorising and research has been focused on aggregatable, objective functional evaluations of product/service consumption. That is, how the product/service performed on specific attributes and benefits provided by the product or service provider according to the consumer's predictive expectations or some other comparison standard (Burns, 1994; Klaus, 1985). Deighton (1992 p. 363) described this as 'contractual performance' in which "we simply credit the performance to the object [product or service provider] and judge the performance's quality against an internalised standard for similar objects." The expectancy-disconfirmation models describes this type of performance judgements consumers make regarding the quality of the contracted performance (Deighton, 1992). This model, however, only appears to fit services where well formed expectations already exist, i.e., with familiar services rather than unfamiliar ones (McGill & Iacobucci, 1992) or extraordinary service encounters (Arnould & Price, 1993). Arnould and Price (1993) noted from their results,

Satisfaction may have little to do with whether the experience unfolds as expected. \ldots\ [P]eople may be unable or unwilling to articulate the meanings they really seek from many service encounters and especially service encounters that offer something "extraordinary." Therefore, deciphering the unarticulated meanings that people seek become more important to service provision than recording articulated expectations.

\(^{34}\) Deighton (1992 pp. 362-363) conceptualised 'performance' as "the thing that gives rise to a consumption experience. \ldots\ [and it can be] argued that performances, not products [or services], are the most general objects of the verb 'to consume.' \ldots\ [A] product [or service] is merely the frozen potential for performance. Consumers may be said to choose products [services], but they consume performances. \ldots\ [P]erformances arise in response to an obligation. \ldots\ [P]erformance refers to action in fulfilment of a contract. When consumers or producers transact, obligations are created between them. Events that happen in discharge of these obligations are what I call performance in the general sense of the word. I define performance generally as a witnessed event, whose audience perceives it to happen in relation to a standard." Deighton (1992 p. 363), however, noted that "while many marketed performances are a result of transaction, there can be performance without transaction. There must, however, be a standard."

\(^{35}\) Deighton (1992) differentiated between occurrences and performance by noting that occurrence do not arise in response to an obligation whereas performances do. All events which occur in an episode or an encounter are either occurrences or performance.
Mechanically linking managerial decisions to stated consumer expectations does not necessarily lead to increased customer satisfaction. (p. 42)

Many different elements may emerge during the duration of a service performance itself in which their characters may not be known as a priori expectations (Fisk, 1981). Customer expectations may also change continuously during the duration of the encounter (Grönroos, 1993). Fisk and Grove (1995 p. 108) argued that "over the duration of a service encounter, many different elements may affect customers' experiences," hence, it is customers' experiences of the encounter that should be in the foreground of explaining their evaluations rather than their a priori expectations. Further, customers' expectations are indirectly taped through the evaluations of the customer's experiences.

Recent consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction theorising and research has also centred around what Deighton (1992) referred to as 'enacted performance'. That is, the consumer recognises that either the consumer and/or the producer is responsible for the resultant contractual performance of the service/product. As such, performance becomes an 'enacted' event either between the consumer and the object or the producer and the object. In this case, the satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement is best described as an attribution process rather than simply an expectancy-disconfirmation process.

The beneficial consequences of such an exclusive objective approach to examining consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction has meant that new theoretical developments such as the role of emotions have been carefully integrated into a comprehensive framework for understanding consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation (see Oliver, 1989). This unified approach, however, has also resulted in major emphasis being placed on the psychological approach (Vezina & Nicosia, 1990) and the evaluation of the product's/service's performance in the understanding of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction.

A broader conceptualisation of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction. Recently, a number of researchers (e.g., Arnould & Price, 1993; Burns, 1994; Deighton, 1992; Granbois, 1993; Jayanti & Jackson, 1991; Vezina & Nicosia, 1990) have all argued for a broader conceptualisation and/or framework of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction to gain a better understanding and explanation of its meaning and process formation. Satisfactory and dissatisfactory outcomes are based on the consumer's construct system which is mediated by his/her previous experiences and socialisation. This includes such factors as the consumer's behaviour, social worlds, and costs, and not just the performance of the product and/or the seller with whom they interact. (Granbois, 1993) generally noted that ...

... a larger normative view on the part of satisfaction researchers is urged .... This recommendation ... grows out of the notion that a broader, kind of consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction is, in part, based on behaviors of the consumers themselves, not just the performance of the sellers with whom they transact business.
At this point, however, experts in consumer satisfaction can only speculate as to what these inherently satisfying behaviors might be. An important potential contribution of satisfaction research is to identify those consumer behaviors causally linked to this broader concept of consumer satisfaction. (p. 37)

Satisfaction with many products/services depends on effective consumer participation or production in the performance to achieve the intended or appropriate outcome (Deighton, 1992; Fisk & Grove, 1995; Hubbert & Bitner, 1995; Jayanti & Jackson, 1991). Deighton (1992) argued that consumer production often has to be endogenous to the model of consumption, because consumers play a part in the production of enacted or dramatistic performance36.

The role can be passive or active. At its most passive, the consumer contributes to the production of the performance by "showing up," filling the classroom or retail store... In a slightly more active role, the consumer functions as both the audience and the co-performer. In spectator sports, for example, the audience member in the stands, by agreeing to behave like a fan, helps to produce the show that is collectively consumed.

At its most active, the consumer's role is to direct the production and be the performer, with the seller in the transaction functioning merely as a supplier. Consumers may use products as props, for example, when they buy particular clothing to mark social status or self concept. They may rent a stage, for example, when they rent a particular restaurant for a celebration...

What we do, and what we have done to us and for us, for entertainment or for edification, makes up much of the fabric of our experiences as consumers. (pp. 367, 370)

As such, consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the consumption outcome may be different to his/her satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the service provider and product performance. Hubbert and Bitner (1995) found that these two types of satisfaction/dissatisfaction (i.e., consumption and service providers satisfaction/dissatisfaction) exist in a high customer-participation service context. Although these were disparate from each other in regards to their antecedents and future intentions, they were correlated. The antecedents (perceived performance and disconfirmation) correlated more closely with the consumers' satisfaction of their outcome experiences, whereas, future intentions corresponded much more closely with their service provider satisfaction. Using both types of satisfaction provided a significantly better model fit.

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36 Enacted performance are ones in which the meeting of an obligation involves an individual. Dramatistic performances are ones "where the audience is aware that enactment occurs so as to be observed. Here performer and audience are each alert to the other's role, or, in Goffman's (1979) term, their behaviors are mutually monitored. The producer is putting on a show, and the consumer knows it" (Deighton, 1992 pp. 363-364).
Burns (1994), based on findings from in-depth interviews examining value and satisfaction of a health club facility and a study of consumers' evaluation of their dining room consumption experiences, suggested that in addition to the evaluation of the product [service] during use, consumers also form evaluations related to how they feel about themselves in the product [service] use situation. Thus, use experiences can result in both 'product (dis)satisfaction' and 'self (dis)satisfaction' outcomes. (p. 252)

Research by Holbrook and Corfman (1985), Richins (1994a; 1994b), and Scott and Lundstrom (1990) has indicated that products/services are used for both their instrumental and/or self expressive value. That is, products/services allow people to manipulate their environment, and understand and express themselves (Prentice, 1987). This suggests that when consumers evaluate a product/service it may result in 'self satisfaction/dissatisfaction' (Burns, 1994). While relatively little work has been carried out in regards to self satisfaction/dissatisfaction, it has been viewed as the result of individuals' assessments of how competent and/or morale they are portrayed to others in a given situation. ... Self satisfaction is then directly related to self esteem and results in individuals seeking situations where self satisfaction is an outcome and avoiding situations where self dissatisfaction is likely to occur. (Burns, 1994 p. 253)

If consumption of products/services define self and direct behaviour as suggested by Belk (1988), Solomon (1983) and Kehret-Ward, Yalch, and Yalch (1984), satisfaction/dissatisfaction may result according to what the product/service and resultant behaviours and responses, or lack of them, indicate or symbolise about the owner or user (Burns, 1994).

Recent research by Arnould and Price (1993) on consumers' river rafting experiences supports this notion that the consumption of products/service contributes to a sense of self and as such, defines their satisfying/dissatisfying experiences.

River rafting provides absorption and integration, personal control, joy and valuing, a spontaneous letting-be of the process. Dimensions of the extraordinary experience manifest themselves in the themes of harmony with nature, communitas [linkage, belonging to group], and personal growth and renewal. These experiential themes are evidenced across all the data; they are woven together over the course of the trip. Together the three themes are significant in explaining overall satisfaction. (Arnould & Price, 1993 p. 41)

Vezina and Nicosia (1990), from a broader perspective, suggested the need to examine consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction from a social psychological approach rather than from strictly a psychology perspective. In doing so, the research focus would move away from solely using internal factors in explaining consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction formation.
Vezina and Nicosia (1990) broadened the conceptualisation of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction by viewing it as

... the result of the many interactions that take place between the individual consumer and his/her environment. The focal point of interest ... still [being] consumption and CS/D at the individual level, and not at societal level .... [As such,] much more attention is given, and in fact pre-eminence is given ... to the influence of external factors in our understanding of the process of CS/D formation. (p. 36)

Vezina and Nicosia (1990 p. 36) argued, along with others (e.g., Arndt, 1978; Meadow, 1988), that consumption is an important activity to everybody's life, and as such, it significantly contributes to our overall life satisfaction. Recent work by Richins and Dawson (1992) indicated that individuals who hold strong material values and place their possessions and acquisitions at the centre of their lives, view possessions as a means to achieving happiness and as an indicator of their own and others' success.

Consumption takes place within a set of social institutions which create norms that individuals are expected to follow. These norms are enforced through mechanisms of rewards and sanctions. Vezina and Nicosia (1990), therefore, argued that the satisfaction/dissatisfaction experienced will depend on how well the consumer adapts to his/her social environment. Consumers who adopt and conform more easily and rapidly to the norms enforced by the consumption institutions should experience a greater level of satisfaction from their consumption experiences.

With respect to the expectancy-disconfirmation process, Vezina and Nicosia (1990) suggested, since expectations result from the interactions between the consumer and his/her environment, that expectations will depend on the nature of the environment as perceived and experienced by the consumer. Vezina and Nicosia (1990), therefore, viewed consumer perception as a crucial mediator in the evaluation of his/her consumption experience. "Those who perceive their environment as either too loosely, too tightly, or well structured, are likely to go through different processes of expectation formation and of confirmation or disconfirmation" (Vezina & Nicosia, 1990 p. 39).

Prakash (1984a), using Rokeach's (1968; 1973) personal value system, found that values influenced consumer product expectations. Assuming that personal values are linked to

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37 Rokeach's (1968) personal value system is composed of 18 instrumental values (preferred modes of conduct or behaviour) and 18 terminal values (preferred end states of being). As listed by Rokeach (1968 p. 161) these are as follows: INSTRUMENTAL VALUES: Ambitious (hard working, aspiring); Broadminded (open-minded); Sense of Capable (competent, effective); Cheerful (lighthearted, joyful); Clean (neat, tidy); Courageous (standing for beliefs); Forgiving (willing to pardon others); Helpful (working for the welfare of others); Honest (sincere, truthful); Imaginative (daring, creative); Independent (self-reliant, self-sufficient); Intellectual (intelligent, reflective); Logical (consistent, well-mannered); Loving (affectionate, tender); Obedient ( dutiful, respectful); Polite (courteous, well-mannered); Responsible (dependable); Self-controlled (retrained, self-
consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction as suggested by Prakash (1984a) and employing Rokeach's (1968; 1973) value system, Rogers, Ross, and Williams (1992) and Rogers and Williams (1990) found that personal values also influence consumers' complaining behaviours. Specifically, the work by Rogers and Williams (1990 p. 76) suggested that "the more strongly a value is held the more likely an individual is to exhibit public complaining behavior." The research by Rogers, et al. (1992), for three familiar but different case scenarios, indicated that there were gender differences, that various values were associated with the different complaining responses (e.g., no action, change future behavior, private complaining to family and friends), and these varied across the different products and services assessed.

Arnould and Price (1993), Deighton (1992) and Fisk and Grove (1995) have advanced a similar, but even broader framework from which to conceptualise and thus analyse and interpret consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction. These researchers have framed consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction resulting from 'dramatistic performances'. Deighton (1992 p. 370) advocated that "marketers produce, script, direct, and enact performances in order to fulfil their imputed obligations" in the marketing exchange. Dramatistic performances, however, result from the combined efforts of the actor(s), audience, and the setting involved (Deighton, 1992; Fisk & Grove, 1995). Both the actor(s) and audience decipher the meanings of dramatistic performances as they unfold in the encounter (Deighton, 1992; Fisk & Grove, 1995).

"Performance depends on the actions of the actor and audience, and each may feed on the other" (Deighton, 1992 p. 369). As human actions and responses unfold in an encounter they are monitored to obtain the projected meaning. The meanings of these actions and responses are deciphered by those who observe them according to the plot like structure and culture in which they are enacted. That is, the meaning of human actions and responses, and the settings are deciphered in light of judgements, intentions, and motives constituted in that culture and the enacted plot. The observer attributes meaning to the encounter with the product/service by a constructive process similar to reading (Deighton, 1992). A story describes how its events are linked together within the experience, and explains why and how it has occurred. The attributed meaning to a particular event within the experience is dependent on the event(s) that precedes it (Lallijee & Abelson, 1983; Read, 1987). The plot of the story integrates the events into a singular entity "with a complete and ordered structure in which the components of the episode are neither removable nor interchangeable" (Stern, 1994 p. 604). The evaluation of a separate event depends on the network in which it is embedded. Moreover, the context of the

TERMINAL VALUES - Comfortable Life (prosperous life); Exciting Life (stimulating, active life); Accomplishment (lasting contribution); World of Peace (free of war and conflict); World of Beauty (beauty of nature and arts); Equality (brotherhood, equal opportunity); Family Security (taking care of loved ones); Freedom (independence, free choice); Happiness (contentedness); Inner Harmony (freedom from inner conflict); Mature Love (sexual and spiritual intimacy); National Security (protection from attack); Pleasure (enjoyable, leisurely life); Salvation (saved, eternal life); Self Respect (self-esteem); Social Recognition (respect, admiration); True Friendship (close companionship); Wisdom (mature understanding of life). These 36 personal values are rated to obtain a measure personal value.
story (e.g., goals, characteristics of the environment, products, actors, social relationships, roles) allows the meanings to be understood and explained (Read, 1987). As in understanding a story, the observer of an encounter

makes a double attribution; there is the issue of assigning credit to the actor or object, but there is the prior question of why the actor is seeking to create the impression in the first place, a question of motive. (Deighton, 1992 p. 364)

Arnould and Price (1993) and Deighton (1992) have proposed that consumers make sense of and evaluate their consumption experiences by describing it as a narrative. The narrative of the experience is central to overall evaluation. Consumers evaluate the performance of the events within the story and its ending according to underlying cultural meanings and the motives behind the staging. In doing so, they may access an array of culturally informed, preconscious scripts or narrative themes in the evaluation. As described by Deighton (1992),

... narrative description is the construction process that makes episodes meaningful to observers. Thus, just as the psychology of choice among objects is built from the observation that objects are perceived as structures of attributes, so a psychology of events can be built from the observation that events are experienced as structures of descriptions. ... [A] story or narrative acts as a cognitive organizer for fragments of experience. ... A culture carries ideas about what is normal or ordinary, and when events occur that depart from the norms, there is a compelling need to make sense of them. The solution is to construct a story, whose plot mitigates or at least makes comprehensible the deviation by relating it to the culture's norms.

Performances supply setting and action. Stories are constructions, built from the raw material of the performance by audiences who infer or recognize the operation of character, goals, attempts to satisfy goals, and obstacles to doing so (Bruner, 1986; Deighton, Romer, & McQueen, 1989). The audience, in effect, must construct its own version of the events. It draws on its personal knowledge of human motivation and emotion, its lay psychological theories as well as the cultural presumptions, and maps them onto the action of the performance. By the means of the story, action on the physical plane becomes motivated action on a personally meaningful plane. ... Story telling is thus unique to each audience member. Each story, constructed in response to the dramatistic actions of the marketer/performer, describes what sense came be made from the performance. (p. 368)

As such, the narrative represents a "theory of symbolic actions -- words and/or deeds -- that have sequence and meaning for those who live, create, and interpret them" (Fisher, 1984). It is this broad framework of 'lived' experiences, as proposed by Arnould and Price (1993), Deighton (1992), and Hunt (1993), that offers the richest base for understanding the consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction phenomenon. From this perspective, the social-psychological and cultural meanings can be examined as well as the psychological and dynamic processes which determine consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction.
CONCLUSIONS

This review has examined the ways in which consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction has been conceptualised and modelled. While past research has significantly contributed to a greater understanding of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction by relating it to antecedents and other post-consumption responses and behaviours, there are still differing views regarding the key constructs and how they integrate into a comprehensive model. Recent enquires have questioned the role and ability of the satisfaction/dissatisfaction construct(s) and measurements to predict important consumer behaviours and provide an appropriate foundation from which to base strategies and decisions critical to business success. It is anticipated this will lead to a better understanding of the satisfaction/dissatisfaction phenomenon, particularly its relationships with critical consumer behaviours for business success (Woodruff, 1993). Further investigation, however, is required to develop a comprehensive model which incorporates different theories and paradigms to explain the 'processes' which underlie a consumer's experience in his/her post-consumption evaluation. Such a model should consider the consumer being more than just a receptor of persuasive messages and/or an evaluator of the service and product in the shopping environment. It should also incorporate what the consumer contributes to the experience, his/her appraisal and evaluation of the experience, and how these directly or indirectly influence resultant consumer responses and behaviours.

Although elaborate research designs and statistical techniques have been used in testing proposed models of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction, these quantitative methods of analysis do not fully illustrate and simulate 'reality', and nor do they explain what 'drives' the process of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction. Rather than using quantitative analyses to address this phenomenon, Hunt (1993) proposed, as has Deighton (1992), that through a method such as storytelling it may be possible to achieve a greater understanding of consumers' 'lived' realities of satisfying and dissatisfying experiences. Hunt (1993) noted,

... it is only in the story context that the richness of CS/D&CB [Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction and Complaining Behavior] comes into focus. We can pass out all the questionnaires we want, but we will not understand "what happened" or "what they think" until we hear consumers' stories in their own words.

We need to write the stories down. The stories then become case histories. From a multitude of stories we can draw inferences about human behavior, inferences in which we are confident because we have heard (or read) that story theme so many times that it is accepted as valid. We can repeatedly seek the key insights to be gained from the stories. Ten or twenty years from now the stories will still be there. As we learn more and understand more we will gain new insights from those same stories. (p. 41)
CHAPTER 3
MEMORY-WORK: THEORY

The memory-work method as described by Crawford, et al. (1992) was used to collect, analyse and interpret the data. The following sections explain the theoretical overview of memory-work as outlined by Crawford, et al. (1992) and Haug and Others (1987) in relation to phenomenological hermeneutics (see Bleicher, 1980; Valdés, 1987).

Theoretical Overview Of Memory-Work in Relation to Phenomenological Hermeneutics

Introduction to Memory-Work Theory and Method.
The method, memory-work, as developed by Haug and Others (1987) and modified by Crawford, et al. (1992) analyses and interprets lived experiences through self and collective reflections of written memories. The focus of memory-work is to uncover the social constructions of experiences as they contribute to self-identity through person-cultural dialects. Memory-work documents the production of constructed meanings for the individual (i.e., self) and the collective of individual others through both the self and the collective others appraisal and reappraisal of their own and the others' experiences for a given theme (Crawford, et al., 1992 pp. 39-40). Thus, memory-work seeks to obtain a heightened understanding of self and the collective's lived experiences.

In general, memory-work involves the analysis of the self’s written memories centred on a specific theme from every participant in a small collective group. These memories are written according to prescribed rules which are to write: (a) about a specific episode in the third person, (b) in as much detail as possible including circumstantial and trivial detail, and (c) without interpretation, explanation, or biography. Then, in a structured group discussion of the collective participants, each memory is read, reflected upon, analysed and interpreted. The group compares the memories for similarities and differences and notes such things as gaps, contradictions, and clichés in each memory. In this way the process by which meanings are derived for the specific theme being examined is uncovered. Each written memory and each participant's reflections of her/his own memory, along with the group's reflection of each memory, is important in uncovering the process. The resultant analysis and interpretations can be related to existing theory by the researcher(s) or may lead to new theory development (Crawford, et al., 1992; Haug & Others, 1987).
A Phenomenological and Hermeneutic Approach.

Memory-work theory and method is based on phenomenology and hermeneutics. It is phenomenological (see, e.g., Merleau-Ponty, 1962; Thompson, Locander, & Pollio, 1989; Thompson, Locander, & Pollio, 1990) in that it seeks to obtain, through a self reflective analysis, that which is conscious to an individual regarding her/his lived experience. It is hermeneutic (see, e.g., Arnold & Fischer, 1994; Gadamer, 1975; Gadamer, 1976; Ricoeur, 1974a; 1981; Thompson, Pollio, & Locander, 1994) in that both the self and the collective reflective analyses of lived experiences are indirect and interpretive, rather than being intuitive or introspective descriptions.

Phenomenological hermeneutics, and thus the memory-work method, is positioned against the mechanistic and dualistic views of Cartesianism such as empiricism and rationalisation (Crawford, et al., 1992; Hirschman & Holbrook, 1992; Packer, 1985; Thompson, et al., 1989). Reality is not, as perceived in empiricism, "a machine like event determined by forces and constraints" where it is reduced into components, quantitatively measured and structured into predictive laws and principles (Thompson, et al., 1989 p.137). Falsely, in social research, empirical research has approached human beings from the point of view of their controllability, the predicability of their actions. Character traits and modes of behaviour have thus been catalogued as fixed elements within human subjectivity (Haug & Others, 1987 p. 35).

The underpinning of memory-work is that reality is not dualistic, as viewed in rationalism, where human beings are seen to exist independently of their physical world (Thompson, et al., 1989). Nor is it possible to abstract formal rules which predict causal relationships (Packer, 1985). Reality as viewed by phenomenology and hermeneutics, is 'holistic' and 'contextualistic' (Thompson, et al., 1989;1994). Human experience is "rooted in history and culture and cannot be understood independently of them" (Faulconer & Williams, 1985 p. 1179). Human experience is understood by relating its specific meaning(s) to other experiences and to the overall context of the life-world (Thompson, et al., 1989). Knowledge of reality, therefore, is gained through interpretation. It is not self-evident (Crawford, et al., 1992).

The memory-work method treats the 'subject' and the 'object' of knowledge as correlative and co-constitutive and rejects the view that the subject and the object designate independent entities. As Crawford, et al. (1992 p. 38) stated, "Meanings are constituted in action and action in meanings." Memory-work does not detach the subject from the object as do pencil-and-paper tasks (e.g., questionnaires and experiments) and most interview situations. Most interviews, as do questionnaires and experimental studies, adopt a reflective, disengaged attitude to the topic of study and/or make evaluative judgements to a hypothetical situation (Packer, 1985). Memory-work, even though examined from the third person perspective, as a hermeneutic inquiry focuses on the semantic and textual meanings of everyday life activities where the subject is not directly detached from her/his actions. Interpretations of meanings, as
such, are mediated through the subject who is located within a context of traditional meanings (i.e., [pre-] understandings or prejudices), instead of being predicted or explained through objective laws which are independent from the understanding subject (Bleicher, 1980).

**Hermeneutics, Subjectivity, and Memory-Work.**

Memory-work theory and method is aligned with Ricoeur's philosophy of hermeneutics and subjectivity as described by Madison (1990). Ricoeur (1974b) theorised 'existence' as being 'meaningful', and thus suggested the use of self-reflections in the interpretative understanding of one's experiences.

Reflection is that act of turning back upon itself by which a subject grasps, in a moment of intellectual clarity and moral responsibility, the unifying principle of the operations among which it is dispersed and forgets itself as subject (Ricoeur, 1991b p. 12).

Ricoeur (1966) recognised, however, that reflection is not purely 'self-positioning' but is determined by the dialogue which the self receives and the context in which it is grounded. "There is no self-understanding which is not mediated by signs, symbols and texts, in the last resort understanding coincides with the interpretation given to these mediating terms" (Ricoeur, 1991b p. 15). Thus, reflection in the hermeneutic method is not just reduced to transcendental subjectivism, nor is it just descriptive. It is the deciphered and interpreted 'truth'.

Ricoeur 'desubjectivized' subjectivity by rejecting the positivistic position of the transcendental self (i.e., the subject in its own awareness is the source of all knowledge) (Madison, 1990 p. 92). As Madison (1990) noted, Ricoeur (1969) in his 1969 essay, *The Symbolises of Evil*, formulated that

meaning does not originate in the conscious, reflecting subject but comes from the outside from its encounter with certain thought-provoking symbols mediated by its culture. Meaning is the result, not of the work of constitution, but of an effort of appropriation. The thesis embodied in *Le Symbolique du mal* (1960) is that the conscious subject has access to itself and can know, and achieve an understanding of itself, only by means of the mediation of symbols. . . . The presence of the subject to itself, which is the very definition of subjectivity and self consciousness, is an indirect, mediated presence. And thus were it not for its participation in the realm of culture, the subject would not exist as such. (p. 93)

Ricoeur (1991b) initially saw hermeneutics as an interpretation of symbols, to explicate the often hidden meanings in these double-sense expressions. Some researchers in consumer behaviour (e.g., Hirschman & Holbrook, 1981; Levy, 1981; Mick, 1986) have taken a similar approach. As Ricoeur's thoughts widened, however, his focus of hermeneutics was extended from symbols to texts, in that the phenomenon of multiple meaning is not just characteristic of signs in themselves but are grounded in the context in which they appear and are employed. Thus, the purpose of hermeneutics to Ricoeur became the interpretation of textuality itself (Madison, 1990).
Ricoeur (1991b) recognised the need to develop interpretative strategies to 'reduce' and 'demask' textual meanings to obtain 'hidden dimensions', such as unconscious drives or social determinants, which operate 'behind the back' of the subject. To access self-meaning of existence, a hermeneutic method can not have a philosophy of immediate consciousness but rather, must allow self-reflection on a 'critical moment'. In this way, an individual obtains access to the signs which are expressed in his/her effort to exist and desire to be and thus, allows the self to indirectly decipher meaning of his/her existence. In other words, self only exists through reflections in the deciphering of the documents of his/her life experiences (Ricoeur, 1974b).

Ricoeur's reflexive philosophy provides us with support for using 'self'-reflection of critical experience(s) in a hermeneutic process to interpret and thus understand our own experiences through the memory-work method. As Madison (1990) summarised,

Ricoeur's reflexive philosophy is not a philosophy of consciousness, and the hermeneutical subject is not a metaphysical subject . . . . The hermeneutical subject is a speaking/spoken subject; it exists only as the self-affirming object of effort and desire, and to the degree that it exists self-understandingly it does so only as the result of the constitutive and critical play of signs, symbols, and texts; it is not a natural (or metaphysical) given but the result of the process of semiosis. (pp. 94-95)

Ricoeur (1991a) noted,

We understand ourselves only by the long detour of signs of humanity deposited in cultural works. What would we know of love, hate, of moral feelings and, in general of all that we call the self if these had not been brought to language and articulated by literature? Thus what seems most contrary to subjectivity, and what structural analysis discloses as the texture of the text, is the very medium within which we can understand ourselves. (p. 87)

Thus Ricoeur (1991b) argued,

To understand oneself is to understand oneself as one confronts the [written] text and to receive from it the conditions for a self other than that which first undertakes the reading. Neither of the two subjectivities, neither that of the author nor that of the reader, is thus primary in the sense of an originary presence of the self to itself . . . . [The first task of hermeneutics] is . . . to seek in the text itself, on one hand, the internal dynamic that governs the structuring of the work and, on the other hand, the power the work possesses to project itself outside itself and to give birth to a world that would truly be the "thing" referred to by the text. The internal dynamics and the external projection constitute what I call the work of the text. It is the task of hermeneutics to reconstruct this twofold work. We can look back on the path that has lead us from . . . that of . . . reflexivity, [to] that of . . . phenomenology, . . . to that of the mediation of signs, then by symbols, and, finally, by texts. A hermeneutical philosophy is a philosophy that accepts all the demands of this long detour and that gives up the dream of a total mediation, at the end of which reflection would once again amount to intellectual intuition in the transparence to itself of an absolute subject. (pp. 17-18)
As with hermeneutics, memory-work does not separate the subject from the object in the obtainment of knowledge (Crawford, et al., 1992). In doing memory-work, a collective of participants are viewed as 'co-researchers' or 'co-workers' where they are their own subjects. They use their own experiences as data through the writing and discussion of their own memories and gain an understanding of these experiences, both 'then' and 'now', through their own and the collective's interpretation(s) (Crawford, Kippax, Onyx, Gault, & Benton, 1990; Crawford, et al., 1992). Haug and Others (1987) argued,

If we refuse to understand ourselves simply as a bundle of reactions to all-powerful structures, or to the social reactions within which we have formed us, if we search instead for possible indications of how we have participated actively in the formation of our past experiences, then the usual mode of social scientific research, in which individuals figure exclusively as objects of the process of research, has to be abandoned. (p. 35)

In memory-work, the lines of objectivity which separate the researcher from the subjects are explicitly removed (Friend & Rummel, 1995). Memory-work as a hermeneutic process bridges the subject-object dichotomy by engaging the researcher(s) in the interpretation of both self and others through his/her/their [pre-]understandings. These [pre-]understanding exist in both the researcher's knowledge of existing theory and research finding as well as shared social-cultural knowledge with other individuals (Arnold & Fischer, 1994). As Crawford, et al. (1990, p. 336) noted, in memory-work we seek not "to eliminate subjectivity (in the logical-positivist sense); [but] rather we explicitly engage with it, and do not try to deny or overcome it."

**Hermeneutics and Linguistic Text/Stories.**

Hermeneutics is concerned with the interpretation of understanding linguistic text (Arnold & Fischer, 1994 p. 55). "Language," as viewed by Gadamer (1975 p. 345), "is the medium of the hermeneutical experience. . . . Language is the middle ground in which understanding and agreement . . . takes place between two people." Through our language, verbal or nonverbal, meanings are filtered, encoded and communicated to one's self and others. Language is how we know and interpret our world. It is how we give meaning to our experiences (Arnold & Fischer, 1994 p. 58).

"Humans live embedded within a shared system of signs based upon public language and other symbolic objects that confer a social existence and identity" (Holbrook & O'Shaughnessy, 1988 p. 400). Language is a system of interrelated meanings that provide the humans with a shared, cultural frame of reference (Thompson, et al., 1994 p. 434). A subject in search of meaning and self understanding, as pointed out by Madison (1990),

... is a linguistic subject, a subject which is given to and which knows itself by means of the language it inhabits. And language ... does not exist in void. The characteristics of those autonomous linguistic entities called literary texts (whose meaning is not to be explained subjectively, in terms of authorial intention) is that they refer to a world which they themselves project or bring into existence by means of their
own literary devices. The task of hermeneutics is to reconstruct the internal dynamic of a text so as to make manifest the world which it projects. (p. 95)

When we seek to understand personal actions, we do so through our language. We account for ours and others' actions through telling and writing stories. That is, we understand by making sense of our experiences through stories (Madison, 1990 p. 97). The stories gives meaning, relevance and value to the experience that would otherwise just be a sequence of happenings (Bleicher, 1980 p. 31; Madison, 1990 p. 97). Gadamer and Ricoeur (1982) explained that to understand human action we must understand motive and its explanatory force, and to understand explanatory force,

[the motive] . . . must be given in the form of a kind of small autobiography. By that I mean that I must put my motive under the rules of story telling; and it is quite possible that this process of story telling might accompany the generation of intentions themselves, as if retrospection were always suffocating the prospective mood of action. . . . [W]hen the point of view of the onlooker is added to that of the agent, . . . the onlooker will not only consider action in terms of its motive, but must also [consider it] in terms of its consequences, perhaps of its unintended consequences. A different way of making sense with the action occurs then, and also a different way of reading it is as a quasi-text. (cited in Madison, 1990 pp. 97-98)

Furthermore, Ricoeur noted that individuals can only deal with their texts in a dialectic of distanciation and appropriation (Bleicher, 1980 p. 220). Only by gaining an understanding of our ideology can we start to explain our motives. Critiques of ideology

. . . rests on the moment of distanciation. . . . The concept of distanciation is the dialectical counterpart of the notion of belonging, in the sense that we belong to a historical tradition through a relation of distance which oscillates between remoteness and proximity. To interpret is to render near what is far (temporally, geographically, culturally, spiritually). In this respect, mediation of the text is the model of distanciation which would not simply be alienating, . . . but which would be genuinely creative. The text is, par excellence, the basis for communication in and through distance. . . . Since distanciation is a moment of belonging, the critique of ideology can be incorporated, as an objective explanatory segment, in the project of enlarging and restoring communication and self-understanding. (Ricoeur, 1991c p. 35)

In this way, subjectivity is not the first stage, but the final one in gaining an understanding of our actions. As Ricoeur (1991c) noted, it is through the act of appropriation that we . . . respond to the matter of the text, and hence to the proposals of meaning the text unfolds. It is thus the counterpart of the distanciation that establishes the autonomy of the text with the respect to the author, its situation, and its original addressee. . . . [T]o understand oneself is to understand oneself in front of the text. Consequently what is appropriation from one point of view is disappropriation from another. To appropriate is to make what is alien become one's own. What is appropriated is indeed the matter of the text. But the matter of the text becomes my own only if I disappropriate myself, in order to let the matter of the text be. So I exchange the me, master of itself, for the self, disciple of the text. (p. 37)
Thus Ricoeur (1991a p. 87) viewed appropriation as "quite the contrary of contemporaneousness and congeniality: it is the understanding at and through distance."

**Memory-Work Text.**

Memory-work text provides the medium in which we understand the motives of our past and future actions. Besides past experiences being used to determine further actions, memories are used to give agency to self. That is, we engage in our past memories to gain a sense of self. We talk with ourself, as do others, in response to our evaluations. Thus through textual interpretation of the written memories by both self and others, participants gain meanings and intelligibility of their, and the others', actions and emotions (Crawford, et al., 1992; Kippax, Crawford, Benton, Gault, & Noesjinwan, 1988).

Similar to that of storytelling as advocated by Gadamer & Ricoeur (1982), participants in memory-work reconstruct their actions in and emotions of an event. Through memory-work texts, we are able "to give an account of things we have actually done, . . . without judging ourselves by the criteria of the culture." That is, participants can "arrive at a perception of self . . . without appearing inadequate" in relation to cultural views (Haug & Others, 1987 p. 43). However, as pointed out by Haug and Others (1987),

> It is commonly argued that the lack of objective validity in subjective experience arises from individual propensity to twist and turn, reinterpret and falsify, forget and repress events, pursuing what is in fact no more than an ideological construction of individuality, giving oneself an identity for the present to which the past are subordinated. It is therefore assumed that individuals' accounts of themselves and their analyses of the world are not to be trusted; they are coloured by subjectivity. (p. 40)

Unlike some forms of storytelling (e.g., case histories, narrative accounts), memories are not 'coloured' by subjectivity. Memory texts engage with the past by describing "what was subjectively significant"; whereas, case histories and accounts engage in "what is and what has become subjectively significant" (Crawford, et al., 1992 p. 38). It is assumed in memory-work,

> . . . that what is remembered is remembered because it is, in some way, problematic or unfamiliar, in need of review. The actions and episodes are remembered because they were significant then and remain significant now. Their significance lies in the continuing search for intelligibility necessitated by the unfamiliarity of the episode, the conflict and the contradiction that might have been present, and the lack of resolution (Crawford, et al., 1992 p. 38).

In this way, written memories provide reflections of past events and actions which serve as the starting point for memory-work analysis and interpretation.
Memories are written according to a set of rules to ensure that the participants "write a description of a particular episode rather than an account or a general abstracted description" (Crawford, et al., 1992 p. 45). By rediscovering a particular given situation

- its smells, sounds, emotions, thoughts, attitudes - the situation itself draws us back into the past, freeing us for a time from notions of our present superiority over our past selves; it allows us to become once again . . . a stranger - whom we once were. . . . [In such a state,] we find ourselves discerning linkages never perceived before: forgotten traces, abandoned intentions, lost desires and so on. By spotlighting one situation alone, we learn to recall and to reassess history . . . [By] stepping back in the past, we embark upon a form of archaeology. We discover fragments of an architecture which we begin to reconstruct. (Haug & Others, 1987 pp. 47-48)

Haug (1992 p. 22) later added, "In short, writing is a form of production, an activity which creates a new consciousness." Furthermore, by writing about a specific episode we avoid giving "an account which typically includes warranting and justification" in terms of things that are specific to ourselves (Crawford, et al., 1992 p. 45).

**Triggers.** To facilitate the memory-work process through the comparison of memories, it is necessary to select topics about which all participants can write a specific episode (Haug & Others, 1987 p. 52). Each topic is used as a 'trigger' to draw out a specific episode from one's memory, which is analysed and interpreted with the other participants' written memories evoked from the same trigger. Selected triggers will of course depend on the area under investigation but, as pointed out by Crawford, et al. (1992), the triggers selected are of great importance to the success of the study. Some triggers do not provide the expected information in relation to the area being studied, while others lack the needed details and contradictions to enable analysis and interpretation of the events and actions. In other words, some triggers produce memories which are totally off track to that being studied and others are too rounded and smooth; too plausible. As such, they lack any sense of contradiction or conflict which allows us to interpret their meanings. The 'ready-made', apparent triggers which are rooted in popular prejudices (Haug & Others, 1987), produce obvious and over-rehearsed responses (Crawford, et al., 1992 p. 45). While these triggers can produce stories which document or describe social representations of a certain topic (e.g., anger), they may not reveal much about how they were constructed (Crawford, et al., 1992 p. 46).

**Writing of memory-work text.** To allow participants to give meaning to their episodes through deconstruction, reconstruction and analysis, they are asked to describe their memories down to the very last detail, irrespective of whether or not they consider it essential to the story. In doing so, participants are able to "denaturalise existing value-judgements" and "disobey the precepts they embody" (Haug & Others, 1987 p. 49). As noted by Crawford, et al. (1992 p. 46), it is in the detail of the episode that "we recognize the constraints placed on our understandings by the notion of 'relevance'; the so called 'irrelevant' aspects of episodes or events point to the hidden moral and normative aspects of our actions."
To avoid explanation through transcendental events of the situation and/or self, about which both Ricoeur and Gadamer so strongly warned, participants are asked to write without biography and autobiography. Linear constructions of earlier actions and events which lead to and determine later ones produce a coherence text, and as such, prohibit later analyses and understanding of the episode (Crawford, et al., 1992). For the same reason (i.e., to avoid coherence), participants are specifically asked to write without interpretation or explanation. Both interpretation and explanation lead to smoothing over the rough edges, and thus covers up any absences and inconsistencies in their memories. As summed up by Haug and Others (1987),

A story of the autobiographical kind represents the sum total of all the social judgements and prejudices, semi-scientific theories, everyday opinions and so on we carry around in our heads and which serve - usually implicitly - as models for our interpretation of the world today. (p. 47)

By following the rule of writing memories in the third person, participants are also apt to provide more detail without explanation or justification.

Writing in the third person enables the subject to have a 'bird's eye view' of the scene, to picture the detail. The subject reflects on herself/himself from the outside - from the point of view of the observer, and so is encouraged to describe rather than warrant. (Crawford, et al., 1992 p. 47)

By contrast, when writing an account in the first person, Kippax, et al. (1988 p. 24) explained "the person gives an appropriate and hence intelligible description. Meanings present in any account have already been interpreted and constructed. Accounting encourages explanation and biography."

Thus, by writing in the third person, participants avoid taking their own self and interest into consideration. In the process of writing, however, they become more attentive to or aware of themselves (Haug & Others, 1987). Along the same track, writing in third person also protects the self from associating itself with any painful past experiences. It provides us with a means of distancing ourself from any destabilising event(s) to our self, but at same time allows us to write fully and completely about our past experiences (Haug & Others, 1987).

In writing a memory, rather than presenting it verbally, the self is also de-emphasised. When talking about oneself it is difficult not to get involved in self presentation. As speakers, we tend to automatically justify and interpret our stories (Crawford, et al., 1992). Writing gives the participant "permission not to bother to make things 'normal' or proper" (Crawford, et al., 1992 p. 47). Writing, as noted by Haug and Others (1987),

... is a transgression of boundaries, an exploration of new territory. It involves making public the events of our lives, wriggling free from the constraints of purely
private and individual experience. . . . As an alternative to accepting everyday events mindlessly, we recalled them in writing, in an attempt to identify points in the past where we succeeded in defending ourselves against the encroachment of others. (p. 36)

Writing of our memories, therefore, provides written texts of our everyday lives which often appear to be unimportant and uninteresting (Crawford, et al., 1992). Through the details of our writings we are able to document the taken-for-granted and the conflict that occurs "between the dominant cultural and the oppositional attempts to wrest cultural meaning and pleasure from life" (Haug & Others, 1987 p. 41). Thus, by analysing and interpreting the taken-for-granted and the conflict we are able to illustrate its meaning and the process of its creation.

As memory-work attempts to uncover the process of the creation of meanings, the accuracy of the memories is not a central issue (Kippax, et al., 1988). Crawford, et al. (1990) pointed out,

In constructing and deconstructing past events, we are concerned with the meanings of those events and not the details of them. We examine the way the events were appraised both then and now. It is the appraisal that forms the basis of our theorising, not the "truth" or otherwise of the appraisal. For example, if the action of another in one of our memories was misappraised (misinterpreted) by the actor then or now or by the group in its theorising, we could not know it. This is not our concern. We are examining how we reacted to what we believed to be the meaning of the action .... (p. 337)

Gabriel (1991) and Allaire and Firsirotu (1984) noted that the understanding of a story develops not through the accuracy of the account of its past events, but through its reconstructed symbolic meanings. Thus, its truth and value lie in its meaning (Gabriel, 1991).

Kippax, et al. (1988), however, noted that it is important that the meanings of the appraisal be remembered accurately. Research, such as Neisser's (1982) on the Watergate testimonies, illustrated that meanings are remembered accurately even though the circumstantial details may alter when it is reconstructed. Diary studies (e.g., Hirst, 1994; Wagenaar, 1994), where subjects test their memories of their recorded experiences, illustrated that while a great deal may be forgotten not much is misremembered. That is, the subjects made few overt errors or confabulations in what they did remember (Neisser, 1994 p. 7). Barclay (1986) also noted,

. . . that there is a discrepancy between what one remembers about everyday autobiographical events and what really happened. . . . It is not the case, however, that the meaning around which autobiographical memory is organized is a complete fabrication of life events. There is a fundamental integrity to one's autobiographical recollection. (p. 97)

Eigenkind (1991) argued along the same line as Crawford, et al. (1990) and Kippax, et al. (1988), but from the opposite direction and a slightly different perspective. Eigenkind commented that what is remembered and expressed will depend on social and cultural references and demands, and as such will determine the meaning(s) of the actions.
While there is support for using memories for understanding the meanings of consumer experiences, Gardial et al. (1994) note some limitations with retrospective recall. First, memory of processing is different from information processing. Recall which relies on long-term memory may lead to selectivity of details remembered, rationality bias, and reconstructions. Post experience thoughts may also alter the accuracy of recall of the actual experience. Second, many cognitive processes used in evaluating an experience are unconscious and can never be adequately measured. Gardial et al. (1994 p. 551), however, note that individuals typically make "evaluations/choices utilizing their memories of experiences, decisions, and products, regardless of the 'accuracy' of this information." Memories therefore are predictive of future behaviours.

**The Hermeneutic Process.**
Arnold and Fischer (1994 p. 59) noted that the "interpretation of a text involves the explication, the clarification, and the working out of the possibilities of our existence as humans." This process is an iterative one (see Spiggle, 1994), and as such is referred to as the 'hermeneutic circle'. The analysis moves back and forth relating parts of the text to the 'whole' and the 'whole' to the 'parts' to determine the meanings of both the parts and the whole of the text. In this way each new reading lends itself to a reinterpretation of an earlier interpretation. This gradually leads to a more comprehensive and valid account of the parts as well as the whole text (Arnold & Fischer, 1994; Bernstein, 1983; Holbrook & O'Shaughnessy, 1988; O'Shaughnessy & Holbrook, 1988; Thompson, et al., 1994). Iteration of the text persist until its meanings are free of contradictions, and thus all parts integrate into a coherent interpretation. This is important because contradictions in a text may indicate minor errors or aberrations in the interpretation and understanding of the text (Bernstein, 1983).

As an interpreter gains an understanding of the text, aligning it with his/her pre-understanding, there is a 'fusion of horizons' (Gadamer, 1975). That is, a fusion of horizons occurs whenever the meanings expressed by the subject are understood in relation to the concepts and issues relevant to the interpreter (Thompson, et al., 1994). As pointed out by Arnold and Fischer (1994 p. 64), "in the process the [pre-]understanding of the interpreter is changed until it is able to account for the sense of the text. [Pre-]understanding becomes understanding." Thus in hermeneutics, the subject-object dichotomy is broken down and allows interpretations regarding the collective 'self' (Arnold & Fischer, 1994).

**Generalisability of memory-work.** Through the process of gaining an understanding of others and ourselves, we obtain generalisations regarding reflective insights. "These generalizations will not be factlike statements or casual explanations of human behavior; rather they will be reflective insights not so much about the other as about a collective human community" (Arnold & Fischer, 1994 p. 64). By the interpreter(s) reflecting on meanings
from his/her/their own experiences, beliefs and/or theoretical knowledge, key relationships between self-interpretations and social-cultural meanings and beliefs can be formulated (Thompson, et al., 1994 p. 435). In the same light, the following discussion by Haug and Others (1987) illustrated how memory-work fits within this hermeneutic framework regarding generalisation of individual experiences.

Since it is as individuals that we interpret and suffer our lives, our experiences appear unique and thus of no value for scientific analysis. The mass character of social process is obliterated within the concept of individuality. Yet we believe that the notion of uniqueness of experience and the various ways in which it is consciously assessed is fiction. The number of possibilities for action open to us is radically limited. We live according to a whole series of imperatives: social pressures, natural limitations, the imperative of economic survival, the given conditions of history and culture. Human beings produce their lives collectively. It is within the domain of collective production that individual experiences becomes possible. If therefore a given experience becomes possible, it is also subject to universalization. What we perceive as 'personal' ways of adapting to the social are also potentially generalizable modes of appropriation. . . . It is . . . certainly possible to explore actual lived experiences within social relations with a view of reaching generalizable conclusions. On the other hand, if research limits itself to the general and ignores the particular, it will be impossible ever to discover the conditions of production of human phenomena. (pp. 43-44)

In a similar argument, Hollway (1989 p. 15) noted that "the concern for mass generalisation and the requirement to use large numbers for statistical manipulation together produce knowledge which does not address the complex conditions of people and their conduct, either in their uniqueness or their commonality." Haug and Others (1987) and Hollway (1989) have argued that the knowledge derived from any participant is valid because it is based on personal experience. Such information becomes generalisable to others when it is plausible and represents similar experiences (Crawford, et al., 1990; 1992). Furthermore, Crawford, et al. (1990) argued that the collective nature of the memory-work method provides tests of plausibility. By examining collectively the common patterns in our lives, focusing on common experiences and processes, and by eliminating biography, memory-work emphasises the social rather than the individual domain (Crawford, et al., 1990 p. 337). Haug and Others (1987) pointed out,

Individual modes of appropriation of the social are frequently conceived as of as personally unique . . . this involves an underestimation of the society of human beings. . . . What individuals feel to be appropriate to and useful to their personal needs is pregiven in the form of dominant cultural values. . . . [Furthermore] it is . . . virtually impossible for them entirely to abandon traditional norms and expectations. (p. 44)

Although highly improbable, Crawford, et al. (1992) recognised that the findings of a memory-work group may be only relevant to its participants. As such, findings from other collectives for the same trigger topic(s) must be compared and analysed against each other before results can be considered representative of a larger population. These researchers suggested that "confidence in the relevance of the outcome of memory-work to other persons other than those
taking part can best be achieved by ensuring the heterogeneity of the groups themself" (Crawford, et al., 1992 p. 42). Haug and Others (1987 p. 58) also supported the use of heterogenous groups in that "the more diverse the backgrounds and present occupations of [its] members, . . . the more far-reaching the insights gained into socialization in general."

The Hermeneutic Process of Memory-Work.
The 'part-to-whole' mode of interpretation is the base from which memory-work procedures and principles are structured. Memory-work research "is a collective process of recording and analysis with each member actively participating in the research process" (Koutroulis, 1993 p. 77). In general, the collective group seeks to understand each participant's memory-text by identifying its parts and grounding them in its overall context (Haug & Others, 1987). Each memory-text is then compared with the others in which the collective identifies the common patterns. As such, the collective gains an understanding of how the whole (i.e., society or social experience), gives meaning to its parts (i.e, individual experiences). Furthermore, this process is an interactive one in that the analysis moves back and forth between analysing and understanding the individual texts and identifying common patterns among them. In this way, memory-work generates knowledge of the process of construction,

. . . from two sources: first, each co-researcher's reflective activities, that is how each co-researcher 'talks to her/himself' about her/his own experiences; and second how co-researchers 'talk to each other' about their own and others' actions and experiences. Reflections on (memories of) a particular episode or event are based in the meaning arrived at and available then, at the time of the episode, and now, at the time of the theorizing. Members of the collective are thus regarded as 'experts in everyday life' (Haug, 1987, p. 54). The collective theorizing . . . involves the co-researchers in a reappraisal of these meanings in the light of their common experiences. (Crawford, et al., 1992 p. 50)

It is through this collective process that it is "possible to uncover new relations and important traces of evidence . . ." (Haug & Others, 1987 p. 49). The collective group "attempts to extricate some clarity from the confusion" written in their memory-texts by reconstructing the past events and making the object of their discussions the process whereby they work their way through and into ideology (Haug & Others, 1987 p. 47). To extricate this clarity Haug and Others (1987) suggested that it is essential for the participants to visualise the events in the past and their ideological foundations in a new and unprejudiced way. As such, Haug and Others (1987) developed strategies and a set of analytical stages to facilitate the interpretation. These stages as summarised by Crawford, et al. (1992) are listed below:

1 Each memory-work group member expresses opinions and ideas about each memory in turn, and
2 looks for similarities and differences between the memories and looks for continuous elements among memories whose relation to each other is not immediately apparent. Each member should question particularly those aspects of the event which do not appear amenable to comparison. She or he should not, however, resort to autobiography or biography.

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3 Each memory-work member identifies clichés, generalisations, contradictions, cultural imperatives, metaphor ... and
discusses theories, popular conceptions, sayings and images about the topic.
Finally, each member examines what is not written in the memories (but might be expected to be), and
rewrites the memories. (p. 49)

Crawford, et al. (1992), however, noted that these are guidelines rather than precise stages which the group should follow. As evidenced in their own research, it was strictly impossible to adhere to these analytical stages in the given order or content. While these stages provided the structure for the sessions, the discussions moved back and forth between these stages and amongst the participants as questions and reflections surfaced. Haug and Others (1987) noted from their work that these analytical stages ... developed out of ... [their] groups' continuous work with their own stories; they were not formulated prior to nor in abstraction from the questions evoked by the stories themselves. In our experience, new modes of analysis suggest themselves continuously [within the group sessions] ... The diversity of our methods, the numerous objectives raised in the course of the work with the stories, and the varied nature of our attempts at resolution, seemed to suggest that there might well be no single, 'true' method that is alone appropriate to this kind of work. What is needed is imagination. (pp. 70-71)

Working with the Memory-Text.
Analytical stages 1 and 2 aim to retrieve the forgotten and repressed pieces of each author's memory and uncover new linkages (Haug & Others, 1987). As such, they provide the collective with the additional details necessary to access "the 'common' sense, the common understandings, contained in them" (Crawford, et al., 1992 p. 49). Upon presentation of each participant's written memory-text to the group, the participants express ideas and opinions, ask questions, and compare the text and gathered information against the other memory-texts and retrieved information, obtaining the necessary details to uncover the social meanings and the processes whereby these meanings are arrived (Crawford, et al., 1992).

When the collective is presented with each participant's detailed memory-text, in which there is no given criteria as to what is essential to its interpretation, the collective finds itself "tracing a number of linkages that appear to be new and exciting, even strange, yet which ... [are] immediately recognised by the group as credible, since they ... form part of all ... [the participant's ] meanings" (Haug & Others, 1987 p. 54).

By having the participants note down all their interpretation visions such as feelings, thoughts, popular wisdom, and judgements which they bring to each memory-text, they are able to analyse the way in which their consciousness becomes ideologised (Haug & Others, 1987). Then by examining experiences in relation to pre-understandings regarding anything from popular sayings, images, proverbs, fairytales, historical documents and various theories (Analytical stage 4) the participants can collectively forge new connections between separate
elements of their stories (Haug & Others, 1987). It is in this way, that the collective discussions become a vehicle for knowledge transfer through the exposure of individual memories to others for analysis (Kippax, et al., 1988), and from which general conclusions can be drawn (Haug & Others, 1987).

Haug and Others (1987) consider this stage of memory-work analysis (i.e., questioning and comparison) as the

... initial corrective focusing discussion on the credibility of the situation as well as its typicality. Questioning points ... [to which of the] events described seemed incommensurable with any others ... [and to the] initial exploration of the conditions under which such events first become possible. Comparison demands of memory exactitude and plausibility. In attempting to produce compatible accounts, ... [we are] at the same time demanding explanations, searching for an understanding of our own actions. (p. 56)

"In examining each memory for absences, contradictions, clichés, metaphors and cultural imperatives [Stages 3 and 5], the collective reflection and theorising, as remembered and written, exposes the processes involved in the making of a 'common' sense of the actions described" (Crawford, et al., 1992 p. 49). That is, examination of the meanings derived from the language employed (or absence of it) and its grounding in the written memory-text (e.g., unexpected absences, contradiction of the story's elements, clichés) allows the collective to expose the taken-for-granted of everyday life and thus illustrate its construction.

**Language and contradictions.** Because language conceals, as well as supplies meanings, Haug and Others (1987) view its analyses as a main tool and vehicle for understanding how meanings are constructed both personally and socially (Koutroulis, 1993). As Haug and Others (1987) pointed out,

Language is a slippery instrument. ... [Our] everyday language is packed with preconceived opinions and value judgements that act as obstacles to understanding. ... Our everyday language is more than a little abstract: it suppresses the concreteness of feelings, thoughts, and experiences, speaking only of them in a distance. ... Language is not usually perceived as a malleable material in through which we live our lives, a material which we could mould, and through which we ourselves are moulded. From our earliest school days we learn to write 'about' the world, rather than to find a language for the forms within which we live. We neither express the feelings we experience, nor, by extension, do we have any means of reassessing or questioning them. (pp. 61, 64)

Eigenkind (1991) also noted that our culture demands that we forget, collectively and individually. She stated,

... there is a hidden demand, backed by a hidden threat, in the social and political pressures on me to assimilate. The demand is: keep quiet about what you know. The threat is: if you don't we can declare you all sorts of things - bitter, lying, crazy ... - so that no matter how loud you speak, no-one will listen. Only those parts of my memory
that support the myth [i.e., cultural appropriation] . . . are given space in this society. (Eigenkind, 1991, p. 23)

It is through our everyday language, however, that the ideological character of objects is formed (Haug & Others, 1987). As such, analysis of the memory-texts through the language employed provides us with new knowledge and insights regarding their meanings. When exploring the social meanings which are attached to our language, such as words or abstract generalisations, clichés, cultural imperatives, and metaphors, the process of creation is constructed.

However, to understand how each individual's actions and emotions personally contribute to the meanings of her/his experiences, language such as clichés and abstract generalisations must be challenged and contradictions and absences in the text must be explored (Haug & Others, 1987). "According to Haug, clichés block our thought and understanding by assuming consensus and conforming to rigid views of what are considered appropriate feeling and desires . . . " (Koutroulis, 1993 p. 79). With the use of these prefabricated phrases participants fail to reflect, feel, or remember. "These phases are all too quick to take the place of our own formulations and yet they still claim to express our very own experiences" (Haug, 1992 p. 23). According to Haug (1992), by securing specific detail in our writing and discussions, rather than using a given cliché or an abstract generalisation, participants are able . . . to recognise other things than those normally allowed on to the agenda by abstraction and prejudice. In short, it makes it possible to escape from the norms of behaviour and to discover the sensuous [personal] dimensions of experience. (p. 24)

As such, the participants can then deconstruct their individual experiences and reconstruct their meanings.

The language employed in the written text also allows participants to explore contradictions or conflicts which occur within their lives. While these contradictions often appear "as no more than hairline cracks" in the memory-texts, under the surface confusion reigns; polarities are conceivable. These contradictions help provide the needed harmony in our lives which "ornaments ugly inconsistencies, plasters over the cracks," and as such make invisible "the unconscious structure that underlies this fantasized harmony" (Haug & Others, 1987 p. 69). The collective makes it possible to identify, question and criticise these incompatible opinions, judgements and events and bring to the surface the non-recognised, the denied and the repressed. In doing so, participants gain an understanding of structural and personal relationships of the episode (Haug, 1992).

Absences and silences. Silence is also a method of coping with the incompatible or the unacceptable, and as such provides harmony to the self (Haug, 1992). From this perspective,
analysis of absences in the text can be just as important to its interpretation as the written text analysis (Haug & Others, 1987). Through our educational experiences, however,

we have been taught to content ourselves with decoding texts, with searching for truth in textual analysis, complemented at best by the author's own analysis ('what did the poet mean by this?'). 'Relearning' in this context means seeing what is not said as important; it involves a huge methodological leap, and demands more than a little imagination. In the group these lessons could be learnt. (Haug & Others, 1987 p. 65)

Absences are also present in memory-text due to the participants' inability to express themselves. This is not only due to poor creative writing skills, but from the obscurity of their conscious being; for example, the inability to communicate one's desires and inhibitions. In these instances, Haug (1992) and Haug and Others (1987) noted that it is the collective's task to act as a 'language school'. They must help sort out the words which allow each participant to describe and reappraise her/his experiences. In this way their experiences can be understood at a level of theory that allows them to intervene when needed or desirable.

Absences are noted when participants creatively expand upon and discuss each others' stories. In doing so, they discover different vantage points to their own, and how these vantage points may conflict with the traditional way of seeing things (Haug, 1992).

In writing stories from our own vantage point, Haug and Others (1987) maintain,

Many of our stories derive their initial plausibility from apparent incomprehensibility of the actions of others. Just as in fairytales the plot is carried forward by actions of the good and the bad fairies, we too view the character traits of others as decisive in directing our lives - even though we have long since stopped believing in fairytales. People act in particular ways, we say, because they are 'evil'; intrinsically 'bad'; mothers are petty, school friends envious and hateful, and so on. In depicting others in this way, we are however likely to be disguising our own contradictions - or at least attempting to construct them into some sort of unity. (p. 70)

Therefore, by examining stories from the vantage points of others, participants alter their ideas about their own and others' actions. In doing so, they gain a more realistic understanding how they may have contributed to the outcomes (Haug, 1992).

The collective group discussion. In the collective discussion, Haug and Others (1987) warned against the use of certain analytical techniques such as queries that convey criticism, 'amateur' psychoanalysis and empathy to access the 'forgotten' and the 'repressed'. These techniques place the author of the memory in a defensive and/or subordinate role, thus discouraging her/him to remember and produce the details which are so vital to a successful collective analysis (Haug & Others, 1987). Furthermore, as when writing the memory-text, Haug and Others (1987) warned against the participants' use of autobiography or biography in discussing both their own and others' actions. Instead, Haug and Others (1987 p. 57) believe
that it is necessary during the collective interpretation for the group to "adopt temporarily the same standpoint as the writer."

In the process of adopting the standpoint of the writer and reconstructing each others' experiences, participants come to know themselves and others through reflecting on each participant's attitude to his/her place within the social whole (Haug & Others, 1987).

Thus, each participant uses the process of reflection to discuss or theorise the written memories (Crawford, et al., 1990). As Haug and Others (1987 p. 58) noted "reflection makes it possible to reinterpret those taken-for-granted aspects of our lives which we could not focus merely by stepping into the shoes of others." Kippax, et al. (1988) stated,

> It is in our reflections that we . . . make sense of our experience of the world and negotiate the meanings that we and others attach to them. Our knowledge . . . comes from our reflective activities; that is how we 'talk to ourselves' about our experiences and from how others talk to us about their experiences. Importantly, these reflections also construct our selves who, in turn, 'do' the experiencing. (p. 26)

It is in this questioning and understanding of both the social and individual experiences that a person gains an understanding of the contradiction or conflict between them; and as such gives meaning to his/her experience.

By rewriting the memories (Stage 6); by including different vantage points, absences, removing contradictions and attending to different theories and ideas as analysed in the collective discussion, participants are able "to articulate and make credible, the motives underlying the behaviour of others who feature in the memory" (Kouroulis, 1993 p. 79), as well as gain a better understanding of their own motives (Haug & Others, 1987). Kouroulis (1993) also viewed rewriting as a way of concretising how the consciousness has been altered through the group discussion. While Haug and Others (1987) considered rewriting to be invaluable to our understanding, and an essential stage for completion of the memory-work process, Crawford, et al. (1992) found it to be a difficult and unproductive task. These researchers attributed their difficulties to the focus of their memories being from early childhood. Since this was a time when they were learning the social rules and involved in the appropriation of the social, the researchers felt they could not use their given knowledge of 'now' to produce a more credible episode of 'then'. While not indicating why, other researchers (e.g., Ingleton, 1994; McCormack, 1994) involved in using memory-work have also eliminated the final stage of rewriting.

The researcher's analysis and interpretation. In a similar fashion to the collective discussion process, the memories and discussions of the group or different groups are read, listened to, and critically examined by the researcher for themes and commonsense understandings. This analysis and interpretation is then related to their pre-understanding of
different theoretical positions (Crawford, et al., 1992). Kippax (1990) viewed this process as an evaluation of the collective's theorising. By the researcher subjecting the group's findings (e.g., linkage of relationships) to orthodox theories, she/he gains an understanding of the validity of these theories. These new theoretical understandings are then tested against other stories in the group and/or other collectives and adjusted accordingly (Haug & Others, 1987). This recursive process can lead to the construction of the researchers' own theory (Crawford, et al., 1992). In this way, memory-work is not just a technique for data collection, but a method which analyses and theorises through interpretation and reinterpretation of the data. Priority is not given to either subjective experience or theory; rather it sets them in a reciprocal and mutually critical relationship. It aims at both modifying and building theory (Crawford, et al., 1990).

Construction and Composition of Memory-Work Groups.

As with other research projects involving collecting data from people, the question about who is asked to participate, the composition and number of members in the group, and the number of groups formed depends, of course, on the research objectives along with factors such as the project resources and time limits.

Group structure. While there are no established rules in the selection of participants and formation of collective groups for memory-work, Crawford, et al. (1992) suggested from their research three different types of groups structured on the researchers' role in the process. These roles for the researcher(s) were either as (a) full and active participant(s), (b) facilitator(s) of a group, or (c) an independent identity to the group. Crawford, et al. (1992) noted, however, that the group which was composed of the researchers as full and active members was the most productive and satisfying. This was most likely due, or at least partially, to the fact that researchers in roles of (b) or (c) above, can not bring the same degree of conviction and meaning to the other groups' or members' experiences as their own. It is for this reason Crawford, et al. (1990) suggested that memory-work demands that researcher(s) become her/his/their own subject(s).

Where research objectives or circumstances do not allow the researcher(s) to be full and active member(s) in some or all the groups formed (e.g., where women researchers are examining gender differences and male groups are required for comparison), groups can either be allowed to work independently after being given the rules, analytical stages, and research objectives or they can be facilitated. The use of group facilitation provides both advantages and disadvantages to the collective analyses of memory-work, and therefore, must be given appropriate consideration in its employment. As Crawford, et al. (1992) noted,

... the presence of a good facilitator may be very useful [in creating a group environment where each participant can speak freely.]... [Facilitated memory-work is
also good,] if the topic to be explored is one that people find embarrassing or difficult to
discuss and/or where the group loses direction. A skilled group facilitator may be able
to relieve anxiety, enable the writing of memories and the collective discussion, and
redirect attentions. . . . [In our] groups, however, we were always aware of problems
created by our presence. The group facilitator becomes the leader and the sense of
collectivity [which is the bases of memory-work analysis] is diminished. (pp. 43-44)

**Group composition.** While Crawford, et al. (1992) and Haug and Others (1987) are in
agreement that heterogenous groups provide far more generalisable insights, Crawford, et al.
(1992) suggest the use of homogenous groups (e.g., age groups, gender) on the basis of
relevant criterion to the research project and the individual member's ability to function
successfully together. Collective group discussions work best when all participants are on an
equal basis (Krueger, 1988). Status differences among group members are likely to restrict
some participants from speaking freely and thus disclosing what is truly common to the group
(Crawford, et al., 1992; Ingleton, 1994). Krueger (1988) also noted that while there should be

. . . sufficient variation among the participants [in focus group discussions] to allow for
contrasting opinions, . . . some mixes of participants do not work well because of
limited understanding of others' life-styles and situations. For example, care must be
exercised in mixing individuals from different life stages and styles - young working
women with homemakers in their fifties who have not been employed outside the home
- unless the topic clearly cuts across these life stages and styles. Often, participants will
be inhibited and defer to those whom they perceive to be more experienced,
knowledgeable, or better educated. A small degree of variation within group
characteristics is often a helpful way to obtain contrast and variation that spark lively
discussions. (pp. 92-93)

Crawford and her co-researchers noted, as did others (e.g., Bain, 1995; Butler & Wintram,
1991; Krueger, 1988), that the establishment of mutual trust by the participants in a group is the
main criteria required for successful collective analysis and interpretation; especially if the group
is to meet over any length of time. In a similar light, Bain (1995 p. 249) stated that "productive
reflection [requires] . . . a nonjudgemental environment. . . . The resulting safety encourages
depth and honesty and self reflection."

Rapport and trust between the researcher and the participant(s) is also viewed by Wallendorf
and Belk (1989) as being essential to create a 'cooperative paradigm'. Otnes, McGrath, and
Lowrey (1995) suggested that the participants are less likely to be inhibited or influenced by the
researcher's presence as the level of trust and number of encounters increase between them. In
their study, 'Shopping with Consumers', these researchers observed that there was a need for
researcher and participant similarity, especially in regards to gender, to breed familiarity, and
therefore create trust. Furthermore, Jorgensen (1989 p. 77-78) suggested that trust can be built
through the researcher and the participant(s) engaging in joint activities. "By participating
together, people create shared experiences . . . [which] cement . . . feelings of mutual
interrelationships and friendship."
Douglas (1985), Wallendorf and Belk (1989) and Werner and Schoepfle (1987) advocated the need for the researcher to understand herself/himself to obtain greater research integrity. By researchers participating in memory-work, Crawford, et al. (1992) and Haug and Others (1987) have argued that they gain an understanding of their own self, thereby creating greater research knowledge. The process of self understanding created by memory-work would parallel that created through psychoanalysis as illustrated in Holbrook (1988a;1988b).

In addition to trust and an equal standing within the group, Butler and Wintram (1991) reported that mutuality and reciprocity of ideas by participants are required to create a successful collective analysis and interpretation. Participants must listen, as well as contribute, to understand their own and the others' experiences. What Bain (1995) noted about understanding her own experiences is just as applicable to the analysis and interpretations of others. "Communication about my experience is an essential element in reflection. Talking or writing about my experiences helps me construct meanings of those experiences and to understand them with a new level of awareness" (Bain, 1995 p. 249). While the memory-work guidelines directly address mutuality and reciprocity in the group discussion, the researcher(s) should be aware of dominant or quiet participants. Tactics such as those suggested by Krueger (1988) for focus group discussions could possibly be employed to ensure more or less equal participation. For example, with quiet participants, eye contact, head nodding, and extra questions asking them to elaborate, may be appropriate by other group members.

Considering the above, Crawford, et al. (1992) and other researchers using memory-work (e.g., Kippax, 1990; Koutroulis, 1993) have reported that groups of close friends work well together in discussion. Crawford, et al. (1992) and McCormack, (1994), however, have also found that groups composed of strangers have been successful. With regard to the selection of group participants, it is important to remember that the intent of memory-work is not to provide generalisations as such, but to provide insight into personal reality through reflection. Therefore, random selection and a sufficient sample size of participants to represent a targeted population is not necessary. Although decisions regarding the number and types of groups formed is necessary with regard to the research objectives, and some degree of random selection may be appropriate, sampling considerations are not the primary determinants in the selection of participants.

Crawford, et al. (1992) used, and recommended, groups of between four and six members in their memory-work collectives. Too large a group limits each member's input into the collective discussion, and as such affects the quality and depth of the analysis and interpretation. Small groups provide an intimate, comfortable environment for the participants, generally providing more in-depth insights where the participants can share intense and lengthy experiences about a topic (Krueger, 1988).
CHAPTER 4

MEMORY-WORK: APPLICATION

This chapter provides an account of how the theoretical framework for memory-work research discussed in the previous chapter was applied in this study to examine the evaluation of consumer retail experiences. Within the study, I was learning with the other participants, not only just from them. As such, it was impossible to totally separate myself as the researcher from that being investigated. How the participants defined and expressed their experiences were central to the study. Nevertheless, I needed to maintain levels of neutrality and objectivity as I simultaneously gathered, organised, analysed and interpreted the data in trying to uncover the nature and context of the experiences. The following principles and procedures describes how memory-work used the consumer’s dialogue and analysis to understand the construction and the social reality of the meanings attached to their retail experiences.

Participants.
Two groups of women, five in one group and four in an other, voluntarily participated in the study. All women were from similar professional backgrounds and lived in Hamilton (North Island), New Zealand, a city with a population approximately 120,000 people. The women ranged in age from 31 to 52 and were all from a middle class background. Some were interested in and frequently shopped for clothing, some were neither particularly concerned with nor shopped for clothing frequently, while other were interested in but shopped only occasionally for clothes. Specific details for each participant can be found in Appendix A.

All participants in Group 1 were previously known to the researcher. Prior to the research, some of the participants in this group, of which I was one, were acquainted with each other. Group 2 consisted of members of an informal work-based social club who met voluntarily for professional support. All of the participants in this group were friends. I was acquainted with two participants in this group prior to the research.

None of the participants were financially compensated for their involvement in the study. However, all had a professional or personal interest in gaining information regarding the memory-work method and/or the clothing retail trade.

Before giving their consent, participants received a booklet (Appendix B) which outlined (a) the purpose of the study, (b) memory-work procedures and principles (e.g., rules for writing memories and discussions), (c) expected time involvement, and (d) ethical considerations for the research. Participants were also provided with the first section of Chapter 4 of Crawford, et
Writing the Memories.

Prior to each session the participants independently wrote a memory evoked by a 'trigger' topic chosen to evoke a specific clothing store experience. A list of possible triggers which might evoke extreme experiences of both satisfaction and dissatisfaction was prepared. These triggers were also considered pertinent to concepts alluded to in the satisfaction/dissatisfaction literature. The triggers used in this study were (a) 'A Quick Exit' (a time you could not exit a clothing store fast enough), (b) 'Exhilaration', (c) 'An Impulse Buy', (d) 'A Pressure Experience', (e) 'A Nasty Experience', and (f) 'An Unusual Experience'.

The first trigger, 'A Quick Exit', was selected by myself in the belief that all participants could easily remember and write about such an experience. This belief was based on discussions with other individuals as to whether they could recall and write in detail a description of a 'Quick Exit' experience. Given the objectives of the study and using the list of possible triggers, members in Group 1 selected the other four triggers (i.e., Exhilaration, An Impulse Buy, A Pressure Experience, and A Nasty Experience). Group 2 was asked to write memories using the same triggers to improve interpretation and extend the grounded theory. Upon Group 2's completion of the 'Exhilaration' trigger and the discussion of the next trigger, 'An Impulse Buy', the group realised that the majority of their memories of exhilaration had been based on an impulse buy and it was felt that both experiences had been explored in one. For this reason, Group 2 did not write a memory using the 'Impulse Buy' trigger but went on to complete the next two triggers (i.e., A Pressure Experience and A Nasty Experience), and then selected the trigger 'An Unusual Experience' for their final memory.

The trigger was decided upon by and/or assigned to the group at least two weeks prior to the corresponding memory-work session. Participants were then asked to write their most vivid memory of a personal experience evoked by the trigger according to the guidelines as outlined in the previous chapter. As suggested by Crawford, et al. (1992), writing in third person rather than just talking memories is preferable, since it encourages description rather than interpretation and gives the participants unlimited freedom in constructing their story.

Memories as Stories.

The participants wrote their memory-texts for each trigger as stories. (See Appendix C for memory-text stories for each trigger.) The stories were based on the evaluation of the
attainment of goals\textsuperscript{38} and consisted of a plot\textsuperscript{39} and/or subplots which described a causal, coherent scenario leading to the outcome(s) such as emotions and actions.

In writing their memories as stories, the participants endeavoured to explain what occurred within their clothing shopping experiences. The use of storytelling provided an effective way to unravel many of the interrelated events\textsuperscript{40} and components of the process. The stories described what events the participants believed contributed to their experience and how the events related to each other. The context of the story, thus, provides a self-understanding of the events and conditions which ultimately result in that experienced by the consumer.

\textbf{The Group Sessions.}

Both memory groups met on five occasions over a period of sixteen weeks. All members attended every meeting which were held in the researcher's home at a time conducive to all group members. Each discussion lasted between two and a half to three hours. Initially it was felt that the study might require a minimum of three to five sessions for all of the participants to gain familiarity and comfort with the method, and because of this, up to 10 session were anticipated for each group. However, familiarity with the research process and each other was achieved in the first session. This was possibly due to several reasons. First, the participants sensed a level of trust and comfort necessary for self-revelation. Although not all group members in Group 1 knew each other prior to the first session, they created a friendly supportive environment; and Group 2's level of personal friendship already existed prior to the first session. Secondly, while none of the participants had previous experience with memory-work, all had prior skills in and were familiar with other forms of qualitative research analysis. Finally, all members of both groups were enthusiastic about being involved in the project and reported at the end of the project that they valued the opportunity to write and talk about their experiences, as well as grapple with analysing and interpreting the memory-texts of others.

\textsuperscript{38} Read (1987) noted that most stories and episodes of human behaviour consist of (a) goal, (b) actions that make up the sequence, (c) conditions that initiated the goal, and (d) the outcomes. Stern (1994 p. 605) also noted that the classical drama story which is structured on linear chronology causality and unity, is "goal oriented, finite, and single-minded," and as such, aims at providing a clear understanding of an occurrence to the audience.

\textsuperscript{39} Stern (1994) noted that a plot causally links the story's chronological events (which tells what happens in the experience) in a way that explains why it happened.

\textsuperscript{40} Events are the physical and mental states, and actions that occur in a story (Trabasso, Secco, & Van Den Broek, 1984). It is only when the events are combined together in a sequence that we understand a story, and explain why and how it has occurred (Lallijee & Abelson, 1983; Read, 1987). The meaning attributed to a particular event within the experience is dependent on the event(s) that precedes it. As Stern (1994 p. 604) noted, the plot of the story integrates the events into a singular entity "with a complete and ordered structure in which the components of the episode are neither removable nor interchangeable." Thus, the evaluation of a separate event depends on the network in which it is embedded. Moreover, it requires the context of the story (e.g., goals, characteristics of the physical environment and actors, social relationships, roles) to provide the meaning(s) that enable attribution of cause(s) to be understood and explained (Read, 1987).
Although there is no recommended number of sessions recognised as 'ideal' for memory-work, it was felt in this study that after five sessions, memories encompassing both 'satisfaction' and 'dissatisfaction' had been thoroughly explored.

The Group Process.
At the beginning of all sessions each participant received a typed copy of all members' memory-texts for the assigned trigger. Each participant read in turn and 'reflected on' her own memory. Group questioning facilitated each participant's reflection process. Autobiography and biography statements which emphasised individual aspects of an experience were avoided with the discussion remaining in third person\textsuperscript{41}. Participants used pseudonyms during the sessions to ensure the discussion occurred at a collective rather than an individual level and to distance themselves from any hurtful experiences. Each participant was encouraged to provide a vivid account and describe in detail her experience and associated feelings. In this way a 'deep' description was obtained for each memory.

Following the reading of each memory, the memory was then examined through group discussion to identify and analyse gaps, clichés, metaphors, contradictions, and inconsistencies. As the sessions progressed, the level of discussion gradually became more analytical. The group also began to identify similarities, differences, and/or patterns across the memories of that session as they searched for explanations of the experiences.

Although this was a collective process, each group member brought her own perspective to the experience as told in the memory-text. Consequently, the group's initial discussion and interpretation of each memory-text identified multiple realities. This eventually resulted in a shared understanding about the meaning associated with each participant's experience. Nevertheless, the group's interpretation was always turned back to the individual for verification.

The discussion moved back and forth from examining individual memories to analysing the collective set of memories for a particular trigger. In some instances, references were also made to previous memories written from other triggers. In doing so, the collective reappraisal of individual memories by the group often uncovered common features or patterns across the entire set of memories. Sometimes the analysis indicated a need to revise a prior interpretation theorised within the session. During all phases of the analysis, the group searched for detailed meanings and understandings. Eventually the discussion ended when the group members felt they had completed a thorough analysis of each memory and a coherent picture had emerged from the set of memories for that particular trigger. This group process reflected the nature of

\textsuperscript{41} During the first memory group discussion, participants often used first person. However, as the participants became more familiar with the process they seldom used first person during the discussions and spoke of the subject in the memory-text by using her pseudonym.
cooperative enquiry to substantiate that which is deemed to be 'reality' for the individual who owned the experience.

**The Role of the Researcher.**

Memory-work research was a two-way process of interaction and sharing between myself, as the researcher, and the women in each group. I was required to give as well as receive information, particularly when the others were expected to share aspects of their life at the personal level. As the researcher, my role was to construe the retail experiences from the participant's point of view, and then try to understand and explain the attached meaning of these experiences. In a critique on searching for meaning through the interpretative paradigm Sparkes (1992) reported that while there may be multiple realities,

... for interpretivists there are no absolute minimums to work out differences in interpretations since the hermeneutic process has no definite beginning or end and contains no specific procedures or established criteria to determine who has got it absolutely 'right' or 'true'. (p. 36)

What was deemed as being 'real' and valid in this study was so because each participant through the writing and discussion of her memory-texts assessed and affirmed her own memories to be so.

As the researcher, I fulfilled two separate roles. First, I was involved with both groups during the sharing and analysis of the memory stories for each of the triggers. Although I acted as the facilitator for both groups, I did not assume a superior position and avoided leading or dominating the collective discussion of either group. Prior to the commencement of each group discussion I collected, typed if required, formatted and photocopied each participant's memory-text for distribution to all group members. With approval of all group members, I audio taped each memory-work session. Second, I transcribed verbatim the group's analysis of their experiences and subjected all data to further analysis.

**Group involvement.** With Group 1, I assumed the role of group facilitator and was also an equal, full participant of the group process. This meant that at each group session I presented and discussed my memory-text and along with the others, I helped analyse and interpret the memories of all other group members as well as analyse the collective's set of memory-texts.

With Group 2, I facilitated their memory-work sessions, but did not participate as a group member by providing a memory for analysis. I did, however, take a minor role and asked questions regarding the individual memory-texts to help retrieve forgotten and/or repressed details. When this group made interpretative observations similar to that which I had witnessed being discussed by Group 1, I remained silent so as not to influence or direct their analysis. By establishing a non-hierarchical relationship within the group, I was viewed as part of their collective group, rather than as an intruder or leader.
As the facilitator for both Groups, my role was to co-ordinate and manage the flow of the group discussions without asserting any significant influence on the analysis of each memory.

**Researcher's appraisal of the data.** The audio recording of each group's analysis of their experiences associated with each trigger were transcribed verbatim and subjected to an on-going analysis by the researcher. This occurred through continual interpretation and re-interpretation of the data. In the first instance, the general description and 'common sense meanings' identified by the group through their discussion about each participant's experience reflected in the memory-texts were noted and extended. At this point I began to unravel the subjective meanings attached by the participants in relation to the social and organisational context in which their experiences occurred. Each memory-text was then reconstructed by myself to include additional information identified in the group discussion but not included in the original memory-text.

These reconstructions, which were acknowledged by each individual as being an accurate interpretation, illuminated the meanings reflected in the original memory-text. In essence, the reconstruction provided a further explanation of how and why her clothing shopping experiences were constructed and evaluated. This procedure was applied to the memory-texts for all triggers for both groups. (See Appendix D for an example of these reconstructions for the 'Quick Exit' trigger for Group 1.)

These reconstructions then became the main data for a further analysis for me to explore and explain (a) how participants attached meaning to and processed their evaluations of their clothing shopping experiences, and (b) how these meanings and processes related to different theoretical perspectives discussed in the satisfaction/dissatisfaction literature. This level of analysis involved making judgements and inferences while reflecting on other research as I began to more fully understand the evaluations of the retail experiences. My role as the researcher was to ensure interpretation of the data elucidated the essence of the experiences.

When befitting, the reconstructions of each memory-text were revisited and modified to accommodate the theoretical perspectives that were reflected in the data. It was from this data that I was able to identify recurring regularities, and identify commonalities and differences for the participants' experiences associated with each trigger. These commonalities and differences were examined collectively across all triggers. From this analysis of the reconstructed memory-text a number of dominant themes began to emerge. Themes were then discussed with several of the participants who confirmed they were an accurate interpretation and

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42 See Spiggle (1994) and Crawford et al. (1992) for a detailed description of the interpretative process. Spiggle describes the analysis and interpretative processes which a researcher uses in qualitative research, and Crawford and her co-researchers give specific examples that illustrate the interpretative process which occurs in memory-work.
representation of the experiences. For the analysis I have chosen to focus on three major themes which emerged from the memories. These three themes are Judgement Processing, Belonging, and Identity.

**Presentation of the Themes: Judgement Process, Belonging, and Identity.**

While each of the three themes are distinctive in what they convey, they are interrelated rather than discrete and unrelated and illustrate the complexity of this data. Each theme will be presented separately and incorporate examples to define how they were represented by the participants in their memory-texts. Specifically, different participants' memory-texts and their corresponding discussions are used as examples to illustrate the researcher's interpretation.

In Chapter 5 concerning 'Judgement Processing', the reconstruction illustrates aspects of this process including what the judgements were attributed to, what resulted from these judgements, the meaning attached to these judgements, and what the evaluation of these judgements meant to the retail experience. For the second theme of 'Belonging' in Chapter 6, the reconstruction depicts how the participants generated a sense or lack of belonging, how this was reflected in the retail experience, and its relevance and meaning to consumer satisfaction or dissatisfaction. In Chapter 7, 'Identity', the reconstruction portrays the relationship of self, the meaning attached to the retail experience and result of this experience on identity and consumer satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

In the following three chapters, I aim specifically to describe through each of the three themes how memory-work was used to show how (a) the participants attached meanings to their evaluative process, (b) the information from this process can be used to further the understanding and explanation of their experiences, and (c) the information furthers our understanding of consumer experiences from both a personal and theoretical perspective.
CHAPTER 5

JUDGEMENT PROCESSING

"... social judgement is concerned with how we make sense of our social world." (Eiser, 1990 p. 1)

Introduction.
The consumer's evaluative process of her clothing shopping experience is fundamentally comprised of a series of judgements. These judgements are based upon the components involved and created in the consumer's retail experience. That is, the consumer judges (a) the store’s environment, products, personnel, and/or their customer’s attributes, (b) her own attributes, affects, meanings and expectations, and (c) the intrapersonal and interpersonal interactions such as the appraisals, emotions and actions which occurred within the experience. These judgements, thus, result from a chain of meanings, affects, emotions, behaviours and actions which occurred or were perceived to have occurred during the encounter.

To illustrate components of the judgement process, three memory-texts have been analysed in this chapter. These show the complexity of the consumer's evaluation of her clothing shopping experiences. They specifically illustrate that (a) these judgements and their resultant emotions and/or actions interact and combine in a dynamic chain which explains the outcome(s), and (b) that these judgements are inferred from attributes and/or 'mental or physical events' which occurred or are perceived to have occurred, and are related to her experience. The first two memory-text reconstructions depict how judgement processing occurs in dissatisfactory shopping encounters, while the third illustrates how judgement processing occurs in a satisfactory encounter. The first of the two dissatisfactory encounters delineates a process which is relatively simple. The other dissatisfactory encounter, which is from the same person, is more complex. In the first, the consumer is the only person making judgements, whereas in the second there are a number of other people involved, introducing other people's affects, emotions, behaviours, and actions. Both, however, illustrate the multiple factors brought to the judgement process. The third memory-text reconstruction based on a satisfactory encounter also depicts the complexities of the process, but illustrates how these judgements lead to a positive rather than a negative retail experience. However, with this encounter there are both negative and positive experiences which determine the consumer's resultant judgement and feeling of satisfaction.

For each reconstruction the entire written memory-text is given first, followed by the judgement processing mapping. Each mapping includes exerts from the group analysis of the memory-text.

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Example One: Wendy's 'Quick Exit' Experience.

Leaving.

She had not bought any article of clothing for a long time. Being a student with little income, new clothes were not a priority. But a new swimsuit was a necessity. Her old one was literally falling apart and in that climate, living by the sea, swimming was an essential part of her lifestyle.

It was late summer. She knew there wouldn't be a huge selection of swimsuits in the stores but she thought there should be a few at sale price. She had put aside this particular Saturday morning to find one, knowing it was going to be a hunt. She was very particular about the style of swimsuit she would wear and had a limit on what she could pay.

She started in Fremantle where she lived, going to every women's clothing store. Nothing. Into the car, she drove down the highway to the next shopping centre, Grove Plaza on the edge of the very prestigious residential area of Peppermint Grove. Nothing in the department store. She wandered into the Plaza and took the elevator up to the second level. From the top of the elevator she saw a rack of swim suits hanging near the entrance of a small boutique. She went in. There weren't many. It didn't take long to find her size range and she immediately fell upon a stunningly beautiful number. It was white with inserts of mesh and a small amount of silver trim. WOW! She grabbed it off the rack and reached for the tag.

The price on the tag gave her such a shock the hanger fell from her hands and the swimsuit to the floor. Suddenly she was aware of how scruffy she looked; of having strayed into the wrong store. How obvious it must be that she could not, would not pay such an extortionate amount for such a skimpy garment. Very quickly, before she could be discovered and confronted by a sales assistant, she picked it up, put it back on the rack and, trying to appear nonchalant, walked out.

In this memory-text Wendy first judged the boutique as being suitable because it had a rack of swimsuits. Other attributes of this boutique were not appraised because swimsuits were scarce at that time of year. Wendy urgently needed a swimsuit, her finances were minimal and as such she could not afford anything else, and she was committed to purchasing the swimsuit as quickly and effortless as possible.

I was into it. That was my mission. I was not leaving [without a swimsuit]. I was going to go down Sterling Highway [from Fremantle] and stop at all the shopping
centres on the way down; hoping that I would get something before I ended up in the city [Perth]. Because I didn't want to go into the city. So it was sort of like a progression, and get one as soon as possible. I don't want to spend too much time doing this. I just have to have this garment. [Wendy]

And you didn't mind about the store? Like you didn't have a favourite store or anything like that? [Helena]

No, no. Not at all. I didn't even really know the stores very well. As I said, 'I had kept well out of it.' The temptation, you know (laughing). [Wendy]

Product scarcity and Wendy's urgent need, lack of personal finances, commitment to a quick and easy purchase, and lack of store knowledge were the situational factors which affected Wendy's initial appraisal. Her total attention was on the availability of swimsuits rather than on any other attributes of the store.

Due to the scarcity of swimsuits (through her knowledge of it being the end of season and looking in a few stores prior to the find), Wendy felt surprised by her luck. As such, Wendy was pleased/excited rather than just content to have found a rack of swimsuits in this small boutique.

I just wandered in. . . . I could sort of see them as I wandered off the elevator. Oh, swimsuits, that is what I am looking for, and didn't take any notice really of the type of, you know, any of the surroundings. It was just a little boutique in a little mall, in a little plaza, and I just honed straight into them [swimsuits] not really looking too much; even about what was in the rest of the store or what the store was like. And I just sort of went straight to the rack. [Wendy]

Wendy examined, hopefully, the swimsuits for the appropriate size and style. Upon finding a suitable style in her size which was also stunning, Wendy was very excited. Wendy commented,

Yeah, [Wendy felt really excited] of having found something. Something that may have been suitable. Something that [Wendy] . . . would have liked to have purchased.

Wendy again appraised the situation in regards to the scarcity of swimsuits and was surprised by her luck since she did not have high expectations of finding an appropriate suit in her size, moreover such a stunning one, so quickly and easily. As such, her expectations were positively disconfirmed resulting in her excitement rather than just pleasure or contentment.

In her excitement (i.e., involvement with the swimsuit), and through her knowledge of being a seamstress and a past consumer, Wendy mentally appraised what she thought the swimsuit should cost, taking into account factors such as the type of garment, fabric and labour costs.

43 As noted in the application chapter, in some instances, particularly in the earlier memories when the groups were still new to the memory-work process and when the writers of the memory-text were being quizzed on her responses, the discussion slipped temporarily out of third person.

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and that it was the late summer sale session. Upon appraisal of the price, Wendy instantly became shocked that it was such an extortionate, unexpected price. As such, Wendy’s expectations were negatively disconfirmed and she became disappointed that she was not able to purchase such a desirable swimsuit. In addition, the shock intensified her disappointment.

Furthermore, as discussed in the following sections, this extreme shock of the unexpected price drew Wendy's attention from the swimsuits to the store's surroundings and thus, her personal circumstances which contributed to her appraisals of inequity, social comparison, and attribution of fault for her feelings of disappointment and injustice. The shock of the experience also intensified the emotions which resulted from these appraisals.

Because Wendy had focused on the swimsuits rather than the store's environment, she was caught by surprise at the price which intensified her shock. When asked “What would have been her assessment if she had realised she was in an exclusive boutique?”, Wendy reflected,

I don't think I would have been as shocked at the price, and wouldn't have been so ‘Wow, Wow! Aren't these wonderful!', and got so enthusiastic or involved in them and then shocked by the price, if I had sort of taken note of the surroundings before... I would have expected it more, probably knowing that these were not going to be department store prices.

As such, Wendy attributed at least part of her disappointment to herself rather than the store, in that she had not taken notice of her surroundings. She also, however, attributed fault to the store in asking how they could actually charge that much for a swimsuit. That is, she appraised why she had been so surprised and shocked at such a price and who was at fault.

Wendy's emotion of disappointment was overridden by her emotions of disgust and horror which resulted from her judgements that such a price was an inequitable exchange; it was unfair and an insult to women. Wendy judged this to be the fault of the clothing industry and women who actually purchased such high priced garments. Thus, Wendy felt a sense of betrayal and anger that some women and the clothing industry would treat women, in general, so unfairly. Wendy reflected,

But it wasn't sort of going from the excitement; but the let down wasn't disappointment as much as, umm, umm - not guilt either - but, but, umm, almost like a betrayal, like (long pause)... There was, 'How could they possible charge that much?' There was disgust! Like this is ridiculous, absolutely ridiculous. I was disgusted... that some conglomerate... could actually try to hoodwink women like that. To expect them to pay that sort of money. (Particularly with something like a swimsuit that is a very basic garment, and you see price tags on them like that... It makes you think that the women's clothing trade is treating you as stupid, and trying to hoodwink you; trying to actually make you spend money that is totally over the top.) So there was disgust from that respect, and horror that there actually may be woman out there that would do that [i.e., purchase swimsuits at such high prices].
Wendy then became distressed when she compared and judged herself against those women with unlimited funds [upward social comparison]. In doing so, Wendy appraised her current personal situational circumstances (i.e., her lack of ability to pay). She reflected,

You bring the situation you are in to [the encounter].... I can't image myself paying 350 [Australian] dollars for a swimsuit... but there has been previous times in my life... that would not have been so devastating! It would not have shattered me so much, because I could have just moved next door and brought something for half price. I wasn't looking for bargain basement stuff... [It was] the very situation from where I was at, in term of where my finances were... [There was]... embarrassment of my own situation... of not having money... looking for bargain basement stuff and being out of my league... [I] got beyond my station almost... [As a mature student,] I was back to penny pinching after spending years of having heaps of money, and it was difficult coming to terms with that. All part of that response... that I was poor (laughs); and the embarrassment that goes with that, just being poor.... [Also, there was] that sort of dissatisfaction with where you were at; and, umm, the implications that it has on your own self esteem; and yeah, those things.

Wendy also compared and judged herself according to those women who would never be able to afford those prices [downward social comparison] and appraised that her circumstances were only temporary. Wendy reflected,

It made me stop and think about what it would be like if you were always living on that sort of budget. And I had come from a situation where I was not living like that, and I sort of anticipated that this wasn't going to be the situation for the rest of my life. But it made me wonder about people who are.

Wendy's lowered self worth and embarrassment, however, were reinforced by her 'scruffiness' while shopping. Wendy appraised that she did not 'belong' (on that day at least) by judging and comparing her and the store's identities. Neither did she 'look the part', nor did she have the money to be shopping at an exclusive boutique who serviced a prestigious residential area.

In Wendy's appraisal that the sales personnel would judge her social standing according to her appearance, Wendy protected herself from further embarrassment. That is, the humiliation of being devalued and degraded by the sales personnel. She left quietly and quickly. Wendy reflected (laughing),

[Wendy had to] get out of there as quickly as possible, before she had to explain why she had wandered in. It was avoidance of the salesperson... [It was] avoidance of having to admit that this was out of my range,... completely out of my range.

In this encounter, Wendy's judgement process is relatively simple in that it is based on her own actions and feelings in regards to the environment and not in interaction with others. However, this memory illustrates how Wendy used other factors besides the environment to judge her encounter. For example, she compared her economic status to others. Her judgement of the clothing industry was a key outcome from this memory. It was the components of injustices,
rather than the encounter itself which drove the judgements and led to her intense emotion and feelings of dissatisfaction.

Example Two: Wendy's 'Nasty' Experience.  
This second memory-text of Wendy's introduces the complexity brought about by a greater number of individuals involved in the encounter and how this compounds the resultant parts and processes constructed in the experience. In comparison to Wendy's 'Quick Exit' memory-text, it also depicts how a situational variable (in this case, of having or not having money) determines the relevant meanings attached to the experience and influences the consumer's resultant judgements regarding the encounter.

Wendy's 'Nasty/Disaster' Memory-Text.  
Years previously, Wendy had won an emerald. Well, not exactly. She won a thousand dollar voucher from a jewellery and gift store in Dunedin and had decided to spend it on something she would never otherwise buy for herself - the largest it would afford of her very favourite gemstone, an emerald.

Wendy has a passion for rings. She has had, at times, large collections of cheap silver rings which were souvenirs of countries in which she travelled, and expensive antique rings, souvenirs of wealthier years. However, both these collections had been decimated by two separate burglaries. The second, which scored most of the antique rings, upset Wendy so much she felt really ambivalent afterwards about owning such treasured items when the loss of them could cause so much anguish, and she stopped collecting them.

So, for about ten years, Wendy's emerald sat in hidden-away places, unset in her dream ring. Firstly, because she planned to take it to a particular jeweller in Perth but found when she went to live there that he no longer did. Then there was the second burglary. Then she didn't have the money to have the ring made anyway. Then she decided that if and when she ever finished her PhD and was on salary again, she would have the emerald set as a special graduation treat to herself. It became an incentive.

The point of this long preamble is to illustrate that when, finally, the day came for Wendy to take her emerald to a manufacturing jeweller in Hamilton to have it set into a ring, it was a very big deal.

She planned it carefully. She checked-out the store, going in to casually look at their rings to see if they were the kinds of designs she liked. It was mainly a traditional looking jewellery store - bright, glitzy, reeking "expensive", with lots of glass, lights and diamonds. But there was a hint of the 'artiste' behind the designs - a large,
irregular, cross-section slab of tree sitting in the window which was his work bench, and a portfolio of his previous works lying on a small table in the corner nearest the door. Most of the rings on display were traditional, run-of-the-mill settings too but, again there were a couple that showed more individual flair and interest. The designer was not in the store at the time but Wendy spoke with his sales assistant who told her he could create any design she wanted.

The problem was, Wendy didn't really know what she wanted. She was sure though, that between her, her partner, and the jeweller they could come up with something perfect for the shape and cut of the stone. Her partner, together with the jeweller in Perth, had previously designed a stunning setting for an aquamarine he gave her and she had faith in his ability to do the same again. He was excited by the prospect. However it meant that if Wendy wanted to take Bob with her to this jeweller, they would have to go on a Saturday of a weekend Bob was in Hamilton.

Eventually a weekend came up that looked like it would be possible. Wendy phoned the store on Friday to ask about their Saturdays hours. She spoke to the designer himself who assured her he would be there until about 2 pm.

Saturday morning. Wendy and Bob had a huge list of things to do and carefully planned the day so as to fit them all in around the varying hours at which shops and services were open on Saturdays. They arrived at the jeweller at about 12.15 pm - Wendy with her precious emerald retrieved from its hiding place and in her jeans pocket. There was no-one in the store except the designer, sitting working at his wood-slab bench, and the assistant.

Bob and Wendy browsed at the rings on display for a few moments and, when approached by the assistant, Wendy asked if she could speak with the designer. There was some exchange between the assistant and the designer then one of them (Wendy can't remember exactly who) asked her abruptly, "What about?" Wendy replied that she wanted to have an emerald set and she would like to talk to him about designs. The assistant then explained that he was busy fixing something for another customer who was returning to pick it up at 1 o'clock, and asked if Bob and Wendy could come back after then.

One of Bob and Wendy's favourite cappuccino places was nearby so they went there to fill in the time. It was in fact a welcomed 'time out' in the crammed day and gave then an opportunity to have lunch.
When they went back to the shop after 1 o'clock, the designer was sitting at the small table near the door with another man, going through some papers. It looked to be some management business. Again, there were no other customers in the store. Seeing the designer was again busy, Wendy and Bob once again went to the display cabinets to browse at the jewellery. The assistant recognised they had returned and was quick to attend.

For the next 15 - 20 minutes Wendy, Bob and the assistant discussed possible ring designs. Wendy tried on several rings from the cabinet. The assistant asked to see her emerald, made suggestions and brought out pictures of rings from glossy magazines for Wendy to look at. Throughout this time, all three were aware that this was 'fill-in' activity while they waited for the designer to be finished with his business in the corner and attend to them. So far he had ignored Wendy and Bob. The assistant did her very best to be helpful but seemed to become increasingly embarrassed by the delay and eventually recognised that there was little more she could do or say. She suggested that Wendy might like to go to a library or book store and look through European fashion magazines for a design to bring in.

At that stage there seemed no point in staying in the shop. The designer continued to ignore them, the assistant was finding the situation more and more awkward and Wendy and Bob were both frustrated and angry. They left. Wendy felt very let down. What was to have been an exciting denouement turned out to be a disaster. There was no way she would go back to that jeweller, and her emerald has been returned to its hiding place.

Wendy first appraised this jewellery store as a place where she could get her 'much valued' emerald set into a ring by observing that it had its own manufacturing designer/jeweller. Wendy commented,

Wendy found out [about the store] by walking past the door and seeing the manufacturing jeweller and seeing this large quite impressive looking workbench sort of in the corner.

Wendy was excited in her find, since she had appraised that stores with a designer/manufacturing jeweller were scarce. She had not expected to find such a store so easily (i.e., positive disconfirmation of expectations). Furthermore, her excitement was intensified by her surprise of having found such a store in Hamilton where she least expected to find one. As such, her expectation of having to travel elsewhere requiring time and effort was positively disconfirmed. Wendy reflected,

[S]ometimes it's quite difficult to find a jewellery store that actually has a manufacturing jeweller and designer with it; that doesn't just sell products that are made elsewhere; so
that you can actually have access to the designer to sort of sit down with him and work out what you want. And so to have found one in Hamilton was a 'Oh, great! I can do that, and I can do it here.'

Wendy reconfirmed her appraisal and excitement about the store in regards to her anticipated goal when she judged the designer/manufacturing jeweller, as well as the store itself. From the store's environment (e.g., workbench design, display of rings, portfolio of the designer's work), and her discussion with the sales assistant, Wendy initially appraised the jeweller as having the artistic and individual flair, excitement, time, warmth, cooperation, and quality of workman required to help design and then produce her 'dream' ring. She also judged the store as being expensive and traditional with reliable quality.

To Wendy, . . . [the designer's cross-section wooden slab workbench wasn't] just a regular workbench. You know, it was . . . quite a feature and it was quite striking; and that to me was what made me think that this person is an artist. This person worked on individual pieces. [Wendy]

Wendy didn't want any old craft person. Wendy wanted quality. She had glass (bright lights and diamonds, and glitz [Wendy]) and she had expense, but she also wanted somebody that was artistic. So she had wood (such as nature, a piece related to nature [Wendy]), someone that was friendly and grounded . . . . [Annabel]

Yeah, and maybe . . . it's difficult to find. You think those seem to be contradictory. So you expect it to be difficult to find a situation where they blend. I suppose Wendy was excited about the fact that there seemed to be a situation where both things were present. [Wendy]

In Wendy's appraisal that the attributes of the store and the designer were congruent with the value she placed on her emerald being set and herself for achieving her PhD goal, her excitement was also reinforced and intensified.

From her partner's past experience with the jeweller in Perth, Wendy appraised that they would collaboratively create a perfect setting for her emerald. Wendy's judgments regarding her partner's past success, his ability to help create another stunning ring, his enjoyment of this past experience, and his excitement about participating fed and intensified her excitement, as well as her expectations regarding the interaction which would occur amongst them. Wendy expected that the interaction amongst them would lead to the enjoyment and product that she would receive from the experience. Wendy reflected,

[W]hat Wendy had in mind, [was] looking for, [was] that warm transaction, . . . the experience that Bob [her partner] had getting the aqua marine set; where he and the jeweller in Perth had sat down and they had together drawn designs and worked on them. Bob had talked about it a lot, and about it being a really wonderful thing to do, and he came up with design he was very proud of because he felt he had actually contributed to the design of it. So Wendy was anticipating that some sort of experience.

Wendy's initial judgements regarding the jeweller (i.e., his artistic and individual flair, excitement to help and create, availability to help, warmth, cooperation, and quality
workmanship) and the store (i.e., quality and expensive) were reinforced when the designer assured her over the phone that he would be available to help. These judgements again were reinforced when she and her partner entered the shop for consultation and found that the jeweller was quietly working behind his wood-slab bench, there were no other customers in the store, and the sales assistant quickly attended to them. As such, there was confirmation of what she expected to find, and anticipation that the encounter would continue as she had appraised.

Wendy, however, started to question her appraisal of the designer's warmth and cooperation as she evaluated his reaction towards her, and the interaction between him and the shop assistant. Wendy judged her treatment as being rather 'sharp' when she was asked abruptly, *What about?* Wendy reflected on Priscilla's question as to whether the designer appeared "unapproachable?"

Yes, when we ... got told to come back later and what do you want to see him for, it was sort of an awkward exchange between them [the sales assistant and the designer]. . . . [T]here didn't seem to be very good rapport between them. [Wendy]

Upon explanation by the sales assistant that the designer was busy fixing *something for another customer who was returning to pick it up at 1 o'clock* (i.e., approximately 40 minutes), Wendy judged the jeweller as being trustworthy. He was fulfilling a commitment to another customer. As such, she judged their first arrival time in the shop as unfortunate. Wendy evaluated the situation as being fair in that it followed the justice rule of 'first come first served'. It was a situational circumstance which was unavoidable and neither Wendy's nor the jeweller's fault. Priscilla commented and Wendy agreed,

Because even when Wendy went away for the cappuccino, there was still anticipation, excitement. . . . [Wendy and Bob] are going back at 1 o'clock. [Priscilla]

Yes, yes. [Wendy]

There is that still wanting to go back. [Priscilla]

However, upon returning to the store shortly after 1 o'clock as requested, Wendy judged that the jeweller had not fulfilled his commitment of serving Wendy and her partner as he had done for the previous customer. Wendy appraised that he had broken the justice rule of first come first served, as well as the equity rule of treating all customers the same (i.e., equality).

Wendy, therefore, judged the jeweller as not being trustworthy and the situation as unfair. Wendy felt devalued in her judgement that the jeweller had not appraised her as being important enough to deal with them first. She also felt ill willed towards the designer in that she appraised that the designer was at fault for this unfair situation. Furthermore, in Wendy's appraisal that the jeweller was attending to management business rather than another customer, Wendy's feelings of being devalued were intensified. Wendy noted,
It wasn't even another customer. It was definitely something that was at the management of the business kind of level.

Wendy, thus appraised that the jeweller had broken another justice rule in dealing with his management business before his customers. That is, the customers come first and are more important than other business. Susie reflected this norm in her statement,

He won't actually need that person? Will he in the future, if he's going to treat [ignore] all his customer like that?

Interacting with this concept was Wendy's belief that in an expensive store, as this one, she should and would be quickly acknowledged and served. That is, in an expensive store the customer is paying for quick, attentive, one-on-one specialised service. As such, Wendy specifically went to this store expecting to pay for the designer's/jeweller's skills and service. That is, his one-on-one efficient and considerate attention.

Wendy went in there because she wanted his [the designer's] service? [Susie]

Mm. . . . There were a couple of rings there [already in the store] which I liked, but [they] weren't designs which she was going to say, 'Yes, I'll have that please. Put my stone in it'. [Wendy]

Right, so he [the designer] would have needed to sort of create the ring? [Helena]

Yes. . . . I was going to have something that was specially created for it. . . . I image it would not have been a small price to pay. [Wendy]

Wendy's expectations of prompt and attentive service were negatively disconfirmed leading to her disappointment with the provided service.

Even though Wendy judged that the sales assistant was fulfilling her expected role of attending to and 'valuing' them as customers, her feelings of being valued were overridden by the designer's actions of completely ignoring them and making them wait.

Wendy's feelings of being devalued were again reinforced and intensified when the designer completely snubbed them while they specifically waited for him to finish his management business. Wendy appraised this as an injustice in that she judged the designer/jeweller by her belief that all customers entering a store (particularly an expensive store) should be recognised and valued. Wendy reflected,

[The designer completely ignored us] by not ever acknowledging we were there and . . . [not] raising his eyes, not sort of saying, 'be with you in a minute.' . . . [There should be] recognition [from the sales personnel] that anyone whom comes into a store should be valued. [They] should be treated like this is a special transaction.
Wendy illustrated her resultant disgust towards the designer's actions of not having received the appropriate treatment in her statement,

Well, there was nobody else there. It's not as if we (laughs) were having to queue.

Overall, as Susie noted and Wendy agreed, Wendy felt anger towards the designer/jeweller due to her appraisal of the injustices which questioned her 'value' as a customer.

You [Wendy] were . . . fairly indignant that it should happen to you. [Susie]
Yes. [Wendy]

Wendy's appraisals of these injustices and disconfirmed expectations were only partly determined by the meaning(s) which she associated with the expensive store. Not only were Wendy's expectations of how she should be treated by an expensive store (e.g., quick service) disconfirmed, but she also assessed that she was unjustly treated in regards to how the designer/jeweller diminished her worth according to her attributes, and in comparison to other actual or perceived customers (i.e., social comparison) for these same sets of expectations.

Wendy appraised that the designer had judged her transaction as not being worthy of his time, and as such had completely ignored her and Bob. Her feelings of being devalued were reinforced and intensified to a point where she felt humiliated. Wendy reflected,

I wondered if . . . a lot of his business, a lot of his profit . . . is actually selling the gems as well; and because I actually had a gemstone it was not a big deal just to set it. Although, I image it would not have been a small price to pay . . . I felt a little humiliated by it. . . . [Being ignored] left me feeling, umm, put down. Right, not valued, put down. Like here we were with . . . what I thought . . . was a precious little thing [emerald] that was just being ignored and we were being ignored; and we were being brushed aside as not important; and that transaction was not important. So, therefore, you know, I sort of took that on quite personally.

Wendy, therefore, internalised the jeweller's appraisal by also judging herself as not being worthy of this exchange. Although she made the judgement that the jeweller was at fault in ignoring them, she also appraised the situation as to why he acted as he did. In doing so, she constructed explanations which transferred blame onto herself.

I think Wendy felt in the end that she deserved to be ignored. You know, you sort of take on that whole notion that has been dumped on you . . . You begin to own what has been dumped on you. [Wendy]

You weren't good enough? [Annabel]

Yeah, and then you start to find reasons for it; and the reasons are things like, 'This emerald isn't very big after all,' and . . . "Why am I taking up his precious time? He has obviously got more important things to do," and 'I'm not really dressed for it. (We were in our Saturday scruffs.) I don't fit in this store." So you find all those excuses.
Wendy's appraisals of the shop assistant's resultant emotions and actions (or lack of action) while they waited for the designer, contributed to and reinforced Wendy's negative feelings towards him. While the sales assistant was very willing to help Wendy and Bob 'fill-in' time, she became *increasingly embarrassed* and frustrated that she was not able to provide Wendy and Bob with the required service. Wendy appraised that the sales assistant felt anxious and distraught that the jeweller was ignoring them and making them wait. Wendy reflected on the group's comments and questions,

The shop assistant was doing her very very best though. [Susie]

She was, yes. Yes, she was... As the time went by, you knew... all three of us [sales assistant, Bob and Wendy] were just saying things that were really just platitudes, chatter, keeping the process going, keeping the time rolling. [Wendy]

You... were covering... for that arrogant artist... [Y]ou didn't have any reason to, but you were, yeah? [Helena]

We were covering. Yes we were. [Wendy]

The sales assistant, however, never interrupted the designer to let him know that Wendy and Bob had returned and required attention. As Susie and Priscilla noted and Wendy agreed,

She didn't go and say to him, 'Hey, there's someone here for you.' [Susie]

No, no she didn't. [Wendy]

The fact that she just didn't feel comfortable interrupting is quite significant... So that indicates to me that he had that manner about him that's unapproachable. [Priscilla]

Yeah, yeah. [Wendy]

That you just didn't interrupt him, because it wouldn't be worth the job to interrupt him. [Priscilla]

Furthermore, the shop assistant's embarrassment snowballed and built amongst the three of them as they became flustered trying to fill-in time and make polite conversation. Wendy reflected,

[The embarrassment] seemed to snowball amongst us. I mean, the more she [the sales assistant] got embarrassed the more I did, and on it went... As it become more and more difficult to fill in the time, ... she [the sales assistant] got sort of anxious about finding ways to do it.

When the sales assistant, no longer knew what to do or say to help, she gave Wendy and Bob the option of leaving. Wendy reflected,
When it got to the point where, you know, the embarrassment and the awkwardness was so..., had got so great, we left rather than just standing there and waiting for him. . . . The assistant gave us the out. Like you can go to the library.

Upon deciding to leave, Wendy had already appraised that she would not be able to work with this designer in creating her dream ring. Wendy reflected,

Well at this stage, she [Wendy] was feeling... if she got to speak to this designer, she . . . [would feel] quite negatively disposed towards him; and the whole transaction of working collaboratively between the three of them on a design wasn't going to work easily anyway. Because he needed more a rapport than you could get with those negative feelings that had sort of crept into the whole experience.

After having spent the time and effort to carefully plan and execute this encounter, Wendy and Bob were frustrated, angry and disappointed. These emotions resulted in their judgement that the jeweller was to blame for their unaccomplished goal which wasted their effort and time, and their unjust and inappropriate treatment of being ignored, respectively. Furthermore, their frustration and anger were intensified by their appraisals that their time was 'limited' and thus precious to them, and by their embarrassment and awkwardness in waiting for the designer. Wendy's appraisal of Bob's frustration and anger reinforced (and perhaps intensified) her own emotions. Wendy reflected,

I mean, he [Bob] hadn't gone through the same preparation, pumping up sort of stuff [as Wendy]. But in terms of the outcome he felt exactly the same as I did - angry and frustrated, and just furious with no inclination to ever go back to that store.

Wendy's appraisal of not receiving the expected enjoyment, pride, and pleasure in the process, as well as not accomplishing her goal, lead to her disappointment. This disappointment, as well as her frustration and anger, was intensified by her involvement (i.e., the time and planning committed in the experience, the salient value of, and the resultant excitement from the value of, build up and commitment to the encounter and product) in achieving her goals. Wendy's level of expectations (e.g., feelings) of what the experience would be like, and the probability of her actually accomplishing them as planned and/or expected also intensified her disappointment. The group commented and Wendy reflected,

You can almost feel, yeah, the expectations and excitement. [Priscilla]

Mm [Wendy]

And the treating yourself and all those things, and then the let down by one person. [Priscilla]

And because there was such a huge build-up to it. You know a huge history behind it (laughing). [Wendy]

What a terrible let down. [Priscilla]

Yes, it was. [Wendy]
Mm, and to wait all that time (laughing), and the planning, and reaching one's goal; and the reward was there. What a let down. [Priscilla]

But the other thing that probably made it worse was that Wendy had phoned? [Annabel]

Yes, Yes, and spoken to him, and he'd inferred, 'Oh yeah, sure, yeah we're open till 2.' [Wendy]

And you expected quite a bit from him too, because of the setting of the shop; and umm, you were sure he would come up with something because of this talent. . . . You were sure he would come up with something. . . . You expected quite a bit from him. [Susie]

[Wendy did]. Yes. . . . Because, umm, not knowing exactly what she wanted, she expected to come away from that encounter with the answer. That he [the designer] would look at the stone and say 'Oh, I know exactly how it should be presented'. [Wendy]

Knowing that store too, I think that would be, yeah, grander expectations because that is a grand store for Hamilton. That is such a beautiful store. So I mean if I went there I'd be pumped up just to look at it. You know, that just adds to the crash (laughs) at the other end of not being valued. [Priscilla]

Wendy's excitement turned not only into disappointment, but into a 'disaster' and a 'nasty'. What she had carefully planned and executed, and the value that she had attached to designing and having her emerald set were depleted. As Wendy appraised, not only was her goal unaccomplished, but her 'self' esteem and identity were threatened. Moreover, it would take her time to disassociate herself with these feelings of being devalued in this experience, so that she could reclaim her feelings of personal 'value' which she associated with her 'prized' emerald and having it set, and proceed with a similar transaction to accomplish her goal. Wendy reflected,

Wendy was pretty quiet about it [her experience] because she felt shattered. You know, there wasn't actually a lot of discussion about it afterwards, it was just like..., you know... [Wendy]

Anticlimax? [Priscilla]

Yeah. . . . Which is why she hasn't done it again. . . . I've got to wait for a huge period of time before I can get pumped up for the whole thing and go through that preparation. [Wendy]

Analysis of this memory-text and the subsequent group reflections, as in the prior reconstructed memory-text, also revealed how disconfirmation of expectations, injustices such as equity, attribution of cause, and failure to succeed in her mission lead to Wendy's intense emotions and dissatisfaction. Moreover, Wendy judged her appraisals by comparing her experiences to those of others. In this memory-text reconstruction she specifically used hers and her partner's experiences, and social norms relative to customer service as a basis for her expectations in the encounter, and then judged the outcomes from these expectations. The interaction which
occurred in this encounter became complex for a number of reasons. These included the number of actors, the dynamics amongst the actors, and the intense build up to the final outcome; all which contributed to the overall intensity of the affect, emotion and dissatisfaction felt in the experience.

Example Three: Helena's 'Exhilaration' Experience.
The next memory-text to be discussed is Helena's 'Exhilaration'. Similar to Wendy's 'Nasty' experience, Helena's exhilaration memory-text builds upon her excitement and anticipation of gaining something of personal value. There are also multiple actors. Helena's encounter, however, has a satisfactory outcome, but importantly, there are both positive and negative features in the encounter which contribute to her resultant judgement and feelings of satisfaction.

Helena's 'Exhilaration' Memory-Text.
She had just decided to go to a Christmas party after a long period of hesitation. At this party she would not know most of people and she was worried about how comfortable she would feel there. Another source of hesitation was the dress. She did not have a party dress, she didn't think she had any dresses what so ever, if you don't count her one mini skirt. She lived in California at the time and she knew that every woman would really dress up for the occasion. So, she decided to go for a real party dress, the first in her life.

She did not like frills and glitter, she was more for natural materials, simple lines and preferred natural colours instead of neon pink and metallic blue. The Californians, instead, seemed to love bright colours. This was a serious task. She asked a male friend--and American--to come with her to judge the appropriateness of the possible choices and also to drive her around.

They went to her favorite mall and went in a couple of shops. She could immediately see that there was nothing for her taste. Her companion was getting worried and could not understand what she was looking for. And how could she decide without even trying anything on that she did not like any of the dresses available.

Finally, they entered the biggest and the most expensive department store in the mall. She had bought several items of clothing there before, so the place had potential. After wandering around the women's department, she still could not see what she was looking for. He told her to ask for assistance and he was increasingly worried that she will not find anything in this place either. He asked for her when she spotted a possible choice on a glass wall of one the designer boutiques inside the department store. This dress was on sale, expensive, but she had decided that once in her life she can have a
NICE dress and NICE dresses cost money. The dress was a body hugging, gray mini-skirt length dress. The saleswoman said they had only small sizes like 4 and 6 and politely suggested that those might not be her sizes after looking at her baggily dressed form. She wanted to try it on anyway with his encouragement (he did not want her to leave without a dress!). It was too big and did not fit anyway. She felt more like a sausage inside of a loose, wrinkled skin. She felt uncomfortable modelling it around for him. She had bare legs and feet.

The saleswoman was getting into it now. She brought dress after dress for her to try on. She tried them all on and she loved the loose, ankle length, natural white, simple silk dress which had a long row of buttons from the neck to the ankles in the front. It was the latest design and very expensive. She almost had decided for that dress, although her friend thought it was a bit too simple and humble and natural when she was turning around and around in front of him to make the silk flow with her movements. She was surprised about his helpful and insightful comments. No other man had ever actually helped her to make a choice with clothing.

As the last resource, the saleswoman brought out a little black dress. They only had this one left and it was also a reduced price. It was a size 4. She might as well try it on. It fit perfectly. He thought it made her look great, even she felt great in it. That was it, one of a kind, the perfect dress. It was black wool with suede waist line and a belt. It had an open neckline and it was short. How could she feel so comfortable in such a thing? The saleswoman asked her whether she was a runner. No, I am actually a dancer, she replied. The saleswoman complemented her about her great looking, strong thighs. Oh God, she always wanted to hide them and although the saleswoman obviously meant it as a complement she still felt bad. The black dress would show her thighs.

Nevertheless, she bought it. She felt very good. It was money well spent. She had never before found such a dream piece of clothing; especially when she was desperately looking for one. Even the sales person had been very understanding and co-operative, not to even to mention him. That was a good team.

In Helena's hesitant decision to attend a Christmas party, she compared herself to the Californian women who would also be attending and assessed that she required a new dress. Helena appraised that these Californian women would really dress up to attend such a function, and that she did not own any appropriate garment to wear, nor had she ever owned a real party dress. Moreover, in Helena's comparison of herself with these American women, she appraised that her fashion taste was quite different to theirs. Helena judged that American women (at least Californian women anyway) liked frills and glitter, whereas Helena with her
Finnish cultural background sought simpler and more natural dress designs and fabrics. Helena reflected, "American have very different taste from what Helena has".

In Helena's assessment that she would not know most of the people and that she did not have an appropriate dress to wear, she worried about how comfortable she would feel there. As such, Helena appraised that she required a nice dress to fit in and feel comfortable at this Christmas party. Furthermore, in Helena's assessment that nice dresses cost money, she appraised that by adding 'value' to a simple dress, which represented her taste and identity, she would give presence, merit and thus confidence to herself amongst the American women's assured and indisputable presence of 'frills and glitter'. In doing so, Helena with her more subdued Finnish background would feel comfortable and fit in with the overpowering presence of the American women.

In Helena's judgements that nice dresses cost money, that she definitely required a party dress to attend this function, and that her fashion taste was different to that of American women, she appraised that acquiring an appropriate dress was a serious task. In other words, Helena considered that it was very important, and as such, was committed to finding an appropriate party dress which she liked to attend this Christmas party. Moreover, as noted by Annabel, the special situation of buying presents for family and friends associated with the Christmas season would have reinforced and intensified the importance of the task.

The other thing here is Christmas. The feeling of Christmas. . . . [It] has to be special. Whatever we buy has to be special, and [as such] it is quite an important choice. [Annabel]

Helena's decision to attend the American Christmas party and to purchase her first real party dress, lead to her being excited about finding and purchasing an appropriate dress. The importance of the situation, along with the festive mood of Christmas and a party, intensified Helena's excitement. As Wendy remarked, it was, "... [the] special occasion and the frill and the glitter that goes with it".

Helena's decision to attend the party without having a party dress, however, also lead to her anxiety about finding an appropriate dress which she liked. Helena appraised that the designs and fabrics she favoured and judged would be appropriate, allowing her to fit into the Californian party scene and still retain her identity, would be scarce and expensive. As such, Helena expected that finding a dress which she liked would be difficult, particularly within the limited time frame before the party. Helena responded to and reflected on the group members' questions,

Did you [Helena] think you went out with high expectations of finding something . . .? [Priscilla]

No. [Helena]
You didn't go out with high expectations that you would find something? [Priscilla]

No. . . . Yeah, because . . . , she didn't like frills and glitter, and that is what she mostly saw and had seen before. So she sort of went on an adventure to try and look, sort of, behind those frill things, those frilly things that were in the front always. [Helena]

[Then there] . . . is that problem of going out to specifically find something special and having trouble finding it and not expecting to be able to find it. [Wendy]

And . . . Helena . . . really needed it in a couple of days. So most of the time when you really need it and you have got to go and get it now, "Oh, there is nothing." Sometimes you end up buying something that will do, just because there is nothing else. [Helena]

And a panic choice, I mean, the panic of getting something in time (laughing) when those well organised have already got them and it is all picked over; and that feeling of being frantic which I think adds to the stress of going shopping for a particular thing two days before the party. [Priscilla]

Moreover, Helena judged that the dresses she liked would be expensive due to their exclusive use of natural fabrics and simple designs, and where they would be sold.

Because of the cultural differences between Helena's and an American's fashion taste and assertiveness when shopping, Helena assessed that she needed help to select, and encouragement to buy an appropriate dress. Helena, therefore, asked an American male friend to help judge . . . and drive her around. Helena reflected,

... she [Helena] took him along knowingly, because otherwise . . . she thought that she would not buy anything.

Helena judged this male friend as an appropriate person to help her make a suitable choice and to shop with, since he was trustworthy, gave her confidence, and would be helpful and fun in the task.

Helena must have trusted this person very much. He must have been a very good friend? [Priscilla]

Yeah, yeah. He was her best friend. [Helena]

So there was a lot of trust with this person, companion? [Priscilla]

Yeah, yeah. [Helena]

Be it male or female . . . ? [Priscilla]

Yeah, yeah, and I think this person had a feminine side and that's why he was so good, carrying on with Helena while she was trying on clothes. [Helena]

He obviously cared, and it was important for him that you [Helena] looked good and felt good about what you were buying? [Priscilla]
Yeah. . . . He really cared about her and that is why she felt that he really wanted to help her. . . . So I think that is why she [Helena] took him along. It wasn't pressure as such, to make a purchase, it was more support. . . .

And having companionship gave her more confidence? [Wendy]

I think so. And also he was an American who doesn't hesitate to ask. [Helena]

You think because he was male too? [Annabel]

Yeah, maybe. [Helena]

In Helena's adventure into the smaller, less expensive stores in her favourite mall, she was not surprised nor worried, as was her friend, that she did not find anything that suited her taste. She instead assessed and felt her friend's worry and panic as he could not understand what she was looking for. In his panic, Helena's anxiety was reinforced and intensified.

Helena, however, expected that she might find something at the largest, most expensive department store in the mall where she had in the past often been successful at finding what she desired. As such, Helena judged that this store provided garments that were consistent with her taste. Helena reflected,

[I]t was a good shop for Helena's taste, umm, because most of the things they had were sort of on the simple design - not the usual, but black, grey, white, rather than bright colours.

After wandering around the women's department without success, they both began to worry that Helena might not find an appropriate dress which she liked. Her friend's appraisal that she might not find anything in this store either, and his resultant concern and increased worry caused him to suggest that she ask for help. Helena's appraisal of the situation suggested that her adventure of finding an appropriate dress was in jeopardy. As such, Helena's anxiety and panic were reinforced and intensified by her own, as well as her friend's assessment of their diminishing hope of finding a dress.

When Helena spotted a possible choice, both Helena and her friend were relieved. Unlike a past memory-text experience, 'A Quick Exit', where Helena felt uncomfortable entering the shop and was intimidated by the salesperson in her shopping pursuit (see Appendix C), Helena appraised that she was comfortable entering this store and looking at the expensive designer clothes. Helena attributed this to her sense of purpose and direction, and to her friend's support.

I think it helped that she [Helena] really knew what she wanted. So that made the shopping experience much more pleasant. Whereas in her first story, she felt like, "Gee, I need to change my clothing style so what do I do? Oh, I don't really know." That was much harder to enter the shop. [Helena]

So you think Helena went shopping with confidence? [Priscilla]
More like it. More with confidence, thinking "I am going to buy something." And Helena went into this very expensive store without caring ... that she doesn't look that way and whatever. Although, he sort of helped because he asked the lady there . . . . "My friend is interested in that dress. Could she try it on?" [Helena]

She didn't feel intimidated this shopping trip? [Priscilla]

Oh no! And she said quite bluntly to her [the saleswoman], "I don't like this. This doesn't fit (laughing). Give me something else." [Helena]

And having a companion gave her more confidence? [Wendy]

I think so. [Helena]

Moreover, in deciding to legitimately shop within the designer's boutique in this store, Helena provides self-worth to herself. Helena considers herself and her purpose important enough to be shopping in such an expensive shop with the serious intentions of purchasing a dress.

Upon asking to try on the dress, Helena appraised that the salesperson judged her and her friend from their appearances. This resulted in the salesperson politely suggesting to Helena that the available sizes might not fit her. Helena assessed the saleswoman's comment as an insult, a put down, and judged that the saleswoman had made unfounded and thus incorrect assumptions about her size and her ability to pay. Helena and the others noted the such a comment was not appropriate and thus embarrassing.

I don't think . . . , even if I were them [the salespeople], I would say that is not your size. I could say, "Oh, try this on and then we will see how it looks. And then we would try something else." [Helena]

Or ask them [customers] what size they are. [Susie]

Right. [Priscilla]

And then perhaps suggest things. [Susie]

Right. [Wendy]

Helena would not have known (laughing) the size she was. [Helena]

Especially American sizes. That is embarrassing, sizes! [Susie]

Do you think that it is an assumption that sales assistant take one look, like Helena in [her] baggy clothes, and assume that they know what you are going to wear? That they direct you in a certain direction . . . . I feel they assume they know you intimately after about a minute, and that they would have you in whatever they think suits you; what is appropriate for you. [Priscilla]

Well that could possibly be . . . because of what Helena says in her story that the salesperson says, "No I don't know if that is going to fit you - size 4." [Annabel]

Yeah, yeah. [Helena]
And when Helena chose for herself the little, body hugging, grey garment as an indication of what her taste was, and what she was looking for? [Wendy]

I think the salesperson knew right away when she saw what we were looking for. Helena was looking at things on that [designer] window. The salesperson sort of looked at her [Helena] - she was young and all this, you know, didn't have nice clothes, and ... maybe that person can't afford to buy anything. Maybe that's it. Maybe that is why she said, "This won't fit you." [Helena]

Thus, Helena appraised that the salesperson believed that they should not be shopping in this expensive designers boutique and by suggesting that the dress was too small was a way of politely saying so. The salesperson had judged that Helena and her friend did not belong in the designers boutique. As such, Helena felt degraded and devalued, both as a customer and a person. Helena, however, in her panic that her adventure would not be successful, in her sense of congruency with the designers' garments, in her uncertainty regarding her dress size, and most of all with her friend's encouragement, judged that she had the necessity and thus the right to be there. Helena, as such, judged that the salesperson had broken an equity rule to treat all customers with respect. Helena was a potential legitimate customer no matter what she or her partner were wearing or how young they looked. Helena decided to try on the dress anyway. Helena, however, felt uncomfortable with proceeding with her adventure in this designer boutique. Helena reflected,

I think really [Helena tried on the dress] because the companion helped Helena over that salesperson's initial sort of slam stuff. "Well maybe it is not quite your size," and stuff like that.

Moreover, Helena's assessment and experiencing of her friend's anxiety due to the possibility that she might not find a dress intensified her desire to try on the dress.

Upon trying the dress on, Helena evaluated that the dress was actually too big rather than too small. While Helena felt uncomfortable modelling this oversized dress in front of her friend, she attributed this discomfort to her resultant overall unattractive, unfeminine appearance created by the baggy dress which was to have been body hugging, and to her bare legs and feet. She felt more like a sausage inside a loose, wrinkled skin. Helena, however, assessed that the saleswoman's insulting assumption regarding her body size were unjustified and thus unfair. By proving the saleswoman wrong, Helena regained her confidence and comfort in trying on the expensive clothes in the designer boutique. Helena felt pride in her body by proving the salesperson wrong. The group members and Helena assessed that,

The saleswomen made ... side swaps at you. Didn't she? By suggesting that you were too big for the clothing they had. [Susie]

Yeah. [Helena]

She just took that first look at your clothing. [Susie]
Yeah. [Helena]

So Helena proved her wrong. Good feeling! (Laughing) A feeling of power. . . . She knew she could get into a size 4 quite comfortably. [Priscilla]

Yeah. [Helena]

You proved her wrong. [Priscilla]

Helena felt and appraised the salesperson's surprise that Helena was actually able to fit into a size 4. After the salesperson judged how small Helena really was and became enthusiastic about helping her, Helena assessed that the salesperson then accepted her as belonging in the exclusive designers boutique due to the symbolism of her smallness/thinness. This appraisal was subconsciously interpreted by Helena as a compliment, thus increasing her pride in the smallness/thinness of her body, and her confidence and comfort in shopping in the designers boutique. Helena reflected and Annabel commented,

I also think . . . that when Helena tried these things on and then the salesperson could see that she could fit this women [Helena] into these tight things they had left, she got really into it. Bringing, bringing, bringing! Which is kind of funny because they sort of idealised the smallness or something like that, you know; or otherwise she had lots a small dresses left that no one else in the shop had bought (laughing). [Helena]

Or perhaps no one else looked good in them. So I imagine that she was actually complimenting you. [Annabel]

But then why should they have those small dresses? Because you know, most women don't look like that. And I think Helena doesn't look like she is that small, but doesn't have any pelvis. (Laughing) And that is how those dresses fitted her, whereas normal women don't look like that. And I think that is . . . emphasising how important it is to be tiny and small and fit into some sausage skins like that (laughing). [Helena]

Helena also judged the salesperson as being very helpful in that she provided Helena with a selection of dresses to choose from. Helena commented,

I think the main role of the salesperson was that she really brought out those dresses that Helena didn't see in the shop.

Since Helena had not expected to find such a selection of dresses to choose from, she was surprised and thus felt good about having such a choice. Helena noted,

Somehow, I don't know where she [the salesperson] brought them out from, but that was her main role in this story. To provide all those amazing choices that she could possibly have and might look good. . . . She felt good . . . because they had so many choices after looking at so many places without seeing anything.

As such, Helena's expectations were positively disconfirmed, and Helena's resultant surprise lead to her increased enjoyment of shopping.
After trying on a number of dresses, Helena had almost decided upon a dress which was congruent with her dance and Finnish cultural background. Helena attributed this congruency to the dress's loose, ankle length design made from natural white simple silk which flowed with her movements as she turned around and around, with the only decorative feature being a row of simple buttons. Her friend, however, assessed that it was a bit too simple and humble and natural, and as such, was not appropriate for the American Christmas party.

Through her friend's insightful comments, attention and concern, Helena judged that her friend was much more helpful than she had expected. Helena reflected (laughing),

This guy was very helpful. Like, you know, he was amazingly helpful. And he waited there all the time when Helena was looking, and saying NO I don't like that. I don't like this. And he waited there and he was really always coming right away, rather than just sitting somewhere in the centre thinking, "Gosh, God." He was really helpful. [Helena]

And that was a surprise? [Wendy]

Yeah. [Helena]

To have a guy along that was so helpful when you were buying clothes? [Wendy]

Yeah. Yeah. Because usually they just sit there some place. And you know, you come out and they just say, "Oh, fine." "Thanks." Or... they just go somewhere else, or they sit in the middle of the mall waiting for you to do something. [Helena]

Helena's appraisal of her friend's helpfulness, attention and concern gave her a sense of being 'valued' as a person. Her surprise in his helpfulness reinforced and intensified these feelings of being valued.

Due to his helpfulness, attention and concern for her, Helena also evaluated her friend's comments as being trustworthy and important to consider in her choice. Along with her assessment that the long, white, flowing, natural silk dress was too expensive, Helena friend's comments influenced her to look at other options.

I think she [Helena] was listening to the companion [not the sales person's comments]. [Helena]

Helena was swayed by what he [her friend] thought about the white, the natural white simple dress that she obviously really loved. She was very much influenced by him thinking that it was inappropriate. [Priscilla]

Mm-mm. [Helena]

And that meant that maybe it was not quite special enough? [Annabel]

Mm. Yep, maybe. [Helena]

And it was enough to take Helena out of her usual style of clothing, or style of clothing in which she felt comfortable in... [Wendy]
Mm. It was very loose, you know, with a straight piece hanging down like this. And it was unique, in that it was a designer thing. It was lovely. But it was very simple... I think because he was American... So Helena thought that this was the most beautiful piece in the world, but it also was very expensive, very, very expensive. So I think that helped, you know, Helena try on something else (laughing). [Helena]

Thus in Helena's judgement that the dress was too expensive and perhaps not appropriate for the Christmas party, Helena tried on a little black dress which was offered to her by the saleswoman as a last resort. In finding yet another dress for Helena to try on, Helena assessed that the saleswoman was making a special effort to help her achieve success. This reinforced and intensified Helena's judgement of the saleswoman as being helpful. As such, Helena's appraisal of the saleswoman's helpfulness contributed to her feelings of being valued as a person, and the surprise of it reinforced and intensified her feelings of value.

The little back dress, which was cheaper, was evaluated by Helena as being just the opposite of what she normally wore and to who she was - the dancer. As a dancer, Helena was aware and critical of her body shape and size, particularly her muscular thighs. Helena, therefore, was surprised to find that she felt so comfortable in this dress which was so small, tight, and short, which highlighted her body size, shape and muscular thighs. Nevertheless, she felt great in it. Her friend's comments regarding how he thought it made her look great, reinforced and intensified her feelings and assessment of how great it looked. Moreover, Helena's appraisal of the dress being a size 4 reinforced and intensified her feelings of looking great, as well as her good feelings about the shopping experience. As Priscilla noted and Helena agreed,

Helena's self esteem must have been very high when she leaped into this wee dress and it looked good, fitted good and her companion thought it looked stunning. [Priscilla]

Yeah. [Helena]

Even though Helena appraised that the saleswoman was complimenting her, Helena felt embarrassed and bad when the saleswoman commented on her muscular thighs. The salesperson's comments, reinforced and intensified Helena's assessment that the black dress would show her thighs which in the past she had been embarrassed about and always tried to hide. However, with other factors taken into consideration, such as her friend's comment and how great she felt in the dress, Helena was not too disillusioned by the saleswoman's comment. Nevertheless she brought it. She felt good. It was money well spent. The saleswoman's remark, however, made Helena's shopping experience less enjoyable. Priscilla and Helena noted,

It was kind of interesting with the saleswoman because I think she was really honestly complimenting her [Helena] about her thighs. Because at the time in California, all sorts of running, and the toned body was very much in fashion, and they really fought for it [their muscular thighs]. Whereas, her [Helena's] thighs were always just sort of there and they had always been a great source of embarrassment, rather than feeling
good. But she didn’t feel that bad to sort of have thunder thighs. So... (Laughing) [Helena]

All women worry about thunder thighs, especially when shopping. [Priscilla]

Yeah. [Helena]

(Laughing) I mean if you could take them off and leave them at home, I think shopping would be far more enjoyable... [Priscilla]

Helena evaluated it as the perfect dress. As well as her friend's positive comments and her feelings that it made her look great, Helena attributed this to its perfect fit, an acceptable price and that it was perfect for the occasion. Moreover, Helena judged that it was special. It was one of a kind in that it fitted so perfectly and was the only one left in the shop. As such, Helena felt exhilarated about her shopping experience. When asked why she felt so exhilarated, Helena reflected,

I think it was a combination of things, because umm, it is usually very hard to find a dress that fits so perfectly, but is not really tailored for you. And I think it was because it fit so well, and the price was sort of all right. And also it was perfect for the occasion. So I think it was a combination of things.

Helena’s exhilaration was intensified by the surprise. She had not expected to find something in her shopping adventure that she liked, more or less loved. She had never before found such a dream piece of clothing; especially when she was desperately looking for one. The group members and Helena noted,

You didn’t go out with high expectations that you would find something? [Priscilla]

No. [Helena]

Okay. (Laughing) So it would have been even more exciting to find something? [Priscilla]

Yeah. [Helena]

The success of it? [Wendy]

Yeah. [Helena]

The success of the adventure. [Wendy]

Furthermore, there was the additional surprise of not having to pay the very expensive price that the natural silk dress would have cost her, which she had almost decided to purchase. This would have also intensified her excitement of finding the little black dress.

Helena also assessed and felt her friend’s excitement regarding her finding such a dress. As discussed, his excitement was attributed to three factors: finally finding something; the dress was perfect; and it was a different style to Helena’s norm.
But for the companion, it was partly also (laughing), "Thank God, that she has finally found something. Let's go!" [Helena]

Well, I don't know, because you know, she mentioned earlier on that he certainly did feel that the other garment she liked was inappropriate. So I think that he obviously was showing patience and, umm, supportive behaviour. [Priscilla]

Yeah, and also for the companion, he saw that Helena normally never wore things like that, a tight dress. So he just probably felt, "Oh Wow, that's nice. Maybe she should buy it." Whereas, she normally did wear these kind of loose silky things. So...

[Helena]

Moreover, the excitement and pressure of the adventure and the 'hunt' also intensified Helena's exhilaration at her success. That is, the excitement of the Christmas party, and the purchasing of her first real party dress within the limited time frame highlighted Helena's exhilaration.

But foremost, Helena's increased self value obtained through the encounter and with purchasing this dress contributed to her exhilaration. Not only did the saleswoman and her friend, in their attention and helpfulness during the encounter, provide Helena with feelings of being special and important, but Helena's feelings of value were also achieved by her being able to wear such a dress. Helena assessed that she would be valued by those at the party as well as by herself. By wearing such a dress, Helena evaluated that those at the party would judge Helena, as did the saleswoman, by her smallness and her toned, trim body shape as these attributes are valued and sought after by society. As such, Helena assessed that she would feel confident and secure in her 'transformation' from her usual baggy, loose fitting clothes while not sacrificing who she was and how comfortable she felt with her body shape and size. By camouflaging her muscular thighs, Helena appraised and felt that she appeared feminine in this short, tight fitting dress, where femininity is also valued by American women. Helena reflected,

At the party she had these stockings with, umm, I think pantyhose they were, with a back seam on them. So that sort of made her feel better about it, and with high heel shoes.

Although there were negative components, Helena's experience fulfilled her highest desires, and exceeded her expectations thus leading to her exhilaration and feelings of satisfaction with the encounter.

**Overall Summary.**

Analysis of these three memory-texts illustrate how a consumer's judgements and the resultant emotions and actions interact to tell a story regarding what happened, why it happened, and how it was experienced. Specifically, these memory-texts depict (a) how the consumer's judgements and their resultant emotions and actions are intricately combined and interlinked together, (b) how these judgements are attributed to either oneself, the store's products,
environment, sales personnel and customers, the situational circumstances, and/or another individual or organisation who are directly or indirectly involved, and (c) how situational circumstances provide the consumer with the motivation and meaning to make her judgements regarding the evaluation of her experience. Although there are a number of different and interrelating components, the judgement process can be viewed as an assessment of causality. Some components, however, are more important than others and create the turning point at which the encounter becomes either satisfactory or dissatisfactory. Whereas, other components tend to reinforce and intensify certain judgements. These encounters highlight the importance of understanding emotion in the process of judgements, and the complex ways in which emotions are brought and experienced within the encounter.
CHAPTER 6
BELONGING

Introduction.
A conclusion from the judgement processing analysis is that one type of appraisal which occurs is whether the consumer feels as if she 'belongs' in the encounter or situation. When the consumer judges and senses she belongs, she feels satisfied with the encounter or situation. However, when a consumer judges and senses that she does not belong, she assesses and experiences the encounter or situation as dissatisfying. Moreover, if the consumer's feeling of belonging or not belonging are disconfirmed during her experience, she will be dissatisfied or satisfied, respectively, with the encounter or situation.

In this chapter four themes - expertise/experience, intimacy, economic, and 'tastes and style' - which emerged from the analysis of the reconstructed memory-texts are discussed to illustrate how consumers determine whether they belong, and how it influences their judgements and emotions of being satisfied or dissatisfied with the encounter. Helena's 'Quick Exit' memory-text is used to illustrate how expertise/experience can influence a consumer's judgement and feelings of not belonging and the resultant dissatisfaction. This analysis is followed by Annabel's 'Quick Exit' memory-text which first depicts how expertise/experience can influence the judgement and feelings of being satisfied through the sense of belonging. This same memory is used to illustrate how becoming too intimate with the consumer can lead to a dissatisfying experience. From the opposite view, Priscilla's 'Impulse' memory-text demonstrates how intimacy in an encounter provides the consumer with a sense of belonging, and thus influences her judgement and feelings of being satisfied. Lastly in this chapter, two memory-texts, Sweetie's 'Pressure Shopping' and Annabel's 'Quick Exit', are discussed and compared in detail, to illustrate how a consumer's 'tastes and style' influences her sense of belonging, and how this influences her judgements and emotions of being either satisfied or dissatisfied. These two memory-texts are also used to point out how a consumer may or may not belong in an encounter due to her economic status, but at the same time may or may not identify with a shopping experience due to her 'tastes and style'. Throughout this chapter, other memory-texts examined prior to a discussion are used to support it. For example, Helena's 'Exhilaration Experience', discussed in Chapter 5, is referred to in support of the argument that 'tastes and style', and the intimacy created in an encounter, can influence a consumer's judgements, feelings of belonging, and resultant satisfaction.
Expertise/Experience and Belonging.

The following 'Quick Exit' memory-text by Helena is composed of two stories. The first describes a clothing store experience and the second recapitulates a health club encounter. Helena wrote her health club experience to contrast and explain her avoidance of the clothing store, as depicted in the first story. The examination of Helena's memory-text below, therefore, is twofold. First, it illustrates how not having any expertise or experiences with purchasing 'nice' clothes and shopping in 'nice' clothing stores lead to her judgement and feelings of not 'belonging', and thus her avoidance and dissatisfaction with this clothing store experience. Second, it describes how Helena experienced dissatisfaction in her health club experience when her sense of belonging was not reconfirmed in the encounter.

Helena's 'Quick Exit' Memory-Text.

She was standing in front of a large window of a clothing store mall. The clothes on the mannequins looked exactly what she had been looking for: natural white silk-cotton long sleeved blouse and blue ankle length skirt with a slit in the back. The blouse was loose and flowed nicely on the contours of the overly skinny mannequin. The skirt hugged the mannequin's long sleek legs. But the clothes fit to her newly awoken sense of style. She stretched her neck without moving from the front of the window to peek inside the boutique. No music inside the store, no neon lights, but soft yellow lights. No customers were in there, only the saleswoman at the counter filling out some forms, her spectacles hanging in a chain from her neck. She had very blond, short hair, permed and perfectly in place and her face was covered with perfect, but clearly noticeable make-up. The colors of the make-up weren't too offensive, like her lipstick was pink, but not bright pink. She was frowning over her papers. She was about 40 and clearly projected classy, expensive taste. The saleswoman scared her. She walked quietly away avoiding the open door so she wouldn't be seen inside of the shop. She was wearing a blue T-Shirt tucked into her lose jeans that stayed up with her hipbones. Her once white aerobics shoes were worn out into every day street colours. She certainly didn't want to bother the lady.

She always hesitated to go into clothing stores, although she liked nice and usually expensive, good quality clothes, but she never had any apprehension about going into a health club. She was one of them with the right gear. This time she had on her black, sleeveless, cotton bike shorts, just long enough to cover the whole length of the quadriceps; a white T-shirt and a blue sweat shirt on top of it as it was cold inside. It was fall. She carried her pink water bottle in her hand, paid at the counter, marched into the aerobics class. She left her water bottle on the side and took a place toward the mid front of the rectangular large aerobics room. The well acclaimed athletes smiled at her from all of the four walls. Were they suppose to inspire someone? The room was full of people, mostly women - young - but also men. It was packed. She felt like a
fish in an overcrowded aquarium where the fish were trying to stay in one spot by paddling their little fins nervously back and forth. The instructor was a sinewy, fit, lean small short man, probably Polynesian decent. His mannerism was quick, so was his way of talking. One of her students stood in front of her. This student seemed very muscular. This wasn’t the usual surroundings for an encounter with a student, she avoided to look at her. The instructor started to blast his music; the usual rappy, hip-hoppy aerobics stuff. She could barely see him moving, although he pranced back and forth on an elevated instructor floor; there were so many people. She couldn’t move her arms without hitting somebody. The others didn’t seem to worry about hitting her (she hated when people aren’t considerate like that), they didn’t even notice. Their eyes were clued into the instructor, who changed his quick moves in quick bursts and gave his instructions after these bursts; quick words aided with constant, rapid hand gestures. Everyone was doing the moves wrong, moving into wrong directions and facing the wrong directions but she noticed their eyes were shining; they were looking at God up there and they were all following his lead with determined, ambitious smiles on their faces - two beats behind or some were two measures behind him. The mass of bodies moved around her in an ever closing circle that was going to squeeze her in its centre, but no one looked at her. She looked down at the pink and rose carpeted floor. She felt she was suffocating, she hated these moves, she thought the instructor was no God, he actually sucked. She tried to understand why people loved this, but got too irritated and angry and aggravated and pushed her way through the uplifted, enthusiastic faces to pick up her water bottle next to the erector spinae machine - this machine was closest to the door of all the white training machines - and ran out after five minutes. She had never done that before, left the class like this without giving it a chance. She did not look at anybody on her way out. She felt bad, like culturally insensitive.

Avoidance of the clothing store. Helena was unable to enter the fashionable clothing store because she believed she did not have the expertise or the experience to interact with the saleswomen. She did not feel as if she belonged, and thus felt uncomfortable entering into such an encounter. Helena reflected,

I couldn’t remember even getting myself, even wanting to face a situation where somehow I had to leave. I’ve always felt very unempowered according to those things. Like, they [the salespeople] talk to me and whatever; and ... what if they come and ask me something and things like that? [Laughing] ... I won’t even go into it [a clothing store]. I won’t let them intimidate me like that!

Helena specifically acknowledged that she frequently avoids clothes shopping because she has neither the knowledge nor skills that enable her to know what to look for, and thus ask the appropriate questions. In this experience, she lacked the expertise and experience, and thus the confidence in (a) what she needed and wanted to purchase for her newly aspired sense of style, (b) her knowledge of how to judge the appropriateness of the clothing, and (c) her skills to
interact with the saleswomen. Due to these feelings of 'inadequacy', Helena did not feel in control of her shopping encounter. She felt that the saleswoman would recognise, through her appearance, actions and behaviour, that she did not have the fashion expertise and shopping experience to belong in this fashion boutique. As such, Helena feared being manipulated, pressured, and/or belittled by the saleswoman. *The saleswoman scared her.* Helena reflected in the group discussion,

Well, I could tell you a story about the last time I have been actually clothing shopping. I avoided, I avoided the whole business, actually. I don't really want to go. And like with these clothes [described in the memory-text experience], I could have very well afforded [them]. So it was not [because of] the price that I didn't go in... I went shopping in San Francisco, actually, and the only things that I came out with were leotards... *Because they are easy for me to buy*. I know exactly what I want (excited). These are good quality, these are bad quality, these look nice and these are useful. But then like thinking of some other clothes, and having to go and ask them [the salespeople] something... I'd rather buy it large, because I know it fits! So I don't have to try it on. (Laughing) I know they're big and it is going to bag, but I... [don't care]. "Oh, these are good." [Helena]

So you [Helena] would not go into this store because you didn't know what you wanted to buy? [Annabel]

That's part of it. [Helena]

And you [Helena] didn't want to have to approach them? [Annabel]

*Bother the lady...* Right, because if Helena knew... what she wanted, she wouldn't have needed to bother her, sort of. [Helena]

Priscilla, in her quest to understand how Helena would be threatened by the saleswoman in as much as she was not sure of what she wanted, asked "But... wouldn't [Helena] have been happy just to look first, just to browse through?" In response, Helena noted how she did not have the appropriate skill of 'browsing' to feel comfortable and partake in the shopping encounter. She actually feared the saleswoman, and felt "inadequate" [Priscilla] since she did and could not project the appropriate appearance, actions and behaviours to belong. Helena reflected,

*Oh, no.* [Helena couldn't just browse]. Maybe she [the saleswoman] would come along and ask me what I wanted. (Excited and laughing)... Yeah, in that sense, especially, [Helena found the saleswoman very threatening]. I am such a clumsy person in there. I am too big, my clothes are awful and all this. That is the feeling I get. You know, I don't have any make up, my hair is hanging. So... I guess that I just felt that [the sales] lady was going to look up and go like (shrouds her shoulders and skews up her face), "What are you here for?" [Helena]

She [the saleswoman] was going to pounce on you? [Priscilla]

Yeah. [Helena]

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44 Priscilla being a expert in retailing (see Appendix A for Priscilla's personal details) assumed that most individuals would have the skills of 'browsing' without being threatened.
Helena was not wearing what she considered to be appropriate clothes, nor did she know how to act the part which would enable her to interact comfortably with the saleswoman. Rather, Helena felt inadequate and ashamed by her dress which symbolised her lack of fashion knowledge and shopping experience, and thus her lack of belonging. The salesperson’s appearance and paper work which symbolised her expertise and experience, contributed to Helena’s feelings of being ashamed and inadequate in her anticipation of interacting with the saleswoman. This reinforced Helena’s lack of confidence, feelings of not being in control, and discomfort in entering into this clothing store. The comparison of herself to the saleswoman indicated to Helena how she did not belong due to her lack of fashion expertise and shopping experience. Priscilla and the group reflected on appearance, specifically what the consumer and the salespeople were wearing in regard to a consumer’s sense of belonging in the encounter.

What I find an interesting thing in the three of yours [Helena’s, Annabel’s, and Wendy’s ‘Quick Exit’ memory-texts45], is the way you described what you were wearing. To me you all felt inadequate in the clothes that you were shopping in, ... and I found that very interesting. That you have all commented that: She [Helena] was wearing a blue T-shirt tucked into her lose jeans that stayed up with her hipbones; and Annabel was in her over-alls - her stonewashed over-alls; and Wendy was in her...

Priscilla

Wendy didn’t give details, but she would have been in jeans. [Wendy]

But obviously Wendy gave that feeling of being scruffy. So when you set off shopping, you must have felt okay about yourselves. But those stores intimidated the way you felt about what you were wearing. But you were in comfortable clothes when you set out, you know. [Priscilla]

Yeah. Sometimes you think, you know, that if you wore really nice stylish clothes already when you go shopping, that somehow they [the salespeople would] take you more seriously and give you more, you know, service or something. Which is kind of strange because why would you go buy new ones if you already had something nice on? But that I guess is the way I think about it. [Helena]

There is some sort of disparity between the sort of regular out there on the street women going shopping and the clothes they are comfortable in and the image that is being presented by the retailing stores. Yeah, I image that it is to try and lure you in to buy their wonderful clothes. But there is such a difference. [Wendy]

But they actually scare you off. (Most of the time I feel ashamed of myself. Mostly because I know I can’t go home and change into other clothes, and totally appear like a lady the next day, and go into the same store because I don’t have any of those clothes.) But I think it was also like when I went to the health club, I had my uniform on. I was one of them. [Helena]

You were more comfortable there? [Priscilla]

Yeah. But I didn’t have my uniform on when I went shopping. [Helena]

45 As part of the memory-work method, the group compared and discussed other similar memory-texts to provide meaning to the experience(s). Refer to Chapters 3 and 4 for details of the memory-work procedure.
Helena's feelings of inadequacy were also grounded in her lack of skill and confidence in knowing what she wanted in a boutique... which clearly projected classy, expensive taste, and knowledge of how to judge if a garment is appropriate. That is, she didn't have the fashion knowledge expertise and experience to know what to ask for and what to purchase. Thus, she did not feel comfortable entering into this boutique. Helena reflected,

...I guess the hardest thing for me is that I don't really know what I want. (Laughing). I have this idea that maybe I should get some other clothes. But like in that sense I don't know how to shop like you, Priscilla, with a mission. Then I would feel better. [Helena]

Mm, like when you [Helena] buy leotards and things like that? [Priscilla]

Yeah, or if I knew something, [but] I don't apparently, ... that would sort of help. Because that would give me more power, sort of. ... [I would know] exactly what I want - the 'look' and what material, and what length, and all that stuff. It was something like... not having the expertise - meaning no knowledge [researcher's emphasis]; so you are totally at her [the saleswoman's] mercy. Sort of... You don't end up having to try on something that you don't like, and you don't have to say I don't really need this, and like this and... [Helena]

Disconfirmation of 'belonging' to the health club. Unlike the clothing store episode, Helena never had any apprehension about going into a health club because it was a situation in which she had expertise and experience and felt she belonged. Helena entered the health club feeling enthusiastic, confident, and in control. She knew how to play the role. She was wearing the appropriate uniform, knew the procedures and the language of the health club, and as such, felt she could appropriately behave and interact within the environment. She belonged. As described in her memory-text, Helena uses the tangible factors of her clothing, movements, jargon and the equipment in this encounter to illustrate how she belonged to the health club scene.

She was one of them with the right gear. (I had my uniform on. I was one of them.) [researchers emphasis] This time she had on her black, sleeveless, cotton bike shorts, just long enough to cover the whole length of the quadriceps; a white T-shirt and a blue sweat shirt on top of it... She carried her pink water bottle in her hand, paid at the counter, marched into the aerobics class. She left her water bottle on the side and took a place toward the mid front of the rectangular large aerobics room... [She picked] up her water bottle next to the erector spinae machine [researcher's emphasis],... and ran out after five minutes.

Helena, however, became dissatisfied with her experience when she discovered that she in fact did not belong to this encounter, as she had expected. When Helena compared herself to the

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46 Helena referred to Priscilla 'Quick Exit' memory-text (see Appendix C) and its discussion where Priscilla is viewed as an 'expert'. She knows what she wants, where to go, what to ask for. Through her fashion and retail experience, Priscilla knows how to confidently shop for clothing.
others participating in the encounter, using her past health club and cultural experiences and expertise, she determined that she was different to the other clientele and the instructor. She neither looked nor behaved like the other participants or the instructor. In her dissimilarity, Helena felt uncomfortable participating in the encounter.

Helena's image of herself did not fit with her perceived and expected image of the other clientele and the instructor. While the others appeared confident about their images and abilities, Helena did not appear so, even though she was the expert and the teacher. Helena's muscular framed body was covered and protected, while theirs were not. Her black, white and blue clothing blended into the background, protecting her image. Most of the other clientele were young, athletic, muscular, and confident. As Helena walked into the gym she felt the 'looks' of the other participants. She judged herself to be different and felt ill at ease in being in such a crowd. Moreover, the appearance of the instructor echoed that of the clientele, reinforcing and intensifying Helena's discomfort. She wrote,

_The well acclaimed athletes smiled at her from all of the four walls. Were they suppose to inspire someone? The room was full of people, mostly women - young - but also men. It was packed. She felt like a fish in an overcrowded aquarium where the fish were trying to stay in one spot by paddling their little fins nervously back and forth. . . . The instructor was a sinewy, fit, lean small short man, probably Polynesian decent._

Helena's feelings of not belonging in the encounter, in regards to her expertise, were also challenged by the presence of a student. In the past, it had not been Helena's experience to participate alongside a student in such an encounter. This student, as the other participants, also appeared muscular and confident, adding to and reinforcing Helena's discomfort. Helena's sense of expertise and authority in the encounter were threatened. Not only was she different to the student, but she also felt uncomfortable participating behind her. Helena did not belong behind any student; neither in confidence nor authority. Helena wrote,

_One of her students stood in front of her. This student seemed very muscular. This wasn't the usual surroundings for an encounter with a student, she avoided looking at her._

As the aerobic session began, Helena's discomfort of not belonging was reinforced and intensified. She became aware that her actions were different to the other clientele, and that they were enjoying themselves and she was not. Helena attributed these differences to her expertise, and to her past health club and cultural experiences. Because her knowledge and skills were different to the others involved, Helena's expectations of the encounter were also different. It was not what she had expected. The others were able to enjoy themselves; she could not. Helena wrote and reflected,

_The instructor, started to blast the usual rappy, hip-hoppy aerobics stuff. She could barely see him moving, although he pranced back and forth on the elevated instructor_
floor; there were so many people. She couldn't move her arms without hitting somebody. The others didn't seem to worry about hitting her (she hated when people aren't considerate like that), they didn't even notice. Their eyes were clued into the instructor, who changed his quick moves in quick burst and gave instructions after these burst; quick words aided with constant, rapid hand gestures. Everyone was doing the moves wrong, moving into wrong directions and facing the wrong directions but she noticed their eyes were shining; they were looking at God up there and they were all following his lead with determined, ambitious smiles on their faces - two beats behind or some were two measures behind him. . . . Everyone else was enjoying [the session] . . . [She hated these moves, she thought the instructor was no God, he actually sucked. She tried to understand why people loved this. . . .]

Helena was not in control of the encounter as she had expected. Rather, she was being driven from an environment which she socially identified with, and thought she belonged to. She wrote,

The mass of body moved around her in an ever closing circle that was trying to squeeze her in its centre, but no one looked at her. She looked down at the pink and rose carpeted floor. She felt she was suffocating. . . .

Helena, however, and more importantly, judged her expertise and experience to be greater than that offered by the health club and the other clientele. Her past experiences in the field of physical education, dance, and aerobics allowed her to judge the environment and instructor as being inappropriate and bad. This lead to her disapproval of this encounter. Helena reflected,

I clearly knew that it was terrible! . . . Because I was the expert. I had the power to judge. I felt confident in myself. . . . I knew because of all my professional information. I knew it was terrible! I knew it was bad!

As such, she became irritated and angry and aggravated since she attributed the fault of her bad and terrible experience to the health club environment and instructor.

Helena had become uncomfortable participating in such an encounter. It did not meet the high professional and personal standards which she practiced and taught others, as an instructor and a teacher. Helena exited this encounter not only because of her irritation, anger and aggravation as described in her memory-text, but because she could not support nor belong to such a substandard service. She reflected that her memory-text,

. . . is sort of a story where . . . you buy services, and I clearly remember this time that I got so angry and I just marched out, and I've never done that. . . . I felt totally bad, although I knew that it wasn't any good. . . . I was the expert! . . . [But] I did go out. So what helped me there [to exit] was my whole expertise in the area.

In summary, it was Helena's expertise and experience that allowed her to confidently enter and exit from the health club experience. Due to her past skills and knowledge she felt as if she belonged, and thus was comfortable entering and partaking in the aerobic experience. It was also Helena's professional expertise and experience that allowed her to attribute blame to the
health club, and thus exit from an incompetent and inadmissible encounter. In contrast, in Helena's clothing store experience, she lacked the knowledge and skills in fashion and clothes shopping to feel as if she belonged, and as such avoided entering into the encounter. She did not have the knowledge nor the skills to select and judge appropriate garments, and leave the store without feeling that she might be pressured, manipulated, and/or intimidated by the salesperson.

Just as Helena's lack of or disconfirmation of belonging, in regards to her expertise, lead to her experiences of being dissatisfied, Annabel's 'Quick Exit' memory-text illustrates how her expertise and experience contributed to her sense of belonging to a high fashion store, and lead to her feelings of being both satisfied and dissatisfied with the encounter.

Annabel's 'Quick Exit' Memory-Text.

Annabel was shopping with her partner (a very rare occasion) as they took in the sights of downtown Vancouver where they were visiting for the day. Both were casually dressed; Annabel in her baggy stoned-washed rugged over-alls and her partner in his jeans and runners. It was a beautiful summer day and both were enjoying walking through the city, popping in and out of stores which interested them both. Although he was agreeable about visiting women's clothing stores, he was not overly enthusiastic.

It was Annabel's last chance to find that something special for her 20th high school reunion. They entered into a shop that looked relatively expensive, but perhaps affordable (even when considering the exchange rate). The store divided into two main sections - a casual/sports wear section and a formal work-wear and dress section. It was almost as if it was two individual shops. Annabel and her partner stepped up from the entrance into the casual/sports wear area.

The shop was a corner one housed within of a small contemporary mall or group of shops in the busy downtown business area. The two outer walls of the casual/sports wear area were almost completely glass and mirror with striking visual displays. Off the back of this area was another room which displayed shoes for sale. Again, this shoe area was almost a completely separate shop with just a small archway (a bit larger than a regular size door) opening into it. The casual/sports wear selling floor appeared nearly square with spacious, individualised dressing rooms in the centre. The clothes were neatly displayed and organised against the closed walls and dressing rooms. The aisles were abnormally spacious with a slightly off-white tiled floor which matched the rest of the decor. At the far side of the room a casual, inviting chair and sofa setting of

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47 This reunion represented 20 years of being out of high school, rather than the 20th reunion Annabel had attended, or the school's 20th year of being in existence. This was the first reunion Annabel had attended since graduating from high school.
furniture blended into the decor adding to the overall shop environment. It allowed individuals to relax comfortably viewing both the inside and outside of the shop without being either conspicuous or hidden away.

Annabel’s partner quickly found refuge in a chair when she began to look seriously through the clothing racks. He took little notice of any store details such as the price tags. Upon browsing Annabel saw that the clothes were branded with well known top American and European designers and that they were very expensive (e.g., $2,000 for a jacket; $1,000 for a skirt - Canadian). However, there were a few brands much, much lower in price (still expensive) which were affordable to her. Annabel wandered around the shop more through curiosity, enjoyment and fashion trend hunting than in serious anticipation of purchasing anything. After looking, Annabel decided to try on one outfit (just affordable). It was not exactly what she had envisaged and was expensive, but thought it might do if nothing else was to be found and if it was absolutely stunning on. She was escorted to a dressing room by a salesperson who chatted pleasantly to her, carefully and politely gaining information about her.

Meanwhile, the salesperson had been quietly chatting to Annabel’s partner; finding out where they lived, how they were enjoying their visit, etc., etc. By this time she had already offered him a beverage and brought him a cup of cappuccino (not yet trendy or available in NZ) which he had consumed. He was actually enjoying being there. He was relaxing, chatting, and watching the happenings inside and outside the shop. He was on holiday.

As Annabel tried on the outfit, she heard the salesperson chatting away and offering him a second cup of cappuccino, which he gracefully accepted. He thought the treatment was great, he had never experienced anything like this before when shopping for clothes with Annabel!

When Annabel stepped out of the dressing room to show her partner and the salesperson that the outfit did not work, the salesperson quickly offered her another outfit to try on. It was a beautiful, short (above the knee) chiffon full pleated skirt with a tapestry, short tailored jacket. Annabel fell in love with it, but was hesitant to try it on. She explained to the salesperson that it would not suit because she was unable to wear an appropriate shoe style due to her disability. She also silently anticipated that it would be expensive. With some encouragement from the salesperson (but no pressure) Annabel tried it on. She was dying to see what it would look like on. -Yes, it looked absolutely gorgeous. But when she looked at the price tag - over 3,000 Canadian dollars, almost 6,000 NZ dollars, - she almost died of shock. She panicked a little, but thought she had a legitimate excuse - she could not wear the appropriate shoe style. But
when Annabel came out of the dressing room to show her partner, the salesperson was armed with a pair of shoes and socks that fitted the brief perfectly along with a couple of other outfits to try on. The shoes were flat, heavy, lace-up ones (Doc Martin style). They were to be worn with an ankle shock. The look was very new, but Annabel knew it would work. It would look fantastic.

Meanwhile, Annabel's partner had just finished his second cup of cappuccino and another salesperson had gone across the store to get him yet another. Annabel was also offered a beverage, but politely declined. He commented favourably about the outfit and made strong remarks that he thought she should purchase it. Annabel was unable to tactfully inform him of the price without indicating that they should not be there drinking this store's cappuccino and trying on this store's clothes. It was out of their league!

Annabel tried on another outfit she liked [whether it was cheaper or not and what it looked like can not be remembered]. She felt uneasy about waiting for her partner to finish his third cup without buying something. She knew that somehow they needed to tactfully leave the store without purchasing anything.

As Annabel tried on the third outfit she heard her partner telling the salesperson that she was an expert in fashion retailing, etc., etc. At this point she was feeling very embarrassed.

When Annabel came out of the dressing room for the third time, it was obvious that the dress did not fit properly. It made Annabel feel at bit more relaxed, taking some pressure off her to buy. The salesperson automatically, but politely started to pin out the excess fabric, to illustrate how it would fit perfectly with a few alterations. She was prepared with a pin cushion wrapped around her wrist and it was obvious to Annabel that she knew exactly what she was doing. She proceeded to explain that the store could do the alterations that afternoon and the dress could be collected before Annabel had to catch the ferry that evening.

Annabel was startled. She felt embarrassed and guilty. Her partner, however, was relaxed and content. He chatted away as if Annabel would definitely purchase one of the two outfits. He was completely unaware of the price. Annabel politely explained by telling a little white lie that she wanted to look some more. She was unsure if either of the two outfits was exactly what she wanted or required. Her partner was somewhat persistent that perhaps she should just purchase one. After all, she did not have much time.
Annabel was anxious to leave as quickly as possible. She could not exit with her partner soon enough.

Annabel was both satisfied and dissatisfied with this experience. Even though Annabel was desperate to 'flee', she explained how she,

thoroughly enjoyed being there. You know, I thoroughly enjoyed being in the store, looking at what was there, ... putting on those clothes, and kind of fantasising. I enjoyed the salespeople. They were very pleasant, they were very polite and they knew exactly what they were on about. They knew ... how to sell something. ... [Annabel had] an array of feelings going on: feeling quite delighted; quite enjoying what was happening. ... But at the same time, I did get this emotion. (She felt embarrassed and guilty.) And it was not because of the store. It was because of myself and my partner. ... Annabel made herself feel guilty. They [the saleswomen] were actually doing their job very well. [Annabel]

Apart from the fact that you [Annabel] knew you weren't going to purchase because it was too expensive, did you feel good about the treatment? [Priscilla]

Oh, yes. It was good. I mean, I enjoyed it! And that is why I found it quite hard to say whether I would call this a dissatisfying event. Because I did enjoy it! You know, I enjoyed the clothing. They [the saleswomen] were polite. They weren't necessarily pushy. It was a wonderful experience. [Annabel]

It was mainly Annabel's expertise and experience in clothing, textiles and fashion retailing that provided her with a sense of belonging and lead to her feelings of enjoyment and pleasure with this high fashion store encounter. Annabel recognised that the saleswomen were doing their job well. Along with the store environment, the saleswomen were making her and her partner feel comfortable, thus contributing to her sense of belonging in this high status fashion store. Annabel reflected and wrote,

[W]e were in our jeans, we looked pretty grubby, and yet there was no kind of anticipation that we could not afford those prices. They [the saleswomen] just assumed that we were genuine buyers. [After Annabel's partner] ... quickly found refuge in a chair, the salesperson ... [chatted] quietly to ... [him] finding out where they lived, how they were enjoying their visit, etc. etc. ... [She offered] ... and brought him a cup of cappuccino. ... He was actually enjoying being there. He was relaxing, chatting, and watching the happening inside and outside the shop. [The seating arrangement] ... didn't make you feel like you were in the middle of everything. But at the same time it didn't make you feel hidden away. You could see what was happening from where you were sitting. It was like a formal lounge with a casual setting. ... He was on holiday.

Once Annabel's partner had become comfortable, Annabel's expertise and experience helped her to confidently play the shopping role and enjoy her experience in this store. Her knowledge of fashion and textiles, plus her past shopping experiences enabled her to comfortably browse and enjoy the merchandise. Since most garments were out of her price range,

Annabel wandered around the shop more through curiosity, enjoyment and fashion trend hunting than in serious anticipation of purchasing anything. [Annabel]
Although Annabel could not afford to buy the items in this store, it was her fashion and retailing knowledge, her comfort with the style, and her purpose for being there that allowed her to belong. Annabel, therefore, felt comfortable in browsing within this store. Moreover, Annabel’s expertise contributed to her comfort in trying on clothing for the purpose of enjoyment rather than purchasing. Unlike Helena, she knew how to act and what to say, which would indicate to the saleswomen that she belonged in the store, even though she was not wearing the ‘appropriate’ clothing. Annabel felt in control because she could illustrate through her actions, behaviour and knowledge that she belonged, and could give legitimate excuses as to why a garment would not be appropriate. She felt comfortable trying on these expensive and/or inappropriate garments without having any intention of purchasing. For example, even though Annabel anticipated that the chiffon skirt and tapestry tailored jacket would be expensive, she felt comfortable trying them because she had a legitimate excuse - she could not wear an appropriate shoe style.

Annabel’s control of the situation, however, gradually became undermined through the discourse and actions of her partner when he became closely acquainted with the saleswomen, and exposed Annabel’s expertise to her.

**Intimacy and Belonging.**

In Annabel’s ‘Quick Exit’ experience, Annabel loses her sense of control and comfort as the encounter becomes too intimate. While Annabel could control her involvement and comments, she could not control her partner’s as the saleswomen progressively made him feel comfortable and ‘at home’ in their store. Annabel reflected,

> I don't actually mind giving out information, but when you are giving it out yourself you can control it. Whereas my partner ... does not control any information which he gives out when he is generally chatting. He was actually talking to the salesperson assuming that I was going to buy something. . . .

As Annabel’s partner settled in, accepting and drinking cappuccinos, chatting and providing personal information, a more intimate relationship developed between him and the saleswomen. In the memory group discussion, Priscilla noted how this resulted in the encounter becoming too intimate. As such, Annabel had become more involved and committed than she had anticipated being, or felt comfortable with, and this contributed to her embarrassment and guilt in leaving without a purchase.

> [W]hen you have someone who is opening up their whole life to the salesperson (laughs), I mean it becomes very intimate. . . . It had become very intimate, and you [Annabel] were caught in there. And once that happens, when someone is opening up and chatting away, I mean, you are getting to know each other, it is not quite so easy to be detached and then say, "Thank you for your help. I'll call back if I need it." . . . . That's to me the real source of the embarrassment. It is what is happening to your
partner and how they were chatting him up, and I think that Annabel would have gotten away, out of there, probably not comfortably, but not as guilty and embarrassed. [Priscilla]

During the encounter, Annabel had tried to control her involvement, and thus her feelings of commitment to the saleswomen and the store. Rather than become more intimately involved and committed in the exchange through small chit-chat with the saleswomen, and become further indebted in the exchange by accepting yet another resource, Annabel **politely declined an offered beverage.**

When Annabel's partner, however, continued to drink yet another cappuccino, and discuss their personal lives with the saleswomen, he informed them of Annabel's expertise in clothing, textiles and fashion retailing. This left Annabel with few, if any, appropriate excuses to escape without feeling embarrassed and guilty for actually being there and participating in this store's hospitality. Annabel realised prior to her partner giving this personal information, that they had already accepted too many of this store's resources without the economic ability to reciprocate. That is, they did not economically belong in this store. Annabel wrote,

> She felt uneasy about waiting for her partner to finish his third cup without buying something. She knew that somehow they needed to tactfully leave the store without purchasing anything.

With the saleswomen having this knowledge of Annabel's expertise, Annabel anticipated that their expectations and feelings towards her would have altered. The group discussion pointed out how the saleswomen's expectations of Annabel may have changed.

> It might reinforce... even more, that you [Annabel] were in fact going to buy. That you could buy. [Susie]

> That you knew what you were looking at. You knew quality. You were there for a purpose. [Priscilla]

> Yes. That could very well be... It might have added to the expectation that... Annabel was going to buy, and that she would buy one of those top labelled brands because it was important to her expertise, to the role she was playing. [Annabel]

Annabel perceived that her partner's statement of being a fashion retail expert exposed her to the salespeople. This statement made them aware that Annabel knew the etiquette and procedures of the shopping encounter. By being exposed, Annabel no longer belonged in the encounter since she knew she would not be able to continue with the expected exchange, and it threatened her sense of justice. The saleswomen had trusted Annabel and her partner to be "genuine buyers" [Wendy], and therefore, provided them with excellent service. In doing so, they had trusted Annabel to reciprocate appropriately. Annabel, however, knew she could not, and as such had betrayed the trust of these saleswomen, and contravened the 'rule' of justice. Annabel and Wendy reflected, respectively,
I guess it was my expectation that if I was there trying things on, that I was really there to buy something... I thought that they would anticipate that I would buy something, and I was feeling guilty about it because I knew that I was not going to buy anything... And I was participating in this exchange knowing that I couldn't reciprocate... I was breaking that rule. I knew that I couldn't reciprocate. It wasn't that I had gone in and looked... I would have no problem about going in and looking and saying that this is out of my price league, and I could look. But... [the saleswomen] were actually going that step further in that exchange. They were selling... and I was indulging them in it. They were actually doing their jobs very well... They were giving something to me, and I was participating in this exchange. [Annabel]

And guilty about it, because of how they were treating your partner. I mean, that kind of exchange of the cappuccinos: one; two; three; and the hospitality and the expectation then that there is something, some sort of trade going on here. [Wendy]

By being exposed, Annabel felt very embarrassed and guilty for involving these saleswomen in the encounter. Annabel reflected in the group discussion,

Annabel made herself feel guilty, because of the expectation that she had of what the retailer expected from her. [Annabel]

And probably the more helpful [the saleswomen were], the more guilty you were feeling. Would that be right? (Laughing) The expertise they were giving must have been linked with your knowledge of what was happening too. [Priscilla]

Yes. [Annabel]

Annabel's sense of belonging to the store was destroyed as the encounter had become too intimate. Annabel no longer felt comfortable being involved, nor was she able to exit the store without feeling embarrassed and guilty.

It is for this same reason that Wendy in her 'Quick Exit' experience (see discussion in Chapter 5) avoided contact with a salesperson. It was much easier for Wendy to quickly and quietly pick up the swimsuit and exit, rather than to establish any contact or rapport with a salesperson. By avoiding any exchange, no rapport or intimacy was established, and any negative emotions or affects were also avoided. This is also illustrated in Helena's 'Quick Exit' memory-text discussed at the beginning of this chapter. Helena avoided contact with the clothing saleswomen to elude any commitment, and negative affect and/or emotions that might have resulted from any potential intimate relationship between herself and the salesperson.

While Annabel's 'Quick Exit' experience illustrates how the development of intimacy between herself and the saleswomen lead to her feeling that she no longer belonged in the encounter, by contrast, Priscilla's 'Impulse' memory-text depicts the importance of intimacy to her sense of belonging. Specifically, Priscilla's memory-text illustrates how intimacy is one of the key components in determining her satisfaction with this shopping encounter.
Priscilla's 'Impulse Purchase' Memory-Text.

It had been a big year for Priscilla. She had completed her first year at University as a mature student. To do so she had given up her part time job and consequently had missed her spending power. However, being one to enjoy a challenge, she had got through the year without making any clothing purchases that were not absolutely necessary.

This year the pre-Christmas build up had been particularly busy - school was breaking up late, friends arrived to stay and family were arriving for Christmas day. Although a very happy time, by Christmas Priscilla was feeling drained. A little retail therapy was what she needed. By the time the shops reopened between Christmas and New Year she was convinced that what she needed to buy was a dress. The family were meeting another family for a weeks holiday at the beach. How nice it would be to change into a long cool dress at the end of the day and sip on a cold wine. Priscilla was one to romanticise.

So, along with her ten year old daughter Priscilla went shopping. She had set a price limit and had decided to stick to the shops that would cater for that price range. There had to be something suitable and not too expensive. She was determined to stay away from some of the shops she used to enjoy browsing in when she was working. Her young daughter was equally determined she would find something. However, everything she tried on reminded them both of the daughter's teacher who was six months pregnant and dressing in long, high waisted crinkle dresses. Determined not to feel despondent Priscilla decided there was no other choice but to get out the sewing machine and make herself the dress.

By this time they decided to head off home, have some lunch and Priscilla would slip back into town on her own and chose a pattern and material. On her way back to the car Priscilla glanced in shop windows. She was quite happy with her decision. She did happen to notice one dress on display that made her look twice. No, she wouldn't even venture in and check out the price. It was one of the shops that carried a higher priced label - not in her predetermined price range. She made a mental note to tell one of her friends though. The dress would be rather nice on her and she was sure the friend would like it.

As luck would have it, the friend turned up at Priscilla's. After relating to her the morning's shopping expedition and the decision she had made, the friend offered to go back to the material shop and help Priscilla along with her purchase. They did not have a lot of time. Most of the shops were closing at 5 pm. It was now nearly 4 pm. They parked close to the shop, found a pattern easily and some material that would be O.K.
Yes, this was a good sensible practical solution to Priscilla's desire to have a dress. They even had time for Priscilla to race her friend back to the shop where she had spotted the dress earlier that day. The friend was definitely interested.

It was still there and looked even better. This shop was not very big but what was in it was well displayed. Clothes were in colour groupings, well displayed so people could see what could be worn with what. It was spacious and tastefully decorated. The shop was staying open until 7 pm so they had time to browse in it. The dress was on a shop dummy. At the same moment Priscilla and her friend requested the assistant to get the dress so they could try it on. Priscilla felt rather embarrassed at her impulsive decision and backed off insisting the friend go ahead after all that was the whole idea.

However, it was Priscilla who ended up trying it on first. As she did so the friend happily searched the racks and saw other garments she wanted to try on. It did feel nice on. The colour was a different one for Priscilla. She liked it. She stepped out of the changing rooms and met with a favourable response from both her friend and the sales assistant. It was a lovely late afternoon. By now there were not many people around. After the bustle of Christmas shopping, this was relaxing. There was plenty of time for the three of them to engage in conversation. All the time Priscilla stayed in the dress. She felt at ease in it. It was still practical. It could be dressed up or worn casually. But no, she had bought the material and she had set a limit. Priscilla could feel her adrenalin rushing. What the heck, she needed a treat. When was she going to sew the other anyway. No, it wasn't suitable for the beach - but hey, who cared. YES, she would take it. It felt even better that it came from a shop she liked AND it was on SALE. Out with the bankcard. She could sort all that out later. As the shop assistant folded the dress in tissue and carefully placed it in one of those lovely big paper carry bags Priscilla felt her energy level rising again. What is more the friend was sharing Priscilla's pleasure. She loved shopping. It didn't matter to her who made the purchase. Yes, Priscilla felt great. She did not normally shop with a friend and definitely was not one to be impulsive. There were no regrets.

Intimacy in Priscilla's experience developed through five different components: the shopping conditions/situation; the store environment; the salesperson; the friend; and the product. While these components are treated as separate concepts, they are not independent of each other. They interlink to contribute to Priscilla's sense of belonging and satisfaction with her shopping encounter.

The shopping conditions/situation. The shopping conditions/situation in Priscilla's experience contributed to the intimacy which developed, and thus lead to her sense of belonging in the encounter. That is, Priscilla felt a sense of closeness, ease, and comfort that allowed her
to relax and enjoy the experience. This was due to the store's shopping conditions and the
timing of the encounter in regards to her mood, commitments, needs, wants and identity.

Priscilla wrote and reflected in the group discussion,

Priscilla was feeling drained [from the pre-Christmas activities and functions]. She had
been catering to everyone else all the time. She was just feeling, really, umm, needing
something. Needing a lift of some description. A little retail therapy was what she
needed. By the time the shops reopened between Christmas and New Year she was
convinced that what she needed to buy was a dress. The family were meeting another
family for a weeks holiday at the beach. How nice it would be to change into a long
cool dress at the end of the day and sip on a cold wine. Priscilla was one to
romanticise. [Priscilla]

It was a lovely late afternoon . . . . The shop was staying open until 7 pm so they had
time to browse in it. (Most of the shops were closing at 5 pm.) . . . . By now there
were not so many [people] around . . . . [T]here had been confusion about which
shops were staying open and which ones were closing early. But the shop assistant had
said that they thought someone else was coming back to make a fairly big purchase, so
they would stay open to 7 pm. Hence that she [the saleswoman] was happy to have
someone to talk to, because no one else was around. After the bustle of Christmas
shopping this was relaxing. There was plenty of time for the three of them to engage in
corverstation. The pressure was off. It had been a fairly hectic. [Priscilla]

And I [Priscilla] also think that it is significant that Priscilla's ten year old daughter
wanted to come along and help in the morning . . . . So, that could have contributed a
little bit too. Priscilla had not had much time at all without her children, for quite a
period of time, and she is (laughing) independent. She had no children with her when
she went shopping [that afternoon], and I think that helped too. [Priscilla]

So it was beginning to fit into that romantic endeavour that you were looking for in the
beginning? [Wendy]

Yeah. That nice relaxed... Yes, exactly. Yeah . . . . In fact, Priscilla did buy a bottle
of wine on the way home (laughing). Yes, it was that whole image. [Priscilla]

Priscilla felt comfortable. She had time to browse, converse, and enjoy her shopping in
abnormally quiet shopping conditions without any of the extra pressures of her normal family
and work duties. She had the time and space to develop an intimate relationship which lead to
her purchasing and feeling satisfied with this encounter.

The store environment. In addition to the shopping conditions/situation, the store
environment contributed to Priscilla's sense of closeness, comfort and contentment that allowed
her to relax and enjoy the encounter. The size of the shop, along with its organisation and
appearance, provided Priscilla with a feeling of intimacy. Priscilla wrote and reflected in the
group discussion,

This shop was not very big [researcher's emphasis], but what was in it was well
displayed. Clothes were in colour groupings, well displayed so people could see what
could be worn with what. It was spacious and tastefully decorated.

So the shopping environment, Priscilla would say, contributed to . . . . the feeling that
she exactly needed? [Annabel]
Definitely. It enhanced the whole situation. . . . Priscilla had been in quite a few shops in the morning where the service and the setting of the shops were okay, but they didn't provoke or enhance any nice feelings. [Priscilla]

It was Priscilla's experience and past pleasant affiliations with this type of shop environment that contributed to her feeling comfortable in the store, and her enjoyment in the store. She identified with the store and thus felt as if she belonged. When Priscilla compared hers and Wendy's' Impulse Buying' experiences, Priscilla noted how they both enjoyed and felt at ease in their own respective experience, because both of them in the past had frequented and enjoyed similar shopping environments to their present encounter. As such, both Priscilla and Wendy had a sense of familiarity with their respective shopping environment. This familiarity provided each of them with feelings of intimacy which thereby contributed to their sense of belonging, ease of purchasing and resultant satisfaction with their shopping encounter and impulse purchase. As stated by Priscilla,

. . . Wendy and Priscilla [were both] . . . in an environment that they really enjoyed. They felt comfortable. They previously had had good experiences buying in those environments, and it was very easy to throw in that extra thing, because they . . . [were] feeling good about where they . . . [were] shopping. [Priscilla]

In summary, Priscilla was in a store environment which she liked and in the past had frequented regularly. Even though she was currently a student and on a restricted budget, she still affiliated with this type of store. She felt at ease being there, but more importantly, she felt a sense of closeness and comfort in the store environment which represented her abundant, secure, orderly, and not so distant past.

The salesperson. As indicated in a previous section, Priscilla's feelings of whether or not she belonged to the encounter depended on the intimacy which developed between herself and the sales personnel. Priscilla reflected on how the shops she had frequented that morning did not create any intimacy through their lack of and approach to personal service.

Really, [in those shops], it was just a matter of practicalities more than anything else - where you take what you want to try on, and no one really comes to see how you are getting along, or what is happening, or says something like, "Oh, that looks good." Just like their advice, you know, is not quite right. You are not feeling like yourself at all, and you are standing there in a dress, and they are saying, "Oh, that looks great on you." [Priscilla]

You know darn well that it doesn't! [Susie]

Mm, mm. [Priscilla]

48 Refer to Wendy's 'Impulse' memory-text in Appendix C. Also note that the other 'Impulse' memory-texts, along with Wendy's, clearly illustrate how intimacy is an important factor in the consumer feeling as if she belongs, and thus, being satisfied with the encounter.
Whereas, when Priscilla was shopping that afternoon, the saleswomen created a bond of intimacy amongst the three of them - herself, the salesperson and her friend. Priscilla’s affinity and attachment to this encounter through the salesperson were depicted in the group session when they again discussed the similarities of Priscilla’s impulse experience to Wendy’s. After Wendy reflected on how she had purchased three shirts from the market, partly due to the intimacy that developed between herself and the salesperson, Priscilla noted how her resultant relationship with the salesperson had a similar affect.

[Wendy,] did the salesperson help you actually decide to buy something? [Annabel]

Most definitely . . . Because it was her that had made the garments. I quite enjoyed buying them from the person who had designed them and made them. And she was very pleasant. She was not pushy. She was just very pleasant. She fitted the sort of stereotype of an alternative craft person who brings her wares to the market and loves what she’s doing, and loved what she was selling, and wasn’t pushing them on Wendy, but was proud of them . . . With Wendy there was this friendly rapport. Like when Wendy walked away, she felt like she had bought those shirts from a friend. From someone she knew, and someone she could go back to and say, "I loved wearing your shirts," or "I have worn them out," or something like that. [Wendy]

And with Priscilla, . . . the salesperson was there in the background creating a certain atmosphere? [Annabel]

Yes, the salesperson in this case loved the clothes that she was selling too. She really enjoyed this shop that she had. I think she may have been the owner. I’m not sure. But, she really loved being there, and was showing . . . [Priscilla’s] friend things that could be worn together, and what she liked herself. It was all very personal [researcher’s emphasis].

There was a rapport built up between the three of you? [Wendy]

Yes, Yes. [Priscilla]

Which is why you felt like opening a bottle of wine? [Wendy]

Yes. That was it exactly. [Priscilla]

In Priscilla’s encounter, the saleswomen had become a friend. They pleasantly chatted to each other, enjoying each others company while they discussed and examined the fashions in the store. As friends do, both the saleswoman and Priscilla trusted each other. Priscilla believed the saleswoman had given her an honest opinion regarding how she looked in the dress, and the saleswoman trusted Priscilla to wander around in the dress as if it was already hers. As a friend, the saleswoman was giving Priscilla approval. The bond between Priscilla and the saleswomen contributed to Priscilla’s enjoyment and satisfaction with this encounter.

The friend. Shopping with her friend also contributed to the intimacy which developed in Priscilla’s experience and satisfaction with the encounter. It was through her friend that Priscilla first felt comfortable participating in this encounter. That is, Priscilla first allowed herself to belong to the encounter by shopping with a friend who could economically afford to be there. By suggesting and taking her friend shopping to look at a specific dress, Priscilla also
belonged. She was helping a friend. Moreover, her friend had placed trust and confidence in Priscilla to help her find and select an expensive dress. Priscilla wrote,

*She did happen to notice one dress that made her look twice. No, she wouldn't even venture in and check out the price. It was one of the shops that carried a higher priced label - not in her predetermined price range. She made mental note to tell one of her friends though. The dress would be rather nice on her and she was sure the friend would like it.*

However, upon returning to the store with her friend, *Priscilla felt rather embarrassed at her impulsive decision* to try on the dress herself. Her friend had also asked, at the same time, to try on the dress. Priscilla backed off insistent the friend go ahead - after all that was the whole idea. Her friend's reaction to happily search the racks for other garments and to let Priscilla try on the dress first eased Priscilla's feelings of embarrassment and discomfort. The friend understood Priscilla's need, as compared to her own, for a new dress. Her friend was a 'shop-aholic'*49, whereas Priscilla *had got through the year without making any clothing purchases that were not absolutely necessary*. Through the intimacy created in this incidence between herself and her friend, Priscilla felt treasured and worthy of such a dress. Priscilla belonged in this encounter, trying on this expensive dress. Priscilla reflected in the group discussion,

The friend that was with Priscilla was a real shop-aholic. . . . Her clothes occupy something like three wardrobes in her house. I think she must be a serious shop-aholic (laughing). But she is a similar colouring and size, and she just can't stay away from shops at all. . . . So Priscilla . . . having had this year of . . . not looking, just knowing that it wasn't an option, . . . welcomed the friend's input. Because it was like . . . Priscilla had lost quite a lot of confidence. You know, she had worn jeans all year and shorts in the summer (laughing). Priscilla knew the friend would be there for choosing the pattern and material, and would help her get on to it. [Priscilla]

The right advice? [Susie]

Yeah, yeah, and she knew her quite well. [Priscilla]

I suppose that continued on in the episode too. Priscilla didn't need to be urged into trying on the dress. When Priscilla saw it again, she thought, "I really do want to try this dress on." So when Priscilla came out and said she wanted to try it on, the friend said, . . . "Okay Priscilla, you actually go ahead and buy this, and don't feel guilty about buying it." [Annabel]

Mm. Approval do you mean? [Priscilla]

Yeah, approval. [Annabel]

Mm. [Priscilla]

Like, to what extent was having the friend there important in . . . [Priscilla] deciding to buy? [Wendy]

Oh, it probably helped at the time. I think that Priscilla would have talked herself out of it again. Well, she wouldn't have gone back and tried it on. [Priscilla]

49 'Shop-aholic' refers to the consumer who is 'addicted' to shopping; and is derived from alcoholic who is addicted to alcohol.
Moreover, because of the friend’s enjoyment of shopping and their friendship, the friend shared in Priscilla’s pleasure in purchasing and shopping for the dress. Thus, adding to Priscilla’s satisfaction with the encounter. Priscilla wrote,

*What is more, the friend was sharing in Priscilla’s pleasure. She loved shopping. It didn’t matter to her who made the purchase. Yes, Priscilla felt great. . . . There were no regrets.*

In this encounter, the friend provided Priscilla with social support, and contributed to her pleasure and enjoyment. That is, the friend provided the needed support for Priscilla to be partaking and enjoying the encounter, along with the approval to purchase and enjoy the dress, thus contributing to the intimacy that resulted in this encounter.

**The product.** Along with these other four components, Priscilla's trying on of the dress contributed to her sense of intimacy and belonging. Her wearing of the dress and remaining in it for an extended time during the encounter contributed to the relaxed, romantic atmosphere which developed. The group reflected on Priscilla's written text,

*It [the dress] did feel nice on. . . . She liked it. . . . All the time [while the three of them engaged in conversation] Priscilla stayed in the dress. She felt at ease in it.*

You were not in any hurry to take it off either. [Susie]

No, no. [Priscilla]

All that time you stayed in the dress. [Susie]

I think that was very clever on the part of the sales assistant (laughing). You know, it was one of those situations where you half expected her to whip out a nice cold bottle of white wine or something and have an evening drink with her (laughing). You know, it was very, very relaxed. [Priscilla]

As indicated in Priscilla's memory-text, Priscilla was very satisfied purchasing the dress, even though *it wasn't suitable for the beach.* She had already become attached to it, as if it was already part of her.

In a similar fashion to Priscilla's 'Impulse' encounter, Helena's 'Exhilaration' experience (see discussion in Chapter 5), illustrates how intimacy developed through these same components, and how it contributed to Helena’s feelings of belonging, and thus her enjoyment, excitement, and satisfaction with her encounter. Helena, in her search for her first real party dress, found comfort in a quiet designer boutique, out of the hustle and bustle of regular Christmas shopping, which was located in a familiar department store where *she had bought several items of clothing already.* Both the support and approach of the saleswoman and a friend generally lead to her comfort and enjoyment of being in the encounter and purchasing the dress. Helena summarised how she appreciated their personal involvement and help when she wrote,
Even the sales person had been very understanding and co-operative, not even to mention him [her friend]. That was a great team.

Wendy's 'Nasty' experience (see discussion in Chapter 5), in contrast to Priscilla's 'Impulse' and Helena's 'Exhilaration' encounters, illustrates that when intimacy does not develop in just one of these components then the encounter can be disappointing, hurtful and thus dissatisfying. Even though intimacy occurred in Wendy's encounter through the shopping situation, the store environment, her love of the product, and the positive involvement of a friend and sales assistant, intimacy did not develop between herself and the designer/jeweller. Therefore, the encounter ended very dissatisfactory for both Wendy and the store. Wendy summarised these effects when she wrote,

_The designer continued to ignore them. . . Wendy and Bob were both frustrated and angry. They left. Wendy felt very let down. What was to have been an exciting denouement turned out to be a disaster. There was no way she would go back to that jeweller, and her emerald has been returned to its hiding place [without being made into a ring]._

For Wendy, this encounter provided further anguish to her experience of collecting and owning souvenir and expensive rings. The value that Wendy had attached to designing and having the emerald set was completely destroyed by the designer/jeweller completely ignoring her. Wendy was not able to experience the expected enjoyment, pride, and pleasure in the process of designing and having her emerald set. She was unable to intimately bond with the designer/jeweller due to his treatment towards her and the others in the encounter.

As illustrated in all the memory-texts discussed so far, intimacy plays an important role in determining whether the consumer belongs, and the resultant emotions that occur in the encounter. The development of intimacy in a shopping encounter requires certain conditions and an environment that will allow the consumer to feel comfortable and value her experience, thus permitting and encouraging positive affective response. As such, the discourse and the actions of others involved in the encounter, and the symbolism and value of the product to self and/or others are important in the development of intimacy, and to whether the consumer judges the encounter as satisfactory.

**Economic, Social Status, Tastes and Style, and Belonging.**

Obviously the ability to pay for a product helps determine whether or not a consumer belongs in an economic encounter. For example, as previously discussed, neither Annabel nor Wendy economically belonged in their 'Quick Exit' encounter due to their economic status. Annabel could not sustain the costs of the very expensive designer garments, nor could Wendy afford the price of the expensive bathing suit. In this way, their encounters were dissatisfying. Moreover, Wendy's 'Nasty' experience illustrates that when the sales personnel, rather than the consumer, judges that the customer does not economically belong, it can also lead to the
customer being dissatisfied. Wendy felt devalued, and therefore dissatisfied, when she appraised that the designer/jeweller had assessed her as not being an economically worthwhile customer.

Economic belonging, however, is not the single most critical factor in determining if the consumer will belong. For example, Helena could have "easily afforded" the clothing described in her 'Quick Exit' memory-text, but there were other factors, such as her lack of fashion expertise and shopping experience, that made her feel like she did not belong. In other situations, as illustrated in Sweetie's 'Pressure Shopping' experience which follows, learnt preferences for certain 'tastes and style' determine whether the consumer will belong. Judgements of tastes and style are used by the consumer to determine whether she/he identifies with, and thus belongs to a social group or institution. Consumers use tastes and style to symbolise and identify with social class or status. While economic factors determine the consumer's ability to purchase symbols associated with social status, other factors, such as learnt tastes in association with social class also contribute to a sense of belonging or not to a social encounter.

Sweetie's 'Pressure' memory-text illustrates how she felt uncomfortable and dissatisfied when she found herself in an encounter where she did not socially belong. Her tastes were incongruent with those of the group.

Sweetie's 'Pressure Experience' Memory-Text.

The invitation was for the Cambridge Rugby Referees 'wives' to attend a 'winter lingerie evening' - and having never been to such an event before, Sweetie entered Jeanette's lounge with curiosity. She imagined coy Elle McPherson-type bras, knickers, spencers and pyjamas at a bargain price - and with her underwear drawer in need of replenishing, looked forward to a pleasant Avon-lady type, relaxed evening - with probably a cream-sponge supper at the end. 'I'd really like to get home early enough to finish some marking she thought to herself. Oh well, a mid-week night out is a bit of a luxury - so might as well make the most of it and do what has to be done - forget about work - meet some new people - and have a nice 'ladies evening' for a change.

50 Bourdieu (1984) has documented how taste and lifestyle preferences function as a marker of social class status. He used the term 'habitus' to describe the unconscious dispositions and taken-for-granted preferences of social groups which form the basis of different lifestyle. Different classes and class factions pursue tastes which reflect their particular position within the social space.

51 'Elle McPherson' is a brand name of sensible fashionable underwear manufactured in New Zealand by Bendon, named after and promoted by an international fashion model.

52 'Marking' is the New Zealand term for grading of assignments and tests.
Several women were enjoying a glass of wine when Sweetie made her entrance and she registered their coiffures and fashionable gear as she was introduced. Mainly secretary or non-working types. Perhaps I should have changed out of my school clothes (sweat shirt and jeans) and got a bit flossied up, she thought. Too late now - have to try to look as though I thought this was a 'jeans' occasion - and dressed in my best Levis - intentionally.

Glass of medium cask-wine in hand ('why is there never dry?') she plonked\(^{53}\) down into the obviously - Farmers,\(^{54}\) patterned, plush-velvet corner-suite - next to a primish-looking woman she vaguely recognised but couldn't pinpoint. Of course she realised after a stilted conversation, the wife of the most senior referee in the club. Oh Hail Almighty! Her husband did 'national' games and was therefore revered by the lesser minions as the man amongst men. This woman, by default, queen of the evening - and I've made the mistake of not recognising her - faux pas! After such a start, and not really knowing anyone, she feigned interest in patting the small long-haired family dog ensconced in front of the feature-brick fireplace - wondering at the New Zealand preference for mixing patterned wallpaper, patterned carpet, patterned curtains and patterned furniture all in one room. Definitely shades of 'Lyn of Tawa\(^{55}\) here, she thought, as she scanned the walls expectantly for three flying ducks flying north for the winter. The plump 'hostess with the mostest'- wearing fluffy slippers that looked somewhat like the family pooch, gaily pressed everyone to refill their glass, take a seat, and then welcomed them warmly to the 'linger-ee party'. Party! Oh Jeez - that means there'll definitely be games - drat it!

'It gives me great pleasure to introduce Angelique from Fantasy Fashions'. She's come all the way from Auckland to be here with us tonight' gushed Jeanette, as she indicated the mutton-dressed-up-as-lamb\(^{56}\) piece of froth kneeling on the floor in front of a large suitcase in the most amazingly ankle-breaking pair of stilettos Sweetie had ever seen. The over-perfumed, over-made-up, over-smiling Angelique began her spiel with comments about the useless menfolk being banished for the evening - wink, wink - which would give the womenfolk the opportunity to really enjoy themselves - wink, wink. This seemed to strike the women in the room as enormously funny and there was a round of applause and excited giggles from everyone, except Sweetie. 'What is this?' she wondered.

\(^{53}\) 'Plonked' is New Zealand slang for collapsed, crashed, or fall.

\(^{54}\) 'Farmers' is a lower-middle class department store in New Zealand.

\(^{55}\) 'Lyn of Tawa' is a New Zealand television comedy character portraying a lower, working class women living in suburbia.

\(^{56}\) 'Mutton-dressed as lamb' is a New Zealand phrase for an older women dressed-up as a young women or girl. Mutton refers to any sheep meat over two years old, whereas lamb refers to young sheep meat.
'Now, just to get you in the right mood - we'll start with a little game' (knew it!!) announced Angelique. The little pen and pencil quiz seemed to focus on the size, shape and performance of men's private parts and by the time more wine was sipped and answers were marked, everyone seemed to be in a jolly, chatty and twittery frame of mind. Suddenly the room started to feel rather hot, stuffy, perfume-y (Angelique/dog?) - and the marking at home quite appealing really. Game over, now it was time for the wares! There was an excited buzz of expectation as the lid of the suitcase was broached by the still-winking (perhaps she's got a 'tick') Angelique - and a reverential hush, followed closely by appreciative ohs and ahs, as the first garment 'Hearts Desire' was introduced.

What actually is it? thought Sweetie, slightly bewildered. Angelique held it up against her torso. A scarlet-red, boned, all-in-one, holder-in-her and bolster-up-her! decided Sweetie. Looks darned uncomfortable - you'd have difficulty breathing - and who wears stockings these days - the suspender things are redundant. All that fussy lace, ribbons and frills! And all that padding in the cups! Grief - a nightmare - you'd have to hand wash it - and what would the neighbours think with that flapping about on the clothesline! Seems to have knickers-things at the bottom of it - oh for goodness sake, crotchless knickers - what's the point of having any on! Where on earth and when on earth would anyone wear such a thing. How gross - God who needs it. It must be a joke!

But it was no joke to the others. Out of the suitcase the effusive Angelique produced a seemingly endless stream of such apparel - much to the delight of the enraptured partygoers. An overwhelming tizzy of conversation, admiration, coveting, goohing and gaahing. Garish colours and sultry black. Shiny satins and silks. Lace and leather. Filmy fuss and frills. Wisps and wasps. Exotic or tawdry? The garrulous Angelique (we can supply all sizes to order) encouraged excited forays by everyone to the bedrooms for trying-ons - and false-apology strutting 'parades' - except for Sweetie, who was wondering how often she could go to the loo without it being too obvious she was avoiding joining in. What on earth would their partners think about them wasting money on such stuff, she thought to herself, only to learn, as the laughter grew more hilarious and the comments became more personal, that the menfolk would greatly appreciate the house-keeping being spent on such 'essentials'. Especially it seems, Mr hero referee, whose formerly prim-looking wife was excitedly trying on everything and ordering with great gusto! What am I doing here, she thought despairingly, this is not my thing. Everyone is ordering up large and I don't even want anything. I wonder if I could use the marking as an excuse - perhaps when supper is served, slip away.

57 'Loo' is a New Zealand term for toilet or rest room.
Quietly thank Jeanette - exit unobtrusively - yes - she won't notice that I haven't made an order.

'Now Sweetie, what are you going to order?' oozed Angelique. 'You are the last to decide. Anything you order will bring the total up to the level required for the hostess Jeanette to get a free gift - she's been eyeing the red all-in-one and I happen to have one in her size in the car. She'd look marvellous in it.' Why was there suddenly a deathly silence? Everyone listening. Jeanette - expectant. Jeanette trussed up in the little red number - Sweetie's responsibility! If she didn't buy anything, Jeanette wouldn't get her hearts desire - wouldn't reach the total needed. The looks on the faces of the women said it all. She had to buy something, otherwise she'd be the traitor who ruined the party. The Party-pooper! Were there any ordinary knickers? Bendon58? Those she needed! Nope! Only crotchless and G-strings. She could use them as a joke present for someone! Perhaps the crotchless knickers would be useful under pantihose - there would still be a crotch, of a kind, and could be quite 'healthy' really - non-thrush promoting etc. Couldn't just buy 1 pair - too miserly. She ordered 2 pair of the crotchless (in white) then scuttled, unsuppered, home to do the marking.

In this memory-text, Sweetie illustrates how she is completely out of her usual social context. By comparing herself to others (i.e., hostess, other clientele, saleswomen), and implicating her taste of decor, wine and products in contrast to those found in the encounter, Sweetie describes in full detail how she is extremely different socially to the others involved in the encounter. Sweetie and the other group members document and expand on these taste differences.

[W]e're talking about a class experience . . . . [Frances]

I tired not to, when I was writing it, to be judgemental. I was sort of trying to put the impression of the room, and everything, without it being too... I just couldn't resist (laughing) with Angelique because it was a bit like mutton dressed up as lamb. . . . . [Sweetie]

And the stiletto heels and the pattern, . . . and all the [description of the] fabric, and decoration, and how it all clashed, and the medium cask wine, and too much make-up. [Frances]

Yes, I was sort of trying not to be judgemental, but as the description says we're suppose to put down [all the details of the memory], the things that are coming to you as you were there. [Sweetie]

The culture, [the social class], came through very much. Even in the style of the room and the carpets, and the curtains, and the patterned wallpaper, the patterned furniture (laughing), and the three flying ducks. [Desiree]

58 Bendon is the dominant designer and manufacturer of women's fashionable underwear in New Zealand.
During the group discussion, Sweetie expanded on the social class differences that existed between herself and the salesperson, Anqelique. In doing so, she illustrated how these differences contributed to her judgements and feelings towards the encounter. Specifically, it was Anqelique's appearance, behaviours, actions, and whom in society she represented to Sweetie, rather than her professional approach to the product, that partly made Sweetie feel uneasy participating in the encounter. Sweetie reflected in the group discussion,

She [Anqelique] had what I call a lower class accent. [It] ... sounds a bit awful, but it was just the way she was speaking. It made me feel, well, that she probably ... started in life very early (laughing), and ... [was] very street wise, ... experienced, and probably [did] not [have] much respect for men too. ... Men are something that you don't respect, ... [you] manipulate. She probably, from her own experience, I would say, has been able to do that [manipulate]. [Sweetie]

And through titillation you can get some control, and you can get some power. ...
[Frances]

[During the whole encounter, Sweetie] ... kept thinking she is performing, and it's not genuine. It's not real. It's all an act for this event. ... I just felt that this was something she dished out all the time, although she really liked the product. It wasn't as if she was trying to sell something she didn't... She probably (laughing) .... [wore them all]. So I wasn't impressed with her [i.e., who she was]. But the way that she did it was professional. I suppose, in a way you could say it was professional, because she knew her stock, she knew how to sell it, and she was doing a good job with it, really. You can say those three things, but it didn't appeal to me. [Sweetie]

Her appearance, the way she dressed, was that part of the...? [Gisela]

Yes, probably part of the turn off. Yes. [Sweetie]

Was it part of her selling side too? [Gisela]

Yes, probably. [Sweetie]

Like, she looked like she would have had that sort of underwear on herself underneath it all? [Gisela]

Yes, probably, yes. ... [Sweetie]

Sweetie explicitly reflected during the group discussion how she did not belong in this home, with these other women, looking at and purchasing 'sexy' underwear from this saleswoman.

You felt quite out of place there? [Gisela]

Yeah. Well she [Sweetie] wasn't meaning too. She went there thinking, "Oh well, it's going to be a nice evening." (Laughing) She was not going to be negative, but it just sort of, as it gathered momentum, it just sort of turned her off the whole time. ... [W]hen you are in a situation like that, it's not a fish out of water, but just totally wrong. The role, it just isn't the right thing for that sort of person. [Sweetie]

Sweetie's judgements of not belonging were based purely on social class differences in regards to tastes and style, rather than economic considerations. Sweetie reflected,
[An] ... interesting thing is that when I came to write this I couldn't remember the prices of things. Now usually I can remember down to whether something is $19.95 or $19.75. I've got that kind of memory for prices, but I couldn't really remember. But I sort of think that they were quite expensive. But it wasn't an important part of the whole evening, as far as I was concerned. Usually prices are, but it wasn't, because everything else was sort of overwhelming. [Sweetie]

Sweetie, unlike the other women in the encounter, found the experience "overwhelming" rather than exciting. While the other women appeared to be enjoying themselves, she was not. She felt uncomfortable playing the expected role since it was incongruent with the way she socially defined herself (and her husband). The expected role was not one which she affiliated with or aspired too. Sweetie reflected in the group discussion,

They [the other women] looked as though they were really excited about it. It was sort of like 'Ladies Night Out', that show. . . . Everyone gets hyped up with it and . . . [there was] a suppressed excitement that they were allowed. . . . [This] was an opportunity to let it out, and Angelique was sort of playing on that. You know, the men folk are all away . . . wink, wink, and we can have our fun girls! Can't we? Wink, wink (laughing). . . . [It] was almost equivalent, I can imagine to a rugby referee sort of stag do (laughing). The equivalent kind of thing, except . . . [my husband] would be just like me (laughing), because he is so prim and proper (laughing). He would be horrified! Because I remember, once they rang up and said they were going to have these blue movies and . . . [he] didn't want to go (laughing). So I guess he doesn't fit the stereotype, and I don't either (laughing). [Sweetie]

[E]veryone seemed to be comfortable except for Sweetie? [Frances]

Yes. [Sweetie]

And it was difficult to know if it was an act or not? But, Sweetie didn't discern any anxiety, people avoiding buying, or . . .? [Frances]

No. [Sweetie]

Because Sweetie did not belong, she felt both guilty and pressured. She felt guilty for not being part of the group and not wanting to purchase any such garments so that the evening would be fun and successful for the hostess. Sweetie, however, also experienced pressure to play the expected role and to purchase garments she did not associate with. Moreover, this pressure contributed to her sense of guilt and discomfort in being there. With this, Sweetie lost her sense of control over her participation in the encounter, which contributed to her dissatisfaction. Sweetie reflected in the group discussion,

There was probably a guilt feeling at [Sweetie] not actually being part of the whole group too. Mm, that they were rushing off to bedrooms and trying on these things, and wanting to sort of come out and show everybody what they were looking like in these things, and sort of saying, "Oh, I shouldn't do this!" You know, all this sort of silly play acting which seems a waste of time. . . . One of the fears was someone would come out in these crotchless knickers, and where do you look (laughing)? You know, . . . it kept going through my mind (laughing). [Sweetie]
So . . . was the guilt twofold then? Did Sweetie felt guilty that she didn't fit in and also guilty that she was holding back from the hostesses rewards [in not purchasing any garments]? [Frances]

That's right. Mm. . . . I don't like it, because I feel out of control. I feel that it is not my situation . . . . I sort of like to know that if I'm wanting to shop and buy something, I'm buying it because I want to buy it. And even though I want to buy [whatever] . . . , when I get this little bit of pressure, that if you buy this extra bit you're going to help your hostess get $400 worth of whatever it is, it just ruins the evening for me. [Sweetie]

In her naivety of not knowing what to expect from such an encounter, Sweetie placed the blame on herself and her husband. After all, she had agreed to participate in such an encounter at her husband's request. He had accepted the invitation, "Yes, she'll come" (laughing) [Sweetie]. And once there, "Sweetie felt obliged to stay. . . . [Y]ou can't just suddenly develop a headache and have to leave when you have only been there for ten minutes" [Sweetie]. Sweetie felt trapped, and that it was basically her husband's fault. Sweetie reflected on Frances's questions,

Angelique assumed that Sweetie wanted to buy? [Frances]

Yes, yes. Obviously, if you are going to one of these things you were there to buy. Everyone else obviously knew what they were going to see (laughing), except innocent me. [Sweetie]

So was there resentment? [Frances]

Not really. I mean, probably in a way. But at . . . Hubby for being a blinkin rugby referee! I mean, rather than it be anything else, it was probably... Probably the next line would have been, "He could damn well have paid for them." [Sweetie]

Moreover, and more importantly, Sweetie also attributed her guilt and discomfort in not belonging to her conservativeness. In the process of passing judgement, Sweetie blamed herself for not being liberal enough to fit in and enjoy the experience. When asked how she felt at the end of the encounter, Sweetie replied,

Probably . . . guilty. Feeling sort of, "Fancy going to that and not getting into it, being part of the crowd". . . . But probably feeling, I'm more conservative than I thought I was. I thought I was quite a liberal, really. But after going to one of those parties, it didn't . . . do anything for my image of feeling quite liberal (laughing).

This experience, as noted by Frances, was "soul destroying" for Sweetie as she questioned why she did not belong to and enjoy the encounter. Whereas for the other women, in their "fantasy world", . . . it was a boost, . . . it was exciting, . . . it was exhilarating" [Frances]. Sweetie replied,

Yes. Fantasy. It was definitely a fantasy experience [for these other women] (laughing). I mean Jeanette in this red number would have probably looked dreadful. But they all . . . were sucked in with the feeling that they would look wonderful in these outfits, and sexy, and seductive, and that their husbands were going to cheer and
applaud when they came out in them. . . . They all imagined that they were going to look wonderful in these things, just because they had them on (laughing). . . . It is escapism. . . . It is fantasy stuff, . . . all to do with acting plays visually.

As for these other women in Sweetie's encounter, Annabel found her 'Quick Exit' experience enjoyable and satisfying in that she was able to relax and fantasise about the clothing she was trying on. As noted earlier in the discussion, Annabel reflected on how she thoroughly enjoyed being in the store, looking at what was there, . . . putting on those clothes, and kind of fantasising. . . . [She was] feeling quite delighted, quite enjoying what was happening. [She was] really wanting to see what things looked like on . . .

When Annabel and her partner first entered into the store, and before it became too intimate, they felt as if they socially belonged. Even though Annabel had discovered, through browsing, that the store was very expensive and mostly out of her price range, she felt relatively relaxed and comfortable participating in the encounter because it was an environment she appreciated and aspired too. Annabel reflected,

I do enjoy looking at things that perhaps I can't afford, or try to get an idea of what, you know, I aspire for, and then go elsewhere and try to get that some image. . .

Annabel wrote how they stepped up [researcher's emphasis] into an environment which projected feelings of comfort, intimacy, creativity, and conservatism along with status. The store's environment and products symbolised exactly the type of garment she valued and was looking to purchase for her high school reunion. She was searching for a garment which was conservative, formal, and prestigious, but yet was creative and casual. Annabel's written description of the store reflected how she appreciated its decor, layout, and fashionable garments, and thus how she felt that she socially belonged.

They entered into a shop that looked relatively expensive, but perhaps affordable. . . . The store divided into two main sections - a casual/sports wear section and a formal work-wear and dress section. It was almost as if it was two individual shops. Annabel and her partner stepped up from the entrance into the casual/sports wear area.

The shop was a corner one housed within of a small contemporary mall . . . in the busy downtown business area. The two outer walls . . . were almost completely glass and mirror with striking visual displays. Off the back of this area was another room which displayed shoes for sale. Again, this shoe area was almost a completely separate shop with just a small archway (a bit larger than a regular size door) opening into it. The casual/sports wear selling floor appeared nearly square with spacious, individualised dressing rooms in the centre. The clothes were neatly displayed and organised against the closed walls and dressing rooms. The aisles were abnormally spacious with a slightly off-white tiled floor which matched the rest of the decor. At the far side of the room a casual, inviting chair and sofa setting of furniture blended into the decor adding to the overall shop environment. It allowed individuals to relax comfortably viewing both the inside and outside of the shop without being either conspicuous or hidden away.

Upon browsing Annabel saw that the clothes were branded with well known top American and European designers and that they were very expensive (e.g., $2,000 for a
jacket; $1,000 for a skirt - Canadian). However, there were a few brands much, much lower in price (still expensive) which were affordable to her. Annabel wandered around the shop more through curiosity, enjoyment and fashion trend hunting than in serious anticipation of purchasing anything.

Sweetie, by contrast, wrote about how uncomfortable it was for her to enter and settle into the environment. She did not appreciate the decor and feel that she belonged.

Sweetie made her entrance and she registered their coiffures and fashionable gear as she was introduced. Mainly secretary or non-working types. Perhaps I should have changed out of my school clothes (sweat shirt and jeans) and got a bit flossied up, she thought. Too late now - have to try to look as though I thought this was a 'jeans' occasion - and dressed in my best Levis - intentionally.

Glass of medium cask-wine in hand ('why is there never dry?') she plonked down into the obviously - Farmers, patterned, plush-velvet corner-suite - next to a primish-looking woman she vaguely recognised but couldn't pinpoint. Of course she realised after a stilted conversation, the wife of the most senior referee in the club. Oh Hail Almighty! Her husband did 'national' games and was therefore revered by the lesser minions as the man amongst men. This woman, by default, queen of the evening - and I've made the mistake of not recognising her - faux pas! After such a start, and not really knowing anyone, she feigned interest in patting the small long-haired family dog ensconced in front of the feature-brick fireplace - wondering at the New Zealand preference for mixing patterned wallpaper, patterned carpet, patterned curtains and patterned furniture all in one room. Definitely shades of 'Lyn of Tawa' here, she thought, as she scanned the walls expectantly for three flying ducks flying north for the winter. The plump 'hostess with the mostest' - wearing fluffy slippers that looked somewhat like the family pooch, gaily pressed everyone to refill their glass, take a seat, and then welcomed them warmly to the 'linger-ee party'. Party! Oh Jeez - that means there'll definitely be games - drat it!

Because Annabel appreciated and aspired to the clothing, identified with the environment, and welcomed the service, she enjoyed trying on the store's garments, even though she had no intentions of purchasing. Annabel wrote,

Annabel wandered around the shop more through curiosity, enjoyment and fashion trend hunting than in serious anticipation of purchasing anything. After looking, Annabel decided to try on one outfit (just affordable). It was not exactly what she had envisaged and was expensive, but thought it might do if nothing else was to be found and if it was absolutely stunning on. She was escorted to a dressing room by a saleswoman who chatted pleasantly to her; carefully and politely gaining information about her. . . .

[When it did not fit,) the salesperson quickly offered her another outfit to try on. It was a beautiful . . . Annabel fell in love with it . . . . With some encouragement from the salesperson (but no pressure) Annabel tried it on. She was dying to see what it would look like on. -Yes, it looked absolutely gorgeous.

Sweetie, however, avoided trying on the garments. She neither liked nor thought she needed such garments; nor did she like the environment, the salesperson, or the approach to selling and trying on the garments. Sweetie did not identify with the products, or the environment created for selling and trying on such garments. She wrote and reflected,
The first garment 'Hearts Desire' was introduced. . . . What actually is it? . . . . A scarlet-red, boned, all-in-one, holder-in-her and bolster-up-her! decided Sweetie. Looks damned uncomfortable - you'd have difficulty breathing - and who wears stockings these days - the suspender things are redundant. All that fussy lace, ribbons and frills! And all that padding in the cups! Grief - a nightmare - you'd have to hand wash it - and what would the neighbours think with that flapping about on the clothesline! Seems to have knickers-things at the bottom of it - oh for goodness sake, crotchless knickers - what's the point of having any on! Where on earth and when on earth would anyone wear such a thing. How gross - God who needs it. It must be a joke!

But it was no joke . . . . Out of the suitcase the effusive Angelique produced a seemingly endless stream of such apparel . . . . Garish colours and sultry black.. Shiny satins and silks. Lace and leather. Filmy fuss and frills. Wisps and wasps. Exotic or tawdry? The garrulous Angelique . . . encouraged excited forays by everyone to the bedrooms for trying-ons - and false-apology strutting 'parades' - except for Sweetie, who was wondering how often she could go to the loo without it being too obvious she was avoiding joining in. . . . One of my [Sweetie's] greatest fears was someone would come out in these crotchless knickers and where do you look (laughing)! . . . It kept going through my mind (laughing). What am I doing here . . . this is not my thing. . . . Where were the ordinary knickers? Bendon? Those that she needed! Nope!

Nor could Sweetie socially identify with the other women in the encounter who valued and needed such a product. She could not understand nor appreciate their reasons for purchasing sexy underwear, or their enjoyment and excitement in trying on these garments. She reflected in the group discussion that these women were superficial, and that she did not want to be affiliated with them or the experience itself.

It all seemed so superficial. I suppose that was the thing that got at me [Sweetie]. The things that were exciting to these women were superficial, and yet they were all hyped on it. . . . [I]t becomes a situation where you think this is a whole waste of time actually being here. I'd rather be somewhere else, even marking at home (laughing). [Sweetie]

As mentioned previously, Sweetie also experienced that the saleswoman's appearance, conversation, games, actions, and pressure to purchase made her feel socially uncomfortable in the encounter. Sweetie wrote,

The over-perfumed, over-made-up, over-smiling Angelique [the salesperson] began her spiel with comments about the useless menfolk being banished for the evening - wink, wink - which would give the womenfolk the opportunity to really enjoy themselves - wink, wink. This seemed to strike the women in the room as enormously funny and there was a round of applause and excited giggles from everyone, except Sweetie. What is this?' she wondered.

'Now, just to get you in the right mood - we'll start with a little game' (knew it!!) announced Angelique. The little pen and pencil quiz seemed to focus on the size, shape and performance of men's private parts and by the time more wine was sipped and answers were marked, everyone seemed to be in a jolly, chatty and twittery frame of mind. Suddenly the room started to feel rather hot, stuffy, perfume-y (Angelique/dog?).

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In contrast to Sweetie's appraisal of the salesperson, Annabel's judgements of the saleswomen allowed her to socially belong in the encounter. Annabel found the saleswomen to be pleasant and socially agreeable. She enjoyed and appreciated their attention and approach. In making her partner feel comfortable and 'at home', Annabel was able to relax and enjoy her experience. As noted earlier, Annabel reflected,

I enjoyed the salespeople. They were very pleasant, they were very polite, and they knew exactly what they were on about... They weren't necessarily pushy... It was a wonderful experience. [Annabel]

Even though they were in their jeans, they felt comfortable and as if they belonged in this prestigious store - partly because they valued and identified with the store's environment and products, and partly because the saleswomen accepted them as "genuine" customers. From this perspective, that Annabel's taste was congruent with that of the store's and that they were allowed to socially belong, Annabel was satisfied with her experience. Annabel, however, as mentioned earlier, only enjoyed participating in this encounter until she discovered that she could not reciprocate with the appropriate expected economic resource.

Helena's 'Exhilaration', Priscilla's 'Impulse', and Wendy's 'Quick Exit' and 'Nasty' experiences also clearly indicate how the consumer's tastes and style influences whether she will belong in the encounter, and thus will or could be satisfied with the encounter. When Helena went shopping to find an appropriate Christmas party dress, her feelings of whether she belonged to the encounter depended on the congruency between her tastes and those reflected in the store. When the store did not carry the needed, valued product, Helena did not belong, and as such did not further participate in the encounter. Helena wrote,

They [she and a friend] went to her favorite mall and went in a couple of shops. She could immediately see that there was nothing for her taste [researcher's emphasis]. Her companion was getting worried and could not understand what she was looking for. And how could she decide without even trying anything on that she did not like any of the dresses available.

It was not until Helena entered into the biggest and most expensive department store in the mall, and spotted a possible choice on a glass wall of one of the designer boutiques inside the department store that she felt comfortable participating in the encounter. Helena first sensed she belonged due to her past successful experiences in this store and finding a dress which she liked. This store's products were harmonious with Helena's tastes and style. As noted earlier, Helena reflected,

[It was a good shop for Helena's taste, ... because most of the things they had were sort of simple design - not the usual, but black, grey, white, rather than bright colours. [Helena]
Moreover, Helena's sense of belonging was reinforced in that she identified with and valued the store's environment and the saleswoman's approach and attention. The store environment and the saleswoman allowed Helena to feel comfortable participating in this encounter. As well as the store's products, the environment and the saleswoman's actions, behaviours and discourse were generally congruent with Helena's 'tastes and style'; and as such, provided value to Helena's encounter.

In a similar fashion, Priscilla's 'Impulse' memory-text parallels Helena's experience. It was the dress in the window which Priscilla identified with, valued, and that drew her into the encounter. Like Helena, Priscilla also valued and identified with the store's environment and the accompanying salesperson's attention and approach, which she had encountered in the past before becoming an adult student. Having similar tastes to those reflected in the store, Priscilla sensed she socially belonged. Not only did she feel comfortable being there, but she also gained value from participating in the encounter.

Wendy, in her 'Quick Exit' and 'Nasty' experiences, felt comfortable being in the boutique looking at swimsuits and being in the jewellery store inquiring about getting her emerald set, respectively. She felt she socially belong in each of these encounters. Her taste was similar to that of each store, and as such, she did not feel out of place. However, as previously discussed, these two encounters were unsatisfactory because Wendy did not belong either economically or intimately, respectively. Wendy in her 'Quick Exit' experience, was also distressed and angry, and thus dissatisfied, when she appraised that the price of the swimsuit excluded her and other women from purchasing such a garment. Such a pricing policy defined and provided an unjust social stratification of elite women who could purchase garments at such ridiculous prices. In her 'Nasty' experience, Wendy also was angry, hurt, embarrassed and humiliated when she appraised that the designer/jeweller judged her as not being worthy of his time. According to the designer/jeweller, Wendy did not belong to the group of clientele whom he valued as customers. As such, Wendy sensed that she did not belong in this store which she so highly valued to have her precious emerald set into a ring. Wendy transferred the blame onto herself. She reflected, how her 'tastes and style', and thus her feelings of worth, were not congruent with the designer's/jewellery's perceptions of her, and as such, she felt she did not belong.

"This emerald isn't very big after all," and . . . "Why am I taking up his precious time? He has obviously got more important things to do. I'm not really dressed for it. . . . I don't fit in this store" [researcher's emphasis]. [Wendy]

Since Wendy received negative feedback from an entity with which she affiliated and aspired to (i.e., valued), she was made to feel as if she did not belong. In her anger and humiliation, Wendy felt dissatisfied with her encounter.
Overall Summary.

In determining whether they are satisfied and/or dissatisfied with a shopping experience, consumers judge whether they 'belong' to the encounter. This analysis of the reconstructed memory-texts revealed that there are several ways that a consumer determines whether or not she belongs in an encounter. Four main themes, expertise/experience, intimacy, economic status, and social tastes and style, were discussed to illustrate how the consumer determines whether she belongs. These four themes describe how the consumer felt either comfortable or uncomfortable in the encounter due to her appraisal of belonging or not belonging, respectively.

The first theme discussed, expertise/experience, illustrated how the consumer's judgement of belonging is based on her knowledge, skills, and competence in the given encounter. When a consumer judges that she does not have the appropriate skills and/or knowledge to socially interact in the given role, and/or make the decisions and judgements regarding what to purchase, she assesses that she does not belong in the encounter. The consumer feels 'inadequate', and therefore uncomfortable participating in the encounter and may avoid partaking in it. She is threatened because she lacks the ability and thus confidence to control the interactions and outcomes of the encounter. However, when the consumer judges that she has the required skills and/or knowledge, she feels capable of interacting in the given role and making the appropriate decisions and judgements. She feels that she belongs and is in control. She is confident that she can control the interactions and outcomes and therefore feels comfortable entering into and participating in the encounter.

Just as the consumer's expertise/experience determines whether she belongs, and whether she will feel comfortable and in control of the encounter, so does her economic status and her social 'tastes'. The consumer who can not afford to purchase the store's products and/or services lacks control over the outcomes because she is unable to reciprocate with the expected resource (money), and thus avoids becoming committed or involved in the encounter. In her inability to pay for the products and/or services offered by the store, she may feel inadequate, frustrated, embarrassed and/or guilty, and consequently feels uncomfortable entering and participating in the encounter. As such, she will be dissatisfied with her experience. In contrast, from a strictly economic viewpoint, the consumer who has the ability to pay for the store's products and/or services has control over the encounter, and thus feels comfortable entering and partaking in the encounter. She economically belongs.

For a consumer to belong, feel comfortable and enjoy the encounter, she must also identify with and/or value its products, environment, sales personnel and clientele. When a consumer's 'tastes and styles', including both symbols and behaviours, are similar to those being offered by the product, environment, sales personnel, and/or the other clientele, the consumer will identify with, be attracted to, and feel as if she belongs in the encounter. The social tastes which the consumer identifies with and aspires to determine what she values and how involved...
she will be in an encounter or situation. The consumer, by receiving familiar and valued resources, will feel comfortable participating, and therefore be satisfied with the encounter. When a consumer, however, is out of her social context and there is disparity between her tastes and those in the encounter, she will be out of her comfort zone. She is unable to control the encounter, since she lacks the experience and confidence, and/or the desire to fit in and participate; nor is she able to gain any valued resources from an encounter that she does not associate with or aspire to. In this respect, the consumer's sense of being affiliated with the encounter is important in determining whether she will be satisfied or dissatisfied with her experience.

Intimacy also leads to and is developed through the consumer's sense of belonging. When the consumer appraises that she is valued by the others in the encounter, and is an integral part of the encounter, she senses that she belongs, and feels comfortable participating. These feelings of being valued and integrally affiliated with the encounter are necessary for the consumer to have an enjoyable and satisfying experience. Whereas, any feelings of being unwanted and devalued lead to negative affect and/or emotion, and consequently dissatisfaction with the experience.

Feelings of being valued and integrally affiliated with the encounter are developed and determined in a number of different ways. First, the consumer achieves a sense of closeness and comfort, allowing her to relax and enjoy the experience through the conditions surrounding the encounter. The consumer requires the necessary time and personal space, free from any pressures and stresses, to comfortably participate and thus intimately bond in the encounter. Moreover, any moods present and brought into the encounter contribute to or efface the consumer's sense of closeness and comfort.

Secondly, the store's environment influences the intimacy created in the encounter through its size, layout, presentation, and overall image. When a consumer likes and/or feels familiar with the environment, she perceives a sense of closeness and feels as if she belongs to the encounter. Due to her affiliations with the environment, the consumer feels relaxed and secure.

Thirdly, a consumer determines whether she belongs in an encounter depending on the intimacy that develops between herself and the sales personnel. Salespeople provide a sense of intimacy to the consumer through their appearance, actions, behaviours, and approach to personal service. If the consumer perceives the salesperson as a supportive, friendly individual or as a 'friend', a relationship develops that provides the consumer with value. The salesperson, through her or his demeanour, along with the amount and type of service provided, influences whether the consumer feels important and secure in the encounter. When a close, helpful, supportive relationship develops between the two of them, the consumer feels important and secure, thus fostering trust. Such friendly support allows the consumer to feel more relaxed.
and in control of her experience in that she can trust the salesperson. However, when there is a lack of friendly, supportive service provided by the salesperson, the consumer may feel unimportant, and may be suspicious of and/or threatened by the salesperson. As such, the consumer may feel ill at ease due to her loss of control in the encounter. Just as the salesperson provides intimacy in an encounter, a friend may also provide the same kind of supportive, helpful relationship. Support from a friend enables the consumer to feel in control by helping her feel more confident and comfortable in interacting, and by assisting her to decide and judge the appropriateness of a purchase. A friend may also be instrumental in making the consumer feel treasured and valued through her or his approval, encouragement and compliments. Moreover, a friend provides fellowship in enjoying and appreciating the experience.

Finally, the consumer's affiliation with a product, may also contribute to her sense of belonging and her satisfaction with the encounter. When the product matches the consumer's 'tastes', and her need for participating in the encounter, it becomes an integral part of her. That is, she associates with it as being part of herself, contributing to her desired needs and wants.

Too much intimacy, however, can become a barrier and lead to the consumer being dissatisfied with the encounter or situation. When the encounter becomes too intimate, the consumer becomes affectively and emotionally attached and involved in that she values the person, product, and/or environment. In becoming too committed and involved, the consumer can lose her sense of freedom or control in influencing the interactions and outcomes of the encounter, and therefore be uncomfortable participating. In doing so, she will be dissatisfied with the experience. When a consumer is rejected from an encounter in which she is intimately involved, negative affect and emotion, and thus dissatisfaction results. Moreover, in an intimate encounter, negative feedback is intensified due to the consumer's involvement in the encounter.

In conclusion, when the consumer appraises that she belongs, she feels valued, comfortable, and in control of the encounter or situation, and as such, feels satisfied with her experience. In contrast, when the consumer appraises that she does not belong, she feels uncomfortable, devalued and/or threatened by participating in the encounter, and feels dissatisfied with her experience. Moreover, when the consumer's judgement of belonging or not belonging to an encounter is disconfirmed, then she feels dissatisfied or satisfied, respectively, with her experience.

There are a number of ways in which the consumer judges whether she belongs in a shopping encounter. For example, these include the expertise/experience, economic status, and the social 'tastes' of the consumer, and the intimacy which develops in the encounter. While these four factors are treated separately in this discussion they are interrelated, determining whether the consumer belongs and whether the consumer feels valued, comfortable, in control, involved,
committed, and/or threatened in the encounter. These factors are also interrelated and are directly or indirectly related to belonging.
CHAPTER 7

IDENTITY

Introduction.
The consumer's sense of belonging in an encounter is defined by her state of 'being'. Individuals define themselves through and in relationship to their social encounters. They are existential beings; they learn and 'become' through their interactions with others. According to Mead (1934) individuals learn who they are among others by understanding how specific roles determine resultant behaviour and permit certain actions to achieve the expected responses in a social encounter. At the same time, individuals also learn that a role can be performed in a number of different ways, producing different responses and thus defining them in any given role. Using others as a 'looking-glass self', Cooley (1902) described how individuals define who they are by interpreting the responses of others in regard to their own actions and presentations in a role. They do so by imagining how they appear to others, interpreting the judgement of others, and experiencing affect and emotion such as pride and guilt (Cooley, 1902). Within a role, people present themselves in a manner which elicits certain interpretations from others. These interpretations are then perceived and interpreted by the individual, which then impacts on her or his personal identity. As such, people are continually learning and relearning who they are. Identity is a continuous process rather than a fixed state or trait (Burke, 1991). When an interpretation is disconfirming, an individual must either explain it as being incorrect, or must revise her or his personal identity. Some roles, however, are more salient than others in defining who an individual is, and those roles of little importance are dropped from the individual's evaluation of self. According to Turner (1968), an individual evaluates and identifies herself or himself according to her or his 'ego-involved' roles. An individual's self-esteem is based on her/his evaluation of her/his performance in the selected salient roles. Individuals, therefore, define themselves according to the socially learned process of role enactment, the evaluation of their performance in salient roles, and the interpretation of

59 See discussion by Belk (1988 pp. 145-146) on 'Having, Doing, and Being'. Belk referred to Sartre's (1943) major work, Being and Nothingness. According to Sartre, "doing is merely a transitional state or a manifestation of the more fundamental desire to have or to be. Further, Sartre, maintains that the only reason we want to have something is to enlarge our sense of self and that the only way we can know who we are is by observing what we have. . . . People seek, express, confirm, and ascertain a sense of being through what they have [and who they associate with]. . . . [O]thers are an important mirror through which we see ourselves. These others first come to associate possessions and possessor and then, depending on which is known best, either comes to infer the traits of the person from the nature of the possessions or the nature of the possessions from the traits of the person (Belk, 1978)." In contrast to Sartre's account of having, Belk also noted two other views, Fromm (1976) and Max (1967), that theorises on how we define our 'self' and 'worth'. Karl Marx suggested that we gain a sense of self and happiness "through doing meaningful and properly rewarded work." While Fromm "advocates being as the pre-eminent form of existence." By sharing, giving, and sacrificing, an individual understands and defines self.
the responses of significant others (Kelly, 1987). As defined by Burke (1991), personal identity is a set of "meanings" applied to the self in a social role or situation defining what it means to be who one is. . . . This set of meanings includes both symbolic and nonsymbolic components. The symbolic component includes our usual set of notions of meanings as involved in symbolic interactions. The nonsymbolic components include the various resources that are controlled by a person in the role. (p. 837)

The data presented in this chapter illustrates how the consumer's identities are either affirmed or threatened in some manner, and how this relates to her being either satisfied or dissatisfied with the encounter. The social roles she is enacting, has enacted and/or hopes to enact in the future are based on and relate to her identities. In a clothing shopping experience, the consumer affirms her personal identities through 'doing', 'having', and 'being'. That is, the consumer reflects and affirms who she is by what she does, brings, and obtains in the encounter. Moreover, through clothing shopping experiences, consumers obtain personal resources which allow them to 'have', 'do' and thus 'be' in other social and further social encounters. In doing so, they define themselves and gain satisfaction from the encounter. However, when the consumer perceives that her personal identity is not affirmed, or that her identity may be threatened in some manner during the encounter, she will be dissatisfied with the encounter. This threat to her personal identity may be a challenge, a loss and/or some form of contamination to whom she believes she is. As the consumer's level of perceived threat in the encounter increases so does the intensity of her felt dissatisfaction. When an expected threat, however, is overcome during the encounter it will lead to feelings of satisfaction. The intensity of the satisfaction felt will depend on the level of the threat overcome in relation to the enhancement of self.

Affirming, Reconfirming and Transforming Identity.
The following memory-text and group discussion of Helena's 'Impulse Purchase' illustrates how she affirmed her identity of being a helpful, playful and adventurous person by both participating in the shopping encounter ('doing') and purchasing ('having') a product. This story also illustrates how the sales personnel facilitated the affirmation of her identity, and contributed to her satisfaction in the shopping encounter.

**Helena's 'Impulse Purchase' Memory-Text.**

A friend asked her to go shopping with her at the local mall. It was spring and the teaching had ended, so they both had time for shopping during the day time. In addition, she was baby sitting another friend's car--a rare opportunity--and the friend, being very aware of the transportation possibility, asked her to join the adventure. She didn't really need anything new, except a little relaxation after the school year. The thought of going shopping during the day time in the middle of the week had a scent of forbidden fruit in it: they were supposed to work during those hours and they did not
have money to spend in the malls; especially not on sexy underwear that the friend was after. She was not particular to sexy underwear, but for the excitement of it, promised to help her friend to choose something.

They took off on their sinful trip and once at the mall, determinedly marched to 'Victoria's Secret'. After the bright spring day which already anticipated the hot and humid summer, it felt cool and dim in the shop. Neither one of the two assistants was interested in helping them--perhaps they looked too sporty, strong, poor or studenty for anything else but a good giggle. However, they took their time to browse through the reduced price section and moved to the extremely lacy section (and they did giggle). They selected an arm full of silk, lace and strings to her friend's liking and asked the shop assistant if the friend could try them on. "Of course" and they both squeezed into a small fitting room for a better laugh but also for serious decision making. The friend tried on the first combination of black, translucent lace and some silk strings to hold the silk in place. "It doesn't fit", the friend announced after looking at herself from the mirror, "it's too long; you should try it on, it would look really good on you". But she did not care about such things. "Come on, just try it on and have some fun", the friend urged. Caught up with the spirit of girlie excitement of doing things usually only discussed among your best girlfriends, she dropped off her grey, big cotton basketball shorts and threw her T-shirt and sportsbra on the top of the shorts to form a messy pile on the dressing room floor. How scratchy was it to be sexy! The lacy material was very uncomfortable. They continued to try on all the garments: the friend first and then her. She had to put on her clothes once in a while to snatch different size or a more flattering color. They almost franticly put different pieces on and off again, faster and faster: "try this; what about that; no that's too small; that's too long".

Finally, they emerged from their little private room, their hair messed up and their eyes shining from all the excitement. They both had decided to buy a comfortable pair of silk shorts and matching tops on sale--she too. After paying the whole thing with a Visa card, they--still filled with the buying spirit--rushed to another shop. Another small, shared fitting room, another "on-off" session, and they purchased similar sweaters. They will need these versatile sweaters--also on sale--once starting their new jobs, they reasoned.

Back in the car, driving home, it began to hit her: what use will she have for beautiful, but impractically thin underwear. When will she wear it? What time of the day? Who can see it, anyway? Coming to think of it now, she has worn it twice just to give it some air. Otherwise, it sits in the closet buried under the sportswear. But it is beautiful.
Helena achieved what she set off to do when she went to the mall. She had an exciting, erotic, but relaxing 'adventure' while helping her friend select sexy underwear. In doing so, Helena affirmed her identity of 'being' the helpful friend, as well as 'being' the playful and adventurous individual she perceived herself to be. Helena, at the time of this encounter, was a dancer, an aerobic instructor, and an international graduate student doing part time teaching and research examining women's realities of the 'toned' body from a feminist perspective. Through these roles she perceived herself as being a performer, an explorer, a sportswoman, and a feminist scholar, and as such, was an independent, strong, playful, adventurous, and novelty seeking individual.

Helena was also playing the role of being a helpful friend. She was supporting her friend's participation in this encounter which neither of them would have felt comfortable doing alone. Neither of them particularly valued sexy underwear, nor were they experienced in shopping for a product which symbolised socially risque behaviour. Helena did, however, personally identify with the purpose of her friend buying the sexy underwear, and the overall aspiration for them to enjoy themselves and relax during the shopping trip. Helena reflected how neither of them socially identified with or aspired to owning sexy underwear, but how she joined in for the adventure and the excitement of it all.

"The friend . . . asked her to join the adventure. . . . She was not particular to sexy underwear, but for the excitement of it, promised to help her friend choose something. This whole idea . . . [of shopping for and having sexy underwear] was so distant to her thinking and feeling, sort of like, she would never want that kind of underwear (laughing).

Helena said, "You [my friend] are crazy. Why do you need it? You don't need sexy underwear (laughing). You know my friend you are silly. Where are you going to wear it anywhere?" . . . But the friend had a partner who was into sexy underwear, and that is where her friend got the idea of buying sexy underwear. Otherwise her friend would have never worn sexy underwear in her life (laughing). . . . But in a way the friend was determined too. I think it was something like the partner's birthday . . . and the friend wanted to have a surprise or something like that for the partner. And that is why they set off for these things. [Helena]

Priscilla further noted how Helena's friend probably needed encouragement and help in looking for and trying on sexy underwear in the store, 'Victoria's Secret'.

I think that, I wonder if, Helena's friend needed Helena for the courage . . . to enter into a shop where she longed to go. I know for myself that I sort of look at these lovely, pretty things, lingerie, and think they are absolutely really wonderful, but never would have the courage to actually go in there and pick one up in case someone would fall on the floor laughing at me. [Priscilla]

Responding to the memory-text, Susie alluded to how Helena and her friend might also be negatively perceived by the salespeople in their need to look and try on these risque garments, and their enjoyment in doing so.

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60 Refer to Appendix A for Helena's personal details.
I love this piece, "Finally, they emerged from their little private room, their hair messed up and their eyes shining from all the excitement." I'd image that the shop assistant wondered what had been going on. [Susie]

Yeah, or maybe you think, "What do they expect of you? What do they use these things for" (giggling). [Helena]

From this perspective, Wendy noted how "the friend was very instrumental in the whole thing," and Helena agreed that "having a friend was essential." That is, they required each other's moral support and approval to participate and enjoy the encounter. Helena reflected,

I don't think Helena would have ever gone and taken, you know, armfuls of silk and just gone by herself to some dressing room to try something on. Never... We need moral support when we are making these big impulsive buys. She had been begging me to her impulsiveness. You should try it on, you would look good... "Come on, just have some fun," the friend urged.

When Priscilla questioned Helena, in regards to how she had "the courage to do that, (try lingerie on together in a fitting room)," Helena revealed how her personal identity as a sports person allowed her to feel comfortable. Helena reflected,

I don't know. Maybe it comes from the idea of being sort of a sports person, because you live in dressing rooms and stuff like that... So you throw off your clothes anyways. So, I mean, there you sit and criticise yourself... about your butt and thighs and whatever. But, you know, you still do it (laughing), because you rather do it that way than run out with next to nothing on to show it to someone. (Laughing)

Moreover, Helena as a dancer and an aerobic instructor was used to displaying her body and performing in front of others, and as such, she felt comfortable and enjoyed doing so with her friend. They explored, performed, and fantasised in the safety of each other's company, and in doing so affirmed who they were. They were playing with and testing their identities. Helena reflected in the group discussion how she performed and fantasised about these garments in the dressing room with her friend.

The whole process of doing something different, [in trying on these ridiculous garments] was a little bit like in Annabel's ['Exhilaration'] memory61, about going into that one big shop that was like a fairytale itself. [Helena]

There was a feeling... of wanting to look as good as they possibly could... They were trying these things on, and [although] it was a giggle... they went out and snatched different sizes and different colours to make themselves as real as possible, to look like those images... they had in the back of their minds. [Annabel]

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61 See Annabel's 'Exhilaration' memory-text in Appendix C. Annabel enjoys and feels 'exhilarated' with her encounter in a grand department store. She fantasises about the sequences party dresses and the associated lifestyle, and compares it to her simple way of being. Even though she really enjoys her experience, Annabel does not purchase any of these dresses because it is not who she is.
Mm, and with those actual images, you probably try them on thinking, "Awe, maybe I can be that, them, when I have these things on. Let's see how I look if I put these things on. Maybe I don't look all that bad!" So that was kind of interesting. [Helena]

Was it a matter of trying out how sexy you could look? [Wendy]

Mm, not necessarily that you want to look like that in real life. But, you know, you just want to see how you measure up in those things (giggling). [Helena]

The shop assistants, by leaving Helena and her friend alone, facilitated the process of letting them have fun while feeling secure and safe. At the same time, when their assistance was required, the sales assistants permitted Helena and her friend to feel comfortable by encouraging them to participate, and by quickly attending to them. Helena responded to Priscilla's and Annabel's questions,

It was fun? Fun being together like that? [Priscilla]

Yes. [Helena]

Do you think it was important for the shop assistants to leave Helena and her friend alone, to do your own thing? [Annabel]

Actually, they did not mind to be left alone. Because then they could go through everything without anyone sort of looking and asking (laughing), "What is the exact purpose of what you are buying these for?" (Laughing) They did not mind at all. And you know, once when they needed the shop assistants, they were helpful. They were there right away. "Of course, go try those things on." [Helena]

Neither Helena nor her friend would have enjoyed the encounter without the other being there and participating. It was the excitement and exhilaration of looking at, trying on, and fantasising about the risque garments together that enabled Helena to identify with and enjoy the encounter. Annabel and Helena commented on the importance of 'being' and participating together as friends in this encounter.

It would not have been nearly as exciting, or giggly, or exhilarating if they had not been there crammed into the same dressing room, trying on the same garments. [Annabel]

Here I think, ... [Helena and the friend] probably felt like that the whole process of trying these things on, giggling, and looking at these crazy creations, that you would never buy, was more fun than the actual giving of the Visa card (laughing); having purchased something. So they enjoyed trying on those impossible things that no one would possibly ever wear, ... at least not them, and how they ended up buying these conservative, comfortable things. ... We didn't buy anything that was not sort of real, was not them. ... But you still want to experience that once and a while. [Helena]

Although their experience of looking at and trying on exotic sexy underwear was exhilarating, Helena and the friend could not compromise their identity by purchasing such garments. From the group discussion,
I notice that their impulse [buy] was actually a comfortable pair of silk shorts, and it wasn't the stringy, lace, tied-up thing (laughing). There was a slight comprise there, maybe? [Priscilla]

They sort of thought about themselves, as well. Like, am I able to wear this. . . . I am not going to go into great expense to look nice for my partner (laughing). So, even her friend [who had intended to buy sexy underwear] thought, "Well I like this, this feels comfortable." It wasn't overly sexy in that sense. [Helena]

So it was more important for them to feel comfortable in what they were wearing than what the partner thought about it? [Annabel]

It was sort of a compromise. Like, you know, you think to yourself that you will never wear those things because they are useless anyway. But . . . my friend wanted to please her partner and have . . . a surprise. But she did not go to such an expense, that she sacrificed her own being for it. So, it was sort of a compromise. . . . [They didn't] feel bad about themselves, sort of compromising themselves, by just doing some typical, feminine, sexy thing, quote, "For Your Man." So, I think they did it right for that moment . . . (laughing). [Helena]

The purchasing of the sexy underwear symbolised Helena's exhilarating and erotic experience with the friend, rather than her need for the product. That is, when Helena purchased the sexy underwear, she reconfirmed her 'being' through 'doing' by 'having'. Specifically, for Helena, 'having' sexy underwear reconfirmed her playful, adventurous, mischievous identity activated in this encounter. Helena reflected,

[Helena] . . . didn't have any intention of buying anything. . . . Helena's partner does not like these things (giggling), so Helena does not have much use for them. . . . [Rather, she was] caught in the excitement of the friend. It was a very interesting 'impulse [buy]' . . .

Furthermore, the whole act of being there and then purchasing sexy underwear had a connotation of being sinful. Helena wrote,

_The thought of going shopping during the day time in the middle of the week had a scent of forbidden fruit in it: they were supposed to work during those hours and they did not have money to spend in the malls; especially not for sexy underwear that the friend was after. [Helena]_

Helena's 'impulse buy' thus occurred when the 'opportunity' presented itself for her to capture and affirm her identity. This phenomenon was illustrated in the group discussion when Helena's 'Impulse' memory-text was compared to Priscilla's 'Impulse' experience (refer to Chapter 6). Both these memory-texts illustrated how the impulse purchase occurred when there was incongruency between the consumer's everyday way of being and the way she perceived herself to be, or aspired to be. From this perspective the consumer makes an impulse purchase to reconfirm or affirm her desired identity. Helena's identity of being an adventurous and playful individual was being overridden or threatened by her mundane everyday life style. Priscilla, as a student, had lost her economic ability to affiliate with the social group in which she still felt she belonged. By purchasing the product, when the opportunity unexpectantly
arose, Helena and Priscilla reconfirmed or affirmed who they perceived themself to be.

Annabel, Wendy and Helena described the similarities between Helena's and Priscilla's impulse experiences and the contrast written in their memory-text, thus illustrating how the incongruency between their everyday lives and their identity lead to their impulse buy. By purchasing the product they grabbed the opportunity to reconfirm or affirm an identity which was incongruent with their current state of being.

When Helena went to the mall, the same as Priscilla, when Priscilla went shopping with her friend to look at the dress she spotted in the window, it had been a very busy year. They both had time, and they both were not going with any intentions to buy. So the same atmosphere was present for these two stories. The same atmosphere of being romantic was present too. You know, they were changing from that practical everyday living [researcher’s emphasis] to, 'Let's go to the mall for something new in life'. [Annabel]

Or to take some time out to do something different. [Wendy]

Yes, relaxation time. I think another thing that was interesting, and in terms of Priscilla's as well, was like the atmosphere of the shop was different from the atmosphere outside. Like Priscilla's shop was calm, when everything was hectic because it was Christmas; and in Helena's story it was cool and dim and everywhere else was hectic bright and hot. So, that sort of sticks in Helena's mind that was somehow different. [Helena]

The playfulness, adventure, and sinfulness of Helena's experience carried over into the purchasing of sweaters. Helena wrote and reflected,

they -- still filled with the buying spirit -- rushed to another shop. Another small, shared fitting room, another 'on-off' session, and they purchase similar sweaters. She [the friend] brought one as well. So she had the same excitement as Helena. I think . . . . what they felt was that the shopping experience carried over. So it was . . . that whole idea, 'Oh we will buy, we will buy now' when we usually don't buy anything . . . . [T]here was no forbidden idea in there. You know (laughing), they weren't sexy sweaters or anything like that . . . . I guess they still felt this pleasure of buying, because they normally couldn't buy anything. [Helena]

By Helena purchasing, and thus 'having' sexy underwear, she assumed another identity besides that of the practical, sensible sportswoman. With the delicate silk shorts and matching top buried under the sportswear in her drawer, Helena acknowledges that underneath her robust, sporty, adventurous and feminist way of being there is also a softer, more delicate, feminine Helena. Although still hidden, Helena takes on or acknowledges a new identity. She reflected,

There is a huge contrast here too . . . when she [Helena] dropped her very practical sports gear, and throws her sportsbra into the pile. It was something totally out of the ordinary for Helena. The excitement of doing that - transformation [researcher’s emphasis]. [Priscilla]

Yeah, absolutely. Yeah, totally out of character to try something . . . . But it is totally out of character too, because now again the thing is buried under the sportswear that she
wears all the time. So it didn't lead into a change of character at all (laughing).

[Helena]

Does it give you satisfaction to know that it is buried underneath that sportswear?

[Annabel]

That it is there. Yeah. [Helena]

Helena has got in [her memory-text], 'But it is beautiful.' So actually, obviously to me, Helena just loves knowing that it is there. She knows she could whip it on for the right occasion (laughing). [Priscilla]

Yeah. [Helena]

So that part of Helena is hidden away somewhere. You know that you have got that in your drawer if you ever want to wear it, or just the idea of having it in your drawer means that there is that kind of romantic sensuous Helena. [Annabel]

Mm. Mm. Yep. Somewhere in the dark (giggling). [Helena]

In the writing and discussing of this 'Impulse Purchase' memory-text, Helena defined what an exciting and exhilarating experience was to her, and as such, what was important to her identity. Helena in the process of transformation, and affirming and reconfirming her valued identities, was excited and exhilarated by her experience, and as such determined and defined her satisfaction with this encounter.

In the following memory-text, Priscilla illustrated the exhilarating process of being 'transformed' into a new, but past and valued identity, through the purchasing of new clothes. This process also determined and defined her satisfaction with the encounter. Similarly to Helena, the saleswoman and the store environment facilitated the transformation and contributed to her satisfaction with the encounter.

**Priscilla's 'Exhilaration' Memory-Text.**

*Leaving a store feeling exhilarated.*

It was roughly three months after having her second child. With the baby being born the end of November, Priscilla had made do with any comfortable clothes during the Xmas season. She was too tired and busy to worry too much about fashion. Her pregnancy had seemed long and fraught with sickness for most of the nine months. She was not one to blossom during pregnancy.

At the time she was living in a very run down town. It had once been a prosperous coal mining town but now consisted of mainly run down houses, broken footpaths and no social contact for Priscilla. Her days were spent mostly caring for her two young children. The nearest town of any size was approximately 15 mins away on a country road. This town was not very exciting but Priscilla had met two women who were to
become very dear friends. They were her life line at those times when things got her down.

Approximately 50 mins away was a larger town boasting some nice stores. It had seemed like an age since Priscilla went shopping for anything for herself, especially clothes. She felt in the need to at least brave the shops and maybe find some appropriate garment: smart, but appropriate for a young mum forever feeding or washing babies. She felt way out of touch with the fashions and not confident at all. With the help of her mother, who lived in the larger town and had offered to mind the children, she set off. Somehow the thought of walking the streets in the city seemed a little daunting. The weather was hot and Priscilla was still up twice a night feeding her baby. It didn't take much to tire her. But her mother, one to keep her eye on nice stores, suggested a place to go in one of the suburbs.

She set off nervously. She had not left her new baby for more than a few minutes before. She knew the baby was in the best of care though, and her toddler. She pulled in to a park close to the store and entered very tentatively. It had been a long time..... what did one wear and with what and how did one wear it. She fossicked through some of the racks starting to feel rather despondent, very mindful of the time going by and having left her children. An assistant who appeared to be fixing up some racks of clothes struck up a casual conversation. Priscilla had no problem chatting to her and soon relaxed a little. The store was not overly large, had a front window but no other glass walls. It was well set out with a nice area near the end for one to try on garments, come out and have a good look in longer well placed mirrors. As it was not in the middle of the city the shop had a relaxed feel to it. People came in and out and appeared to enjoy browsing without any hassle attached.

Getting back to Priscilla, she and the assistant were chatting along comfortably, the assistant no doubt building up a bit of a profile in order to see if she could tempt Priscilla into buying something. Priscilla saw some dressy jeans she rather liked. Time to take the plunge and try something on. Oh dear... it had been a long time since she last did this. Great, they fitted, felt good, were practical and would carry through Autumn to winter. One needed a very versatile wardrobe at this stage in ones life. But what to wear them with? No problem, the assistant appeared with a couple of shirts. One looked great. So this is how it feels again. Oh, and something else, the assistant then appeared with a top which she suggested would look good worn over the shirt, or could be worn alone. Wow, felt good, looked smart, was practical and Priscilla was definitely feeling "with it" again. She hadn't even thought about the children for a few minutes. But something was missing from the ensemble. Sure enough the assistant offered a VERY smart black belt, to try on too. Seemed a pity to hide it under anything.
Well by now Priscilla was standing there in the jeans, shirt, top and belt. She was a little taken back at the reflection in the mirror—was that her? Yes, to heck with it... she would take the lot. She had a fair idea of the prices, she always looked at price tickets before trying clothes on to avoid disappointment if the clothes were out of her price range.

By now she was getting hot, and feeling exhausted from trying the clothes on. She was also anxious to get back to her children. It took no time for the assistant to gather up the garments, pop them into a smart shopping bag and casually relieve Priscilla of her hard saved money. Although she felt a wee twinge of anxiety, Priscilla was happy to part with it. She knew she would get heaps of wear from all the garments, together or as separates. She felt great. She literally skipped out of the shop, one very satisfied customer. The exhilaration lasted for days. It was the best tonic for a young mum living in a depressed, run down town. At least when she went out or had visitors she felt quite the part. She was to wear these clothes for years and whenever she did, always felt good.

Priscilla, through the process of and in purchasing new clothes, marked a transition from being a pregnant, nurturing mother to becoming a more independent, sociable women. She uses the contrast of details in her memory-text to highlight this transformation, and thus explain her exhilaration and satisfaction with the encounter. Annabel and Priscilla described some of these contrasts, while Wendy noted the significance of them.

What I found interesting about this [memory-text] was the contrast that came into it. The contrast... of the old depressed town to the fashion - the fashion store in the suburbs; being pregnant to being a very smart looking mom. There are others too, but just the contrast. [Annabel]

To always having the children... with... feeling free. ... From being very ill to starting to feel better again too... [Priscilla]

It marks a transition, a turning point. [Wendy]

Yeah. It did actually, because Priscilla actually had her hair cut too. [Priscilla]

Helena, when she compared her 'Exhilaration' memory-text concerning her purchase of the Christmas party dress (refer to Chapter 5) to Priscilla's, illustrated this transformation of identity through the use of contrast in the written text. Helena reflected,

I thought it [Priscilla's] was similar to Helena's story, because Helena also went from shorts to a very fancy dress. That is not usual for Helena at all. So maybe, Priscilla did the same thing, went from these motherly clothes, from being pregnant (laughing) to the sort of clothes that can be worn when you have visitors. [Helena]
In the act of 'doing', going shopping, Priscilla started her transition from being a young mom with two dependent children and little social life to 'being' a more independent and sociable women. This shopping trip demarked the first time Priscilla had left her new baby, and her return to a more exciting and stimulating social environment after a long absence away. For Priscilla, it marked a "new beginning" [Priscilla], a "lifestyle change" [Wendy].

The sales assistant and the store environment facilitated Priscilla's transition by allowing her to 'belong' in an environment where she initially felt uncomfortable. This discomfort was partly due to her lack of current experience and expertise, and as such, she feared the consequences of not being able to attain her desired identity through participating in this shopping experience. If she was unsuccessful, she would not achieve the transition to 'being' an independent, social woman through the act of 'doing', nor would she acquire the appropriate clothes to affirm her desired identity. Priscilla reflected,

Yes, ... she was in a stage of her life that she needed, she really needed the clothes. But she was reluctant for many reasons - leaving babies, and the hotness, and the scariness of [not knowing] what does she wear, and how does she wear it. She could look at things and think they look nice, but couldn't imagine putting them together herself. So yes, she was reluctant to go in.

The sales assistant, being both sociable and helpful, provided Priscilla with the needed friendship to participate in the encounter. Through this friendship, Priscilla was able to enjoy the shopping experience as a social outing and rely on the help and support of the sales assistant to select the appropriate garments to affirm her new identity. Priscilla reflected, comparing hers and Helena's 'Exhilaration' memory-texts, how the sales assistant was both sociable and helpful, fulfilling the role of a friend.

An assistant ... struck up a casual conversation. Priscilla had no problem chatting to her and soon relaxed a little. ... [Priscilla] and the sales assistant were chatting along comfortable. [Priscilla]

They [Priscilla and Helena] had enjoyed their shopping experience and felt good. While Priscilla didn't have a companion [as did Helena when she was shopping for her Christmas dress], the sales assistant almost fitted that role because she wasn't selling as such, she was being suggestive and supportive. She was unobtrusive. Very unobtrusive, but sorted things out very, very quickly, and ... very quietly suggested things. Priscilla didn't know really what to wear with what, and the assistant suggested things. ... But [the sales assistant] managed to put her finger on the spot, and suggested different ways of wearing things, which I think is sometimes lacking. ... It was the sales assistant that sort of said, "Well, what's missing is this really nice belt.". ... It is really selling it, lets face it, ... but she did it really well. And because it worked so well, Priscilla thought, "Oh well, what is the point of going around with half your leg." [Priscilla]

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62 Stone (1962) noted that we use our appearance, and thus clothing, to symbolise our identities. There are general norms which indicate the appropriate appearance and clothing for certain social roles, and thus identities.
And she recognised that this was a complete make-over? That Priscilla was not in there to just buy a pair of jeans. [Wendy]

Yes, ... she was in need. Yes, yeah. [Priscilla]

Was it that she guided ... Priscilla towards it, [rather] than forced herself upon Priscilla? [Susie]

Mm, unobtrusive, in guiding. [Priscilla]

Priscilla also noted how the store environment facilitated her comfort, and thus her transition into her new identity. The environment, being small with its non threatening decor and store position, allowed Priscilla to relax and enjoy the encounter. She affirmed her desired identity through participating in and associating herself with this 'warm', intimate, pleasant environment.

*The store was not overly large, had a front window but no other glass walls. It was well set out with a nice area near the end for one to try on garments, come out and have a good look in longer well placed mirrors.* [Priscilla]

It wasn't the kind of store that ... was a glass house, where people could see in and see you try on things which Priscilla would find extremely intimidating. ... [T]hose stores she just doesn’t go into because who wants to come out with tight things around their thighs, just to see what they look like, and who needs all the shoppers going past to have a look as well (laughing). [Priscilla]

*Somehow the thoughts of walking in the streets of the city seemed a little daunting. ... As it was not in the middle of the city, the shop had a relaxed feel to it. People came in and out and appeared to enjoy browsing without any hassle attached.* ... [T]his store, it wasn't flash at all, but it was just simply, nicely decorative, done. Yeah, it had a relaxed atmosphere to it. Perhaps being in the suburb, I think she related to that, being away from the downtown. [Priscilla]

The store, through its associated status, also contributed to Priscilla's transformation and her satisfaction with this encounter. Annabel and Priscilla discussed how Priscilla’s self-esteem was uplifted by the store's status, and how it contributed to her enjoyment and exhilaration of the encounter.

Priscilla had gone to an up-graded town and a shop in the suburb. She had gone from a depressed town to a... [Annabel]

to a good shop. It was a very good shop. It was well known to be a very good shop in the suburbs. Yeah. [Priscilla]

There is a bit of status being added ..., [and] perhaps just a boost in ... the ego? [Annabel]

I totally agree that it adds something to the shopping. If you buy lingerie say at K-Mart, and you buy it from a really nice lingerie store, which do you enjoy most? It might be the same garment, but which do you feel better about? The one in the really nice store, because the status affects you. [Priscilla]

And ... [Priscilla's] purchase just boosting that ego a little bit further to improve the self-esteem. [Annabel].
The group also discussed how the packaging of Priscilla's purchased clothing into a smart shopping bag boosted her self-esteem, contributing to her transformation and satisfaction with the encounter.

"Here's my parcel everybody (laughing)." [Helena]

And with the name on the outside. [Wendy]

Yes, yes, the pleasure of taking it out, of feeling good about a purchase, and being proud to carry it out in this shopping bag. [Priscilla]

It was, however, through the purchasing of the appropriate clothing that Priscilla gained confidence to play her new, desired identity role. Priscilla reflected on how her "full body make over" [Susie] allowed her to gain the confidence to step into her new identity.

"She felt confident... Yes, it really helped with confidence, and all sorts of things. Priscilla knew that when she was going somewhere that she felt good going. As where [before the transformation], she felt very dowdy for a long time... [She didn't] actually feel very flash when they went out... It was a boost in confidence. From lacking in confidence, from a low self-esteem [and being quite depressed] to having the self-esteem boosted. [When she had visitors, she felt quite the part]. [Priscilla]

There was also excitement in having found the appropriate garments which marked Priscilla's transition into her new identity. Annabel commented on its significance,

"It was the first articles [of clothing] that Priscilla had bought after being pregnant, and she was in great need." [Annabel]

Wendy noted how Priscilla and the other group members in their 'Exhilaration' experiences (with the exception of Annabel who didn't purchase anything), felt, "Yes, this is mine." There was excitement and exhilaration "in finding exactly what they needed" [Annabel] to mark either their transition into a new lifestyle role or to affirm their self defined identity. Priscilla and Helena reflected,

"They found something to make this decision, this new beginning real exciting and special." [Priscilla]

I think once again, looking at expectations, the three [individuals discussed] so far [i.e., Helena's, Wendy's, and Priscilla's 'Exhilaration' memory-texts], have gone out with expectations of having their needs met, and they have been met, and hence exhilaration. Those needs were being fulfilled. Because they all went out with a need, with a desire to new life, a new beginning, or... a special party dress; and they have had that fulfilled. To me, that is quite significant, just remembering the occasion. [Helena]

Priscilla was also "going to gain pleasure from wearing these garments at the functions... in which they were intended for" [Annabel]. Priscilla wrote,
At least when she went out or had visitors she felt quite the part. She was to wear these clothes for many years. And whenever she did, she always felt good.

Moreover, Priscilla was also excited and exhilarated by her physical transformation. Priscilla had been threatened in that her new body shape after pregnancy might not allow her to appear as she desired in her new identity role. In her discovery, and surprise, that she looked great, she was excited and exhilarated. Priscilla explained why this transformation was such an exhilarating experience.

Priscilla had been very ill, and couldn't bear anything close to her body for a long time. So she hadn't wore anything fitting for a while, like dress jeans . . . . The shirt wouldn't have been so bad, but the dress jeans in particular . . . . [Nor was she] feeling particularly confident about her body shape at the time. So to actually try something on that fitted was . . . . I don't know about anyone else, but trousers in particular, was actually great excitement. It was her thighs. She had left the children at home, but took her thighs with her. So it was a real buzz for her to try trousers that actually . . . . fit. [Priscilla]

See, the same thing with Helena. She left her loose clothes and put on something fitting, and when it actually fits, it is like "WOW!". [Helena]

Mm, it boosts your self esteem . . . . It just actually makes you feel good. Priscilla sort of thought, "Gosh, is this me?" She was a little taken back by the reflection in the mirror. Was that her.

She felt great. She literally skipped out of the shop, one very satisfied customer. [There was] excitement, pleasure, and exhilaration. A slight touch of euphoria (laughing). . . . [There was] that feeling of bubbling inside, that really great feeling. The exhilaration lasted for days. [Priscilla]

Priscilla's satisfaction with this encounter resulted from the affirmation of her desired identity through participating in the encounter and purchasing the appropriate garments. It was, however, the excitement in her transformation that made this experience not just satisfying, but exhilarating for Priscilla. This transformation, being highly valued, increased her self-esteem and thus resulted in her extreme satisfaction with this encounter.

In a similar light to Priscilla's 'Exhilaration' story, the following memory-text, Wendy's 'Pressure Experience', also illustrates a satisfying experience in that she achieved her shopping goal of purchasing befitting clothing, allowing her to play the desired identity role. However, unlike the previous two memory-texts (Priscilla's 'Exhilaration' and Helena's 'Impulse'), Wendy did not aspire to this identity role, but rather conformed to it, thus allowing herself and others around her to feel comfortable participating. As such, the purchasing of this clothing was satisfying to Wendy, but neither exciting nor exhilarating.

Although it was important for Wendy to be able to play the role and thus purchase the appropriate clothing, it was not one she aspired to, and as such, it was neither exciting nor exhilarating in that it was not reconfirming who she wanted to be.
Wendy's Memory-Text. The Pressure Experience

The graduation ceremony at Otago University was about to take place again, and another group of students Wendy had taught would be returning to Dunedin for the ceremony and a week or so of reunion parties. Many would bring their parents with them.

Wendy, not being much into formal ceremony, never went to the actual graduation ceremony but always attended the informal afternoon tea hosted by the department afterwards for the graduates and their families. It was an occasion she always felt ambiguous about and went along with feelings both of excitement and nervousness. It was always good to see the students again, with whom she would have shared four exciting years. They would invariably be looking smart and sophisticated, dressed formally in their gowns, ever so proud of themselves and with a maturity they seemed to have acquired only in the six months since last seeing them. But invariably she had a difficult time maintaining conversations with their parents. She was not great at 'idle chatter' at the best of times, and in this situation she usually got the impression that the parents felt awkward talking to a female university lecturer and did not know what to talk about. She recalled one such occasion when a male graduate's mother had asked Wendy if she was married. When Wendy said no, this woman became exceedingly embarrassed and in her embarrassment had spluttered, "Well never mind dear, your turn will come". Every year Wendy anticipated similar awkward moments.

On this particular occasion, Wendy felt she needed something to wear that was a bit more sophisticated than her usual casual wardrobe. Somehow or other she had to fit into the occasion and give the impression of a mature academic, happy and confident in that role. Obviously it needed to be something classical and conservative, probably not something she would wear much but never mind, it was important for this event.

It was Friday, the day before graduation. Wendy knew of only one store in the city which carried the sort of clothes she had in mind. It was expensive, but she had bought a skirt on sale there earlier in the year and, although she hadn't worn it much, continued to be amazed at how well it was made and how perfectly it fitted her. Wendy went directly to that store. The thought of having to traipse the streets looking for something suitable was intolerable, so she mentally told herself that something in this store would have to do and it was just a matter of choosing it.

She thought that perhaps a suit of some sort would be best but couldn't find anything that was right. Then she discovered a skirt the same label as the one she had previously bought. She liked the material, even though it reminded her of brocade furniture fabric,
and the style. She tried it on and discovered it fitted as perfectly as her other skirt. This company must have her body for their mould! It was, however, quite a lot longer than she felt comfortable wearing. But the sales assistant said, "the style was supposed to be worn long." Still, it wasn't 'an outfit'. What would she wear with it?

The sales assistant showed Wendy the range of knitwear the store carried and, in particular a long cardigan in a colour which coordinated beautifully with the skirt. Wendy saw immediately that she would wear the cardigan a lot. The sales assistant suggested that a cream shirt would go well with the two garments. Wendy had a cream shirt. Her all-purpose black shoes could be worn too. The sales assistant suggested a long string of the beads. Wendy knew where she could buy some that would suit and in fact, thought that would be just the frivolous touch to perhaps balance the dowdiness of the skirt's length. Yes, finally she could see she had a suitable 'outfit'. Happily, she bought the skirt and cardigan and set out to get the beads. She felt that at least she'd be dressed right tomorrow.

Wendy, attending such a function and being the only women academic staff member in the department, was 'on display', and was socially expected to fit into the conservative, traditional, formal, mature, dominantly male, stern image of a university lecturer. Wendy, however, who was a casual, young, vibrant, educated, unmarried, caring, feminist women, neither fitted into nor aspired to fit into this traditionally prescribed image. In this conflict, and in anticipation of awkward reactions which might be created by this conflict, Wendy's identity was threatened. Wendy reflected how, in the past, her deviance from the expected socially prescribed image had caused herself, a past student and his mother, great embarrassment and discomfort, and how the distress had threatened her identity.

This incident, where Wendy was asked if she was married, was a classic case for this woman opening her mouth and changing feet. Because . . . what happened is she got embarrassed about the first question and then made it worse. It actually became quite the talking point in the staff room for the next several weeks afterwards. Wendy was the joke [researcher's emphasis] yet again. Wendy was always the joke, being the only woman. But anyway, because the son had been quite embarrassed about the whole thing and had talked to his mates (Laughing), it had obviously got around that this had happened. . . . [Wendy did] feel for the woman. . . . It just sort of encapsulated those awkward moments that she always anticipated happening. [Wendy] This threat to Wendy's identity, coloured and determined the way she approached and responded to her shopping experience.

To avoid any further discomfort, embarrassment, and/or distress to herself and/or others at this graduation function, Wendy decided to conform her identity by purchasing the appropriate clothing which would allow her to fit into a socially prescribed image of a university lecturer. The group noted why Wendy needed to transform her identity for this graduation function.
If she had just gone in her comfortable attire, they would have been like, "How on earth can she lecture, if she dresses like that!" (laughing) ... She would have been noticed and criticised. [Priscilla]

No wonder she doesn't have a husband. [Helena]

(Great laughter by all).

Exactly. [Wendy]

[Wendy was] going to feel awkward ... [She] anticipated similar awkward moments ... [to past ones], and she knew she had to be right, [to dress right for the occasion to avoid this awkwardness]. [Susie]

Mm-mm. [Wendy]

By 'moulding' herself into the perfect 'fit', Wendy would feel confident and comfortable participating. The group commented,

If you are wearing something that fits you really well [as well as the social situation], it gives that confidence, and Wendy felt confident ... [As Wendy] said, "Wendy is not into idle chatter," but if you're feeling good about how you dress and your feeling confident, it is almost like the idle chatter doesn't matter. I don't know, it's just a psychological thing. [Priscilla]

It's that first impression. [Annabel]

You're feeling good and confident. [Priscilla]

You can carry it off. [Susie]

Yeah. [Wendy]

And you can get through those scenes. [Susie]

Well, it turns it back on the other person. If you fit into what you're suppose to look like, you know, this university lecturer ... it's the other person's fault then that they can't make the proper conversation, not Wendy's. It's their problem and not yours, because you are what you're suppose to be. [Annabel]

And if you do feel comfortable, and you do fit, then you don't have those anxieties about how I'm dealing with this. How I'm coping, whether I'm making the right conversation. [Wendy]

Mm. You are just there with an air of confidence about you. [Annabel]

And it doesn't matter. [Wendy]

And think, if they can't see that those clothes are nice, that's their problem, and they have no taste. So that sort of gives her that confidence to be there. [Helena]

Unlike Helena's 'Impulses' experience, where she would receive pleasure and exhilaration by 'doing', both through participating in the encounter itself and selecting an appropriate garment, Wendy viewed her shopping trip as a chore rather than an adventure. Wendy wrote,
The thought of having to tramp the streets looking for something suitable was intolerable [researcher’s emphasis], so she mentally told her self that something in this store would have to do and it was just a matter of choosing it.

Wendy was only partaking in this shopping trip to find an outfit that would allow her to fit in, and thus avoid any further embarrassment, discomfort and/or distress at an occasion which she felt both excited and nervous about attending. Additionally, the time pressure of having to find an outfit for the next day also contributed to Wendy's lack of pleasure and enjoyment in this shopping task. The group noted that,

Pressure kind of takes the enjoyment away from buying - the mood of buying. [Annabel]

Yes, because you've got that anxiousness, the anxiety...[of having] to get something. And that's the important bit. You've got to get something. [Susie]

Besides there being no fun associated with this shopping trip, Wendy noted how she avoided going shopping till the day before the event because she resented having to buy something specifically for this function, something that she would not particularly enjoy or wear often, and something that did not actually represent who she perceived herself to be or aspired to be. Wendy reflected in the group discussion,

Wendy is very good at procrastinating on things that she doesn't feel particularly happy about doing or comfortable with; and I think it was a matter of just having left it till the point where it couldn't be left any longer. [Wendy]

Wendy was out of that range [of representing the typical feminine role], and that's why she was uncomfortable...[Helena]

Wendy was being forced to conform to a role that was acceptable outside the feminine stereotype... And I think there's...resentment... Resentment of being put in a situation where you have to do it. You've got to conform to a particular expectation of the way we present ourselves and dress. And there is a resistance to doing that because it's going to cost us pressure, cost us anxiety, and cost us money. And it's a cost to self, who we are [researcher's emphasis]. [Wendy]

It's not who we want to be. [Annabel]

Yes, I mean Wendy set out to buy something, and she would get something that...she felt was suitable for the occasion, but there was anxiety that it wouldn't be something that was necessarily her [researcher's emphasis]. In fact, this outfit was not necessarily her, but was still right for the occasion. [Wendy]

In finding the 'right' outfit for the occasion, Wendy was satisfied with her shopping experience. She had fulfilled her mission, and her reason for purchasing such an outfit. However, unlike Priscilla's 'Exhilaration' experience, who also set off hesitantly and anxiously to find an outfit which would allow her to socially participate, Wendy was neither exhilarated or excited by her shopping encounter success. As noted earlier, Wendy found little enjoyment or pleasure in looking for and purchasing an outfit which did not symbolise the 'real' her. Rather,
she found relief and comfort in finding and purchasing an outfit which allowed her to take on the socially prescribed identity of a mature, classical, conservative, confident women university lecturer. In doing so, she avoided any embarrassment, discomfort and/or distress that she might have caused herself and/or others. She would be able to "accomplish her respectability or her role as a lecturer, which is not a typical female role. . . . [She would be able to make] a certain impression . . . an important impression" [Helena]. Wendy, thus, felt satisfied with her purchase. She reflected,

Wendy felt satisfied. I mean, it wasn't elation or exhilaration, but just, . . . satisfaction and comfort . . . from it. You know, a sort of security thing. . . . [There was] relief. But also some sense of satisfaction of having accomplished something that she had set out to accomplish. And pleased that she could put herself in a situation where she'd feel comfortable and confident. So it all sort of fitted the bill. Yeah, so satisfied. [Wendy]

Moreover, Wendy was happier with her outfit than she anticipated she would be. Her resentment of having to buy an outfit specifically for this occasion was offset by her purchase of the cardigan which she liked and would wear a lot. She commented,

I don't think there was much resentment afterwards of having to buy these garments. I think that was probably muted by the fact that the cardigan was going to be something that she was very happy to have. [Wendy]

The store's image, products, and sales personnel facilitated Wendy's resultant satisfaction with this shopping encounter. Through its image and products, Wendy was aware that she could quickly find an appropriate outfit without begrudgingly wasting her time and energy on an experience which she was not going to enjoy. The quicker she found what was required, the more satisfied she would be with the encounter. Wendy reflected in the group discussion how the store's image and her knowledge of its products lead to its selection and her satisfaction of achieving her goal of finding an appropriate outfit as quickly as possible.

Wendy knew of only one store in the city that carried the sort of clothes she had in mind. . . . Wendy went directly to the store. . . . [She mentally told herself that something in this store would have to do and it was just a matter of choosing it. [Wendy]

The familiarisation with the stock is important. . . . this shop will solve all . . . [Wendy's] problems, and it did this time. [Priscilla]

When you saw this skirt did Wendy think, "That will have to do? There is nothing else here." [Susie]

"Yes. I like it, I know it fits, and I'm not going anywhere else. It will have to do." And also because that store presented the kind of clothes that she thought were appropriate for the kind of presentation that she wanted to make - classical conservative. [Wendy]

The group discussed how the expensive and quality image of the store and its products contributed to her satisfaction. This occurred both through the association of the store and
product image with the sought after prescribed identity, and by quickening the purchasing task. The group noted that,

There's often an association with "Well, if I want this kind of executive looking clothing, or if I want to feel respectable, I have to pay money for it." [Annabel]

I think so. Yeah. [Wendy]

'Classic clothes, classic prices' (laughing). [Priscilla]

If you want to look respectable, don't even worry about the price. [Helena]

Wendy and the group also noted how the fabric of the skirt was also associated with the needed prescribed identity, which contributed to Wendy's satisfaction. Wendy reflected on Annabel's question,

Does this have any meaning to the memory? She liked the material, even though it reminded her of brocade furniture fabric, and the style. Is there a reason you remembered that? [Annabel]

Perhaps because brocade furniture fabric is also very classical, conservative, [and] different too. [Wendy]

It's formal. Brocade furniture is usually quite formal. [Annabel]

Moreover, Wendy described how the expensive, well-made skirt which fitted her body perfectly, boosted her ego, and thus her satisfaction with this encounter. Not only did this outfit allow her to easily fit into the prescribed identity required for the graduation event, but it contributed to her feelings of being socially normal and an acceptable person. Wendy, by not fitting into the social expectations of this encounter, found her identity threatened. Wendy reflected in the group discussion.

After I had written this, . . . I was thinking, "Why did I say all that stuff about the skirts being a perfect fit? Why was I talking about all that sort of stuff? Is it irrelevant to it? Why did I put that in?" . . . I . . . think maybe . . . on a subconscious level . . . that maybe [it was] that sort of feeling of not fitting into the social context. The fact that I could take a skirt off the rack and it fitted perfectly onto my body, meant I wasn't quite so peculiar. [Wendy]

"I am normal in some way. Just because I can't fit into this image that people have of me being a University lecturer, I can fit as a women." [Annabel]

Yeah, I fit somewhere else. [Wendy]

And not only does it fit, but they must use Wendy as a mould. [Annabel]

Mm. There is quite a lot of emphasis on that. [Priscilla]

Oh, yes (very excited), I wrote that too. Oh, you are right (laughs). . . As you say, Wendy goes on about it. [Wendy]

Also how well it was made was associated with that perfect fit. [Annabel]
Oh, she is right. [Wendy]

Wendy is boosting her image in one way... [Annabel]

"I [Wendy] am valid... I am well made. I am doing something right." Yeah. [Helena]

Yeah. "Something is right about me, even though I don't fit into this normal role [being a female university lecturer]. [Annabel]

The salesperson was also very important in contributing to Wendy's satisfaction. While Wendy felt pressured by the salesperson, she was grateful for the salesperson's assistance in helping her quickly, and cost efficiently, putting together an outfit that was appropriate for the required identity. Wendy responded to Susie's questions,

[When the salesperson said,] "the style was suppose to be worn long," was she pushy? [Susie]

Yes, on that particular issue. Yes she was pushy. Wendy didn't agree with her. [Wendy]

Even though... Wendy felt that was sort of a pressure thing... Wendy was happy to go with the [salesperson's] assistance of mixing and coordinating? [Susie]

Wendy doesn't have a great deal of nous about putting clothes together for outfits. Wendy doesn't think in terms of outfits... Because Wendy does buys separates... [and then when she gets home she doesn't have] anything to go with it... It had to be a total look, it couldn't be just her usual, go and buy a garment... She felt a little bit bullied into wearing a skirt that was too long, but the assistant was very helpful in terms of putting it together with other things. And from her suggestions, Wendy could see that she didn't actually have to buy a blouse or something else that went with the cardigan or whatever. She could get away with buying two garments and still have an outfit. [Wendy]

Because Wendy needed a complete outfit to feel comfortable at the graduation function, she proceeded onto another shop to buy a string of beads, and thus was satisfied with her shopping experience and clothing purchases. She reflected in the group discussion.

She was happy to zap off to another store and buy beads. I think at that stage Wendy was sort of into it a bit... With the help of the sales assistant she had learned how to put it together, and knew that there was one thing still needed. [Wendy]

At the same time Wendy wrote, she knew where she could buy some that would suit and in fact, thought that would be just the frivolous touch to perhaps balance the downdiness of the skirt's length. So actually it was not only the executive look that she was looking for, but she also had to look quite feminine in some senses too? [Annabel]

There were two factions pulling. She had to be acceptable to the parents, but she also had to be acceptable to this group of students, not too formal or unapproachable. She hadn't seen them for a while, and they were friends, and they were all dressed up smartly. But she felt closer to them in age and experience so [she] didn't want to distance herself too much from the students. But [she] also had to be acceptable in that lecturer role with the parents. So it was, yeah, being pulled in two directions. And I think maybe that was it... The length of the skirt made her feel dowdy and made her
feel older, and maybe too conservative, so the beads would balance it a little bit. You know, somewhere on that fine line in the middle. It was a matter of fitting in some how. [Wendy]

Through the store and product images, and the help and support of the salesperson, Wendy was able to achieve her goal of quickly purchasing an appropriate outfit to fit into the graduation function. *She felt that at least [researcher's emphasis] she'd be dressed right tomorrow.* Moreover, there was less resentment to this purchase than she had first anticipated. She did not have to buy, at great financial and personal expense, a number of unwanted garments. Because of this, Wendy was happy and thus satisfied with her shopping experience. She was, however, neither excited or exhilarated by this shopping encounter in that she was forced to conform to a socially prescribed identity which was not totally congruent with whom she was or aspired to be.

Like Wendy in her 'Pressure Experience', Susie in her 'Exhilaration Experience' was not looking forward to her shopping encounter. While Wendy viewed her shopping trip as a burdensome task, Susie feared not being able to find the appropriate product and being 'put-down' by the retail establishment in the process of looking. The following memory-text and discussion regarding Susie's 'Exhilaration Experience' illustrates how her fear was turned into exhilaration when her expectations of being a 'physical freak' were disconfirmed. Moreover, she was exhilarated in her ability to illustrate that she could disprove allegations of being too large to possess beautiful things and be 'feminine'. Susie was also exhilarated by finding the appropriate product which represented her tastes and style, and not being humiliated by the retail establishment.

**Susie's 'Exhilaration' Memory-Text.**

*Susie has a problem buying shoes. Many of her unsuccessful stories revolve around shoe shopping experiences. If you want a depressing day then go shoe shopping with Susie. [Excuse the alliteration.]*

*Her winter shoes had reached the point where she prayed for fine days so her left foot wouldn't get wet through the hole in the left side of the shoe. She really must see if the shoes she had ordered had come in. Taking a big reassuring breath and with speech rehearsed, Susie walked into the shop. Pleasantries were exchanged.*

*There were two assistants. Both were wearing the mandatory uniform of black skirt and white blouse. The more "tailored" one of the two was far too busy to look up - she was doing the inevitable "book work". The second assistant in black high heeled shoes, white legs, no pantihose was most obliging. She had a nice open face, warm smile - was lightly made up.*
Susie told her about the order. She went into the store room - seemed to be away for ages. Still the "tailored" one didn't look up -- no music to fill the pregnant pause either. Nice smell of leather- leather handbags, leather shoes. Susie hates that smell of the "spare pantihose" for people to use when trying shoes on - a funny, musty smell.

The assistant finally appears, no shoes in hand. Susie's order doesn't appear to be there. Oh dear! More discussions on names, spellings, addresses. O - Tailored - One comes to the rescue. Yes they had arrived AND they had even managed to get some that were even larger.

Susie tried the shoes. Eureka - a perfect fit. Susie tried the larger shoes on too. What a great feeling to be able to say "sorry - these shoes are too big"! That always gives her a bit of a buzz!!

Then Shop Assistant Two really came up trumps. She said "I think we have some other shoes that you may be interested in __." Things were getting exciting now. Shop Assistant Two brought the shoes out. Eureka again! Susie was extremely happy. Shop Assistant Two was bubbling now and more keen to help Susie.

Susie made a decision. "I'll take both pairs please." Shop Assistant Two was delighted. O - Tailored - One looked up - and was that a slight trace of a smile?

Susie with not one, but two pairs of shoes and a promise of a phone call when any more of "her" size came in -- left the shop --walking on air -- totally exhilarated.

Back home the "old" shoes were thrown, with due ceremony, into the rubbish.

Through past unsuccessful shopping experiences in purchasing shoes for herself, Susie expected that she would have the same difficulties in this shopping encounter. On entering the encounter, she braced herself in anticipation of the negative events and distress that she expected would follow. Susie was threatened by her shopping encounter. She feared that she would be 'put-down' by the retail establishment in the process of trying to obtain the essential and desired shoes. She feared being humiliated by being unacceptable in her difference to the socially desired norm of what was considered feminine and beautiful. In the group discussion, Susie reflected first on her difficulties in finding shoes that were the correct size and the distress it brought her.

Susie has been to something like sixty shops in Wellington, and Lower Hutt, and Upper Hutt in one day to find a pair of shoes. Most shoes are not made in Susie's size. So to get a pair is amazing! To get two is just fantastic! From when Susie was about ten, she could remember that this has happened to her. [Susie]
And it is a bit depressing before you even go in? [Annabel]

Exactly.... Because shoe shopping for Susie has always been a negative experience, and depressing for as long as she can remember. [Susie]

Not only does Susie have difficulty finding shoes large enough for her, due to the scarcity of larger sizes, she also has the problem of finding shoes that are appropriate and 'nice', reflecting who she is and/or wants to be. Susie recalled her early experiences of having shoes that labelled her as being socially and physically abnormal.

Susie can remember when she was 12, she was as tall as she is now [5' 8 1/2''], and about this wide (showing very thin with her hands, laughing), and the feet were about the same size; and she can remember that they actually sold her mother a pair of white shoes like that [corrective shoes]. They were like nurses shoes, white wedges, laced up. She can still see them. That is all she had to wear, because there was nothing else. [Susie]

People would have seen Susie's feet coming before her body. [Said in horror] [Priscilla]

That is right. [Susie]

Susie also reflected on Annabel's remarks concerning the difficulties she must have in purchasing 'nice' shoes, ones that would allow her to blend into the background and be socially acceptable without making her feel different to the others in her social world.

Susie must think [every time she enters into a shoe shop], "Am I going to be able to get anything, and if I am what is it going to look like?" .... I'm going to get stuck with this. I am just going to have to take what I can get." [Annabel]

That is dead right! Susie was always in awe of people who could buy an outfit for a wedding and then pop down and get a pair of shoes. Susie buys the shoes, and much later gets the outfit to go with them. And you know, once Susie's ... husband actually said to her, "Why don't you get some nice [researchers emphasis] shoes like so and so?" So Susie, not to be deterred, says, "Fine, you come with me and we will." And that was the day of the sixty something shops with two small children in tow. [Susie]

Because Susie could not easily obtain the desired 'nice' shoes, she felt threatened that she did not fit into society's prescribed norm of what was acceptable, beautiful and feminine. As a women, having large feet was not the norm and was associated with ugliness. Being large was acceptable if one was male, but not if one was female. Comparing Susie's experiences with Helena's 'Exhilaration' memory-text (refer to Chapter 5) and Annabel's 'Quick Exit' memory-text (refer to Chapter 6), Helena and the group appraised that for women in Western Society there is a positive association between being big and ugly, and thus a negative relationship between big and femininity. It is in this context that Susie's identity was threatened by her shoe shopping encounters.

Do we have the same experiences, that sometimes I feel that the bigger the clothes or shoes or bras or whatever you have to get, the UGLIER they get? All the beautiful
ones are the small tiny ones. So why do those bigger things get so ugly? And then they [the salespeople] tell you right away, "Oh, no we don't think this is your size. You will have to go look at these, and they are all ugly" (laughing). [Helena]

[Or where the shop assistant says to Susie,] We have some other shoes that you might be interested in, . . . [and] they weren't in the shop. They were out the back. Yes, you can imagine how beautiful they were! They were submarines (laughing). Susie knows that if she goes into a shoe shop and sees the really ghastly shoes that they will definitely be available in her size (laughing). It never fails; and they get forced upon her too! [Susie]

If you are larger, you have no right to have taste. [Annabel]

If you want some shoes, these fit. Why not? What is wrong with them? [Susie]

How can you be so fussy! [Wendy]

Exactly. What right have you got to be fussy? If you have these big feet, you have these big shoes, and that is it. [Susie]

It is an injustice. [Annabel]

It is a huge injustice. [Wendy]

You know, this . . . is the same thing that happened to Annabel . . . or Helena where they [the shop assistants] says, "This certainly doesn't fit you. You are too big." And we all feel bad. I think it is the womanly thing to take it negatively. Like if they said to men, "We don't have anything this size," . . . [they aren't] getting depressed over it because he is too big. [Helena]

Women are sensitive to anything like that. [Priscilla]

Yeah. [Helena]

I don't mean to generalise, but often women are more . . . sensitive about maybe that we are fitting in the norm. [Priscilla]

And the norm is small. Isn't it? [Helena]

And it is ridiculously small. [Priscilla]

[It is even worse [than being overweight], because you know you are suppose to have small feet, but you can't change it. You can't change your shoe size. [Helena]

It was not only the scarcity of finding nice shoes that reinforced this threat to Susie, but the sales personal and the image of the type of stores in which she could find shoes that fitted. Susie reflected how in the past the sales personnel threatened her in this manner by their 'put-downs' or 'let-downs'.

Like, "Gosh madam," you have got rather big feet," . . . , or "Oh no, we don't have that size." . . . "You'll have to wait until they come in." . . . One day a young girl assistant said to Susie, "Had you thought of trying the men's department?" . . . Susie just stood up surrounded by shoes she was trying on and said to her, "Would you?", and walked out of the shop. [Susie]
The types of stores where Susie found she could purchase shoes also contributed to her feelings of being 'put-down' by the retail establishment. These stores offered no status image or value. Susie reflected how she generally could not find shoes at the expensive, status boutiques.

But Susie knows now which shops to go to. She does not go to the boutique shops... There are only about two shops in Hamilton that she has discovered she can go to. [Susie]

In her 'Exhilaration' memory-text, Susie, at first, was offended by the store. The store did not appear to provide the appropriate taste and style for Susie. She reflected in the group discussion on how the saleswoman offended her, and wondered what she could possibly get from this shop.

Susie will talk about the feelings she had here. The second assistant with black high heel shoes, white legs, no pantyhose, that almost put her off when she saw that! She thought, "What are you doing here? How could you possibly help me?" .... "How could she possibly know what she is doing? .... What an arrogant thing to think. But it really almost put Susie off. [Susie]

There was no status attached to this store. There wasn't anything glitzy about the store? [Priscilla]

No. [Susie]

Or boutiquish, or...? [Priscilla]

It was nicely arranged, and smelling of leather. Except for the smell of pantyhose. Susie hates the smell of the spare pantyhose for people to use when trying shoes on. A funny, musty smell. [Susie]

Nor did the store, at first, provide Susie with intimacy which allowed her to feel valued and wanted. Rather, the actions of the sales assistants and the quietness of the store made Susie feel as if she was not wanted and had been forgotten. As such, she felt unimportant and put-down. The group reflected,

Oh dear! More discussions on names, spellings, addresses. O - Tailored - One comes to the rescue. [Susie]

Why does it take 'O - tailored - One' so long to come up with the information that the order had arrived? Had she not heard Susie request it? [Wendy]

She was busy doing the books. The book work, something far more important! [Susie]

Ignoring Susie? [Wendy]

That is the feeling that Susie got. [Susie]

[So] there was this shop assistant not paying any attention...who was probably in charge... and [then there was] the other sales assistant who probably didn't know
very much, . . . who ended up taking care of her . . . It was a disaster in the making. [Annabel]

Although Susie was put-off at first by the second sales assistant, Susie accepted her as being friendly and okay "when her face changed" [Susie]. *She had a nice open face, warm smile, and was lightly made up.* Susie felt welcomed by this sales assistant, and perceived her as being helpful when she happily went off to find her order. However, when she returned without it, Susie felt angry, distressed and abandoned by the sales assistant's inability to produce the goods. *Susie swore.* For whatever reason(s), Susie had been 'let-down' once again, reinforcing the negative feelings towards herself as well as the store. Priscilla and Annabel commented on the injustice of the situation which triggered Susie's anger towards the store.

She had made an order. The assistant was looking for it. The one who knows about it, is not doing anything about it. . . . I would call that an injustice. And I would call the way that the . . . tailored assistant doesn't acknowledge Susie, or presumably gives a feeling of seniority there, an injustice. . . . So I think Susie did have an injustice when she went into the store - that she wasn't attended to by the senior one as well, or between the two of them to sort that out. Because that was an order; that was something that she had been in before about and she should have had her needs met without having to wait while someone fossicks around the back. And then when the other one came to the rescue; well she shouldn't have had to come to the rescue. . . . She should have been onto the picture just straight away. [Priscilla]

And I guess there was the injustice that we talked about being big. [Annabel]

Yeah, to say that . . . [something] would not fit [because an individual is too big]. That is an injustice . . . by the shop assistant. [Priscilla]

Not only were the sales assistants not doing their job well, but their actions indicated to Susie that she was different, unimportant, and a difficult individual to deal with. In the group discussion, Priscilla commented from a retailer's perspective, reinforcing Susie's perceived feelings of injustice.

I don't know if it was a put-down or not. When 'O - 'Tailored - One' came to the rescue and said, "And we managed to get some that were even larger." **PUT-DOWN,** **PUT-DOWN.** "What are you complaining about!" That is the feeling that Susie got from that. [Susie]

Perhaps Susie was a nuisance shopper because she didn't fit into the normal size shoes and would not be a quick sale. "She is going to take effort." [Priscilla]

Susie, however, in purchasing "something she can't usually find" [Annabel] (i.e., 'nice' shoes) was exhilarated and thus satisfied with her encounter. In doing so, she affirmed who she was by 'having' the appropriate shoes which represented her taste and her sense of femininity. She was even more excited by having a selection to choose from which meant she was able to buy not only one, but two pairs of 'nice' shoes. Susie reflected,
It was basically exhilarating because, in the very end, the store had what Susie could not get anywhere else. [Annabel]

Mm-mm. And they had double! Which was even better. [Susie]

These two pairs of shoes which Susie brought, were they nice shoes or did they just fit? [Wendy]

They were very nice. (Shows the group the shoes she has on to indicate how nice they were.) [Susie]

So that was part of it? That was total exhilaration? [Wendy]

Mm [Susie]

Susie specifically wrote in her memory-text about her excitement of having a choice. She reflected, through her experience of shopping with her daughters, how she thoroughly enjoyed this experience of choice.

Susie loves going shoe shopping with her daughters because she knows that their feet range is in the middle, and it is such a pleasure to sit back there and see them trying on all these shoes that fit. And then they have to decide. [Susie]

Susie received even more pleasure from trying on the shoes which were too big. What a great feeling to be able to say "sorry - these shoes are too big"! That always gives her a bit of a buzz! [Susie]. The group noted how both Susie and Helena in their 'Exhilaration' experiences were able to get 'revenge', and feel more powerful by proving that they could fit into a smaller pair of shoes or dress than had been implied by a salesperson in the encounter. In doing so, by being smaller, they improved their self-esteem. The group discussed,

I don't know why Susie likes to try on shoes when they come out bigger. She knows jolly well that they are going to be bigger. But she has to try them on to be able to say, "Sorry these are too big." You don't know what a good feeling that is. You don't know. [Susie]

In defiance! [Wendy]

Perhaps it is getting back for all those years of none being available. [Susie]

And perhaps, at getting back at all those negative comments that had been thrown at Susie, . . . to sort of turn it around. [Wendy]

Could be. [Susie]

That could be true too . . . when the sales assistant . . . says that is going to be too small for Helena. . . . You can turn it around by putting it on [and it fitting]. It is turning the situation around, getting back . . . Those injustices [of being accused of being too big] are overcome. . . . You had gotten back! [Annabel].

A slight touch of power there. Isn't there? I think there is? [Priscilla]

So the smaller we get the more powerful we are. . . . You have to be small to have power. . . . You have to be smaller for them to judge you wrong. [Helena]
Big is bad, and if you can say that you are smaller than that, then there is ... a thrill or something. [Wendy]

Unless it is a male. A male could say this is too small. [Annabel]

Yeah, and that is a compliment. [Helena]

In a sudden and surprise twist of events, Susie's shopping encounter had become successful. This contrast contributed to her exhilaration and heightened her satisfaction with the encounter.

All of a sudden it is just a contrast of events. It changed from being problematic to successful. A huge contrast. [Annabel]

A complete turn around. [Wendy]

[Susie] ... was ready, she was getting ready for the bad experience. [Priscilla]

But when she didn't have the total bad experience, it made the good experience even better. [Annabel]

Through Susie's exhilaration from finding the correct size, the sales assistant also became excited and more helpful. In her response to help,

Susie felt good that the shop assistant was making some effort to try? [Priscilla]

Definitely. [Susie]

And produces something from elsewhere [besides what is on the shelves in the store]? [Wendy]

Yes, exactly. [Susie]

The sales assistant contributed to Susie's exhilaration through her excitement and attentiveness. Susie reflected,

The shop assistant ... kept with it, she got into the groove. I mean that relationship sort of grew, and they ['O - Tailored - One' also] were only too pleased to help her. [Susie]

Shop Assistant Two in the end had caught on ... with regards to her feet, and actually came up with some positive things for her to try on, that maybe weren't obvious to Susie on the shelves. [Priscilla]

The shop assistant was quite excited, because Susie had got into it. [Susie]

And probably could see that Susie was feeling happy at the success that was happening. [Priscilla]

Because of the sales assistant's help and excitement, Susie felt valued rather than degraded. Instead of being viewed as a difficult customer who was different from the norm, she was seen by the sales assistants as a customer with specific needs whom they could help.
Part of the exhilaration was being an individual customer. And having your particular needs met. And leaving the store feeling like they had taken note of your particular needs. They had acknowledged them, honoured them, and you were an individual customer. [Wendy]

There is also the feeling of exhilaration with the promise of a phone call, the personal touch. It is like Priscilla [who] experiences the personal touch too . . . with suggestions of wardrobe etiquette basically - what to wear with what and everything. And they said to Susie, "We will call you if any more shoes your size come in." How often does that personal, but not pushy... I mean, it would not happen very often that the shop would call the customer to service a special need. [Priscilla]

It is almost like positive reinforcement. [Susie]

Being 'positively reinforced' for Susie was an identity which she desired and valued, making her feel normal and special rather than unfeminine, ugly and a physical freak.

Susie's surprise at finding the desired product against her expectations, and the affirmation of her desired identity by 'having' the product, outweighed her initial feelings of disgust. She left this encounter feeling satisfied and exhilarated.

Threat, Contamination, and Loss of Identity.
In contrast to Susie's 'Exhilaration' memory-text, her 'Quick Exit' experience clearly illustrates how Susie was dissatisfied with the encounter because her identity was threatened. Susie's identity was first threatened by the prospect of purchasing a damaged and contaminated product, and secondly by the manager's accusations of Susie's wrong-doings. As such, Susie was unable to affirm whom she felt she was.

Susie's 'Quick Exit' Memory-Text.
It was a warm sunny day - Summer was almost here. The wardrobe was looking pretty sad - time to go shopping for summery clothes. Susie was in her thirties - decided to try an ethnic type dress. The dress shop had exactly the style - longish flowing, white and just the thing for summer evenings. She went into the fitting room. There was a skylight there where the sun was streaming through. She tried the dress on. Someone else had already done so because she could smell a strong deodorant type of smell. A bit off putting to say the least. The dress was almost what she wanted, but then she noticed a split of about three inches where the stitching had come undone around part of the waistline. Susie took the dress off - changed into her own hot winter clothes and took the dress to the owner of the shop at the counter. She pointed out the problem. The look of utter disdain on the Manager's face made Susie feel as if she had in fact split the dress. Feeling hot prickles climbing up her neck it was time to leave!! Messages were being sent to the legs "lets get out of here!!" - but the lead feet seemed stuck to the floor - and the mouth kept chattering on non-sensically. It was at least two
more years before she went near that shop again and she made quite sure the manager was nowhere near at the time. She still did not buy anything!

In this encounter, Susie's identity was threatened by the thought of 'having' a dress which had been contaminated\textsuperscript{63} and damaged by another individual. Susie was first disgusted and threatened by the contamination of a strong odour from a previous customer. Referring to the strong smell of deodorant left on the dress, Susie explained disgust,

I can still to this day remember putting it on and thinking, "Oh dear!". A bit off putting to say the least. [Susie]

Secondly, the damage of the undone stitches around the waistline, possibly caused by some other individual trying it on, lead to Susie's disgust with the dress. Because Susie needed and liked the dress, she was disappointed when it was not appropriate. She commented,

The wardrobe was looking pretty sad - time to go shopping . . . . The dress was almost what she wanted, but then she noticed the split . . . . I was probably feeling disappointed that the dress wasn't up to scratch . . . . [It was not the quality] it should have been. [Susie]

The contamination of another individual leaving her damaging mark on the dress was also off-putting. Susie did not want to associate herself with a low quality product, nor with the stranger who had contaminated the dress\textsuperscript{64}. Because of its spoiled quality, the dress did not affirm who she wanted to be and it challenged who she was through its negative associations with another customer. Susie was therefore dissatisfied with this encounter through her disappointment of not being able to achieve her goal. Her disgust with the dress also contributed to her feelings of dissatisfaction.

Although Susie was disappointed in not achieving her goal and disgusted by the contamination, it was the manager's false accusation of wrong-doing that caused Susie the most distress. The manager, in making Susie feel responsible for breaking the stitches on the dress, threatened Susie's identity of being the nice, helpful, honest, caring, considerate, and positive individual she perceived herself to be. It was this identity which she was endeavouring to affirm in the encounter by 'doing' the helpful, honest thing. Susie and the group reflected,

I [Susie] thought I was being really nice, taking and showing her before the next customer got it. [Susie]

\textsuperscript{63} As discussed in Belk (1988 pp. 151-152), contamination is where one person's traits are said to be taken on by another in the extension of self. "The concern here is not with the medical sense of germ contamination and spread of disease, but with the symbolic contamination involved in involuntarily incorporating another into one's extended self (see Rozin, Millman, and Nemeroff 1986)." An individual may be disgusted and thus threatened by "unwanted symbolic contamination by others."

\textsuperscript{64} The concept of contamination will be further described and illustrated in the next memory-text, Frances's 'Nasty' experience.
Rather than just sneaking it back onto the rack. [Wendy]

I thought I was being totally honest and lovely, but that backfired somewhat. [Susie]

She went to the manager ... being helpful, being positive, rather than going to the manager being negative about the whole thing and complaining. But then she [the manager] took that away; although you [Susie] totally felt you were going to help her, that you were going to contribute. ... And I think, that is something very 'womanly', that we [women] don't go and complain about things, but we do when we feel that we can help other people. [Helena]

Susie received the unexpected outcome. She was shocked by the manager's reaction in not affirming her perceived identity. Susie reflected,

I would have expected her [the manager] to say, "Thank you very much for pointing it out. We can fix it. No problem." I would have expected that. [Susie]

Instead of being thanked for her deed, Susie was made to feel as if she had damaged the dress. Susie reflected on Helena's comment.

[The manager] ... made you feel guilty; although you were helping. She made Susie feel guilty that she helped her. [Helena]

I felt very guilty. ... Just the look she gave me, I knew she thought I was guilty. But I wasn't guilty. But she made me feel as if I were. [Susie]

In addition to the shock of the unexpected response from the manager, Susie's feelings of distress were intensified by the contrast of how she felt earlier and the mood created by the setting. Susie sought a longish, flowing, white 'ethnic-type' dress, just the thing for summer evenings, to affirm her pure, easy, carefree, cool, calm and light-hearted identity. Moreover, she sought to affirm her feelings of the warmth and excitement associated with partaking in this social encounter. Susie was looking for a garment that would transform her winter image into a summer one. The contrast between the images of the new, cool, fresh, breezy summer and the old, heavy, stormy winter in Susie's memory-text symbolise the extreme feelings which occurred in this encounter resulting from her identity being threatened. Susie and the other group members reflected on these contrasting symbols.

I can ... remember distinctly the sun coming through the skylight, which I thought was a peculiar thing to remember. Yes it was summer. [There was] the contrast of when I changed [back] into my winter clothes. I can remember them being very hot... . [Susie]

And with it the longish flowing and white ethnic dress, and the sun streaming in. It was a real summer image. [Priscilla]

Yes it is that excitement... [Wendy]

65 An 'ethnic-type' dress refers to a fashionable garment based on some racial or national influence rather than a grass skirt or similar attire.
Carefree feeling of summer. [Priscilla]

[From this excitement and summer image... did Susie feel] "I can be free in my ethnic dress, I can float away", [and thus] ... feel good about going up to the saleswoman and saying that someone else had ripped this? [Annabel]

As indicated by Susie's intense physical reaction from being accused of wrong-doing, it was the emotions of guilt and humiliation which dominated her negative feelings and her subsequent behaviour of leaving the store and not returning for two years. Susie reflected,

If you could underline feeling hot prickles climbing up her neck, if you could underline that! And... the message... going to the legs... lets get out of here! ... But those feet were very heavy and they weren't going anywhere. And the mouth kept chattering on and on non-sensically.... I wanted to get out of a situation I was not in [being guilty]. [Susie]

Because Susie attributed the cause of the injustice to the manager, future interaction with the manager was avoided even when she returned to the store two years later. This implied a fear that if she were to see the manager again, there was a possibility of being humiliated as before and reliving the feelings of guilt. Through the act of avoidance, she protected herself from humiliation while attempting to maintain her identity of being a helpful and honest individual.

In summary, Susie's dissatisfaction with the encounter resulted from her distress caused by the manager, and her disappointment and disgust created by the product, when neither affirmed her identity. While this dissatisfaction reinforced her 'quick exit' from the store, it was her feelings of guilt and humiliation that motivated her behaviour to exit and to later avoid this store and the manager, thus protecting her identity.

Like Susie, Frances, in her 'Nasty' encounter, was also dissatisfied with her experience because of 'perceived' contamination of the garments in the store. However, as described in the memory-text which follows, Frances's encounter of trying on swimsuits entailed a greater threat to her identity through contamination than did Susie's. Whereas Susie was only being contaminated by the smell of another's deodorant, a hygiene product used to curb the production of body sweat, Frances's personal hygiene, space and integrity were threatened by the perceived presence of a stranger's body fluids. More importantly, Frances's encounter entailed an 'imposed intimacy' of trying on swimsuits which fitted closely to the body and came into contact with personal, private body parts. Through this 'imposed intimacy', Frances lacked control and choice over who she perceived herself to be. From this perspective, Frances's resultant disgust and thus dissatisfaction was much more intense than Susie's.

**Frances's 'Nasty' Memory-Text.**

*Shopping for clothes for Frances was never a nasty experience. It was uplifting, exhilarating, at times frustrating, but never nasty. She loved the smell of new clothes,*
the smooth way they hung on their hangers and she marvelled at how she could never get a garment to look as neat once she had bought and worn and washed it. There was something about a brand new, pristine, never-been-out-of-the-shop garment. It had never been buffeted by weather, had its hemline slammed in a car door, or had its lapels crushed by overcrowded wardrobes or had it's button holes get worn and the buttons floppy threatening to drop, as they were only held by a single centimetre of thread in the first place. No, new clothes were special, untouched, except by prospective buyers (which she hoped had not just been eating chocolate and licking their fingers - hard to tell on brown garments).

She didn't like to think that they had been tried on by other people, other people who may have just popped in from their aerobics session on their way home to pick up a greasy chicken at Big Fresh and a small salad and garlic bread... Or worse still, had just eaten the greasy chicken, small salad and garlic bread and were on their way to aerobics. Or maybe other people who had not showered recently and had trouble getting the zip up and stretched the seams, or pulled the hem or started to unravel one of those enigmatic threads which just go on and on once you start to pull at it, wishing you hadn't.

Actually the thought of trying on clothes just after someone else had, was a bit of a nasty for Frances. Fine if it was your girlfriend, or your mother or your relations or someone else you know and love and trust that they wash now and again and don't take the opportunity to wipe their armpits on new blouses. But the thought of a great unknown sticky armpit bristling with wiry hairs and glistening droplets of sweat, was a bit much for Frances. Trousers were even worse and she tended to hunt for the most un-tried-on looking pair. And as for swim wear she knew for a FACT that some women, if not most women, ignored those signs that clearly stipulated that women retain their undies while trying on bikinis and one-pieces. She had been in changing rooms with various women as they came out to get a better view of themselves in the mirrors (like they were walking down the length of a beach) and there was not a skerrick of their undies to be seen. Not a seam or a roll of elastic or a Bendon label sticking out anywhere above their bikini line. Unless they all wore G-strings, chances were they had dropped their knickers on the changing room floor or stuffed them in their handbag while they twirled in their new swimsuit. And horrors, they were ALWAYS trying on more than one pair, like 6 pairs. And Frances understood that. It always took at least 6 swimsuits to get something that looked even half presentable and not like some escapee from an erotic strip-show, or worse, some '50s reincarnation of sensible 2 pieces where belly buttons were heard of but not seen. She remembered one girl/woman trying on copious suits with her mother giving loud and encouraging advice, and her mother didn't even comment on her daughter's lack of knickers. She
wondered what mothers did tell their daughters these days. Probably far more serious and important things like AIDS prevention and the problems about affairs with married men. How did keeping your knickers on in a changing room compare with those eminent topics?

But it was something she couldn't stomach. Trying on swimsuits that others may have just slipped their natural selves into was a bit much. She didn't slip into bed with strange women, or share their toilet seats or their handkerchiefs so why on earth would she want to share their bikini bottoms?? Why didn't all shops line their bikini bottoms? Or provide free showers? Or make darn sure those undies stayed on! A quick whip down of their bikini bottoms would confirm or deny if they had in fact, retained their underwear as requested. And if not, the penalties would be appropriate for the crime. She would like to see notices: "We prosecute knicker-droppers" right up there alongside the shoplifters and the surveillance camera system.

Frances decided that buying swimwear had always been problematic and it wasn't just because she felt pale and frumpy and lumpy and blotchy in such skimpy garments under the harsh unforgiving lights of the changing chamber. Oh, no. It was more subterranean than that.

Although Frances's written memory-text described a 'nasty' encounter in general, in the ensuing group discussion it became clear that her memory derived from a specific encounter. In her encounter of trying on swimsuits, Frances felt as if she was being contaminated, through indirect bodily contact, by an unknown young woman who had previously handled and tried on the same swimsuits prior to herself. In contrast to feeling appalled by this contamination, Frances first explained how she felt pleasure from trying on and owning uncontaminated garments, that is, garments which were brand new, pristine and untouched by strangers, or had been given to her by a close friend or relative. Frances then compared how she felt disgusted by garments which had been contaminated by body fluid and/or any other negative image associated with the stranger who had handled or tried it on prior to herself, particularly those garments which were close fitting and came in contact with genitals. Frances reflected,

Frances loves the smell of and look of new clothes, . . . 'pristine', never been out of the shop.... I really feel there is a link between its being great and untouched.... Which means Frances gets first go at it. It adds to its specialness, or . . . to the joy of the sale, or to the joy that this is specially for me. You know, the uniqueness of the experience.... Frances [also] has been given [second hand] clothes by people, and she loves that. She loves them. She's known who they are, and she trusts them and loves them. So, that makes a huge difference.

[But] the thought of trying on clothes just after someone else has, is a bit nasty for Frances. Fine if it is a girlfriend, or your mother or your relations or someone else you know and love and trust that they wash now and again and don't take the opportunity to wipe their armpits on new blouses. But the thought of a great unknown sticky
armpit bristling with wiry hairs and glistening droplets of sweat is a bit much for Frances. . .

And . . . it concerns Frances . . . when she is trying on anything tight fitting, whether it is aerobic gear or trousers or anything tight fitting around the armpits. . . . Frances has tried on the odd blouse that has smelt of other people's BO. . . . Frances just thinks twice now, and she looks at it [before trying it on].

[And] trying on swimsuits that others have just slipped their natural selves into was a bit much. She didn't slip into bed with strange women, or share their toilet seats or their handkerchiefs so why on earth would she want to share their bikini bottoms??

[I]t was something she couldn't stomach. It's nasty when she thinks about it, and it gives her the horrors when she thinks some people drop their knickers to try on swimsuits that she might try on, when you don't know anything about their personal life, and you don't know them. So yeah, it does, it makes her feel queasy and uneasy and unpleasant. [Frances]

In regard to this particular encounter, that is, Frances trying on the swimsuits directly after the young woman, Frances first reflected on her general concern for trying on such personal garments.

Frances didn't like trying them on, . . . [but] Frances tried on some. They were on special . . . and it was the end of summer, they were cheap. [Frances]

And they had all been tried on! [Sweetie].

Exactly. . . . You never know who has been in them, . . . and how many people have tried them on before you. [Frances]

Frances's personal identity, however, became very threatened in this encounter when she was forced to become too intimate with the unknown young woman who was trying on the same swimsuits as herself. In having to try on swimsuits, to get something that looked even half presentable, Frances was forced into an 'imposed intimacy' with this young unknown woman, which she would not have otherwise chosen. As such, she lacked control and choice over who she was. In that individuals choose and define themselves according to those they are intimate with, this imposed intimacy was a contamination of who she was. Frances did not want to be contaminated by the social behaviours she associated with this young stranger, and that were forced upon her through the indirect personal contact of trying on the same tight fitting, intimate garments. Frances reflected,

Here was this girl, women, she was at that stage [of being sexually active] . . . , and yeah, [she] had no undies. And she was trying on all the swimsuits that Frances was. I felt outraged. . . . And I didn't know where this girl, woman, had been, and I don't know what she does with her private life. [Frances]

Frances's threatened identity in this encounter is symbolised through her perception of endangered health by germ contamination and thus the spread of disease. Frances noted in the group discussion how trying on the swimsuits, by coming into close contact with a stranger's
bodily excreta, contaminated and affected her well being. Not only was her personal health and thus hygiene threatened, but so was her personal space and integrity. This young woman's social behaviours were not ones that Frances herself practiced, nor wished to be associated with. Ultimately, these behaviours were not part of who she was. Frances reflected,

[Frances leaves her knickers on,] so she is protecting herself. It's like a parallel [researcher emphasis] with AIDS really. I mean who knows, we could be catching something from this one day, if not already. [Frances]

That the inference I got . . . [You might catch something nasty . . . . Those are what I call old wise tales . . . . You can't get these things from trying on things in shops. [Sweetie]

What about thrush and yeast? That's quite easily transferable. And this woman, girl, with her mother, . . . there was something about her that made Frances think, "Yes, you are sexually active, you are already experimenting." You know, you can just sometimes tell, . . . and she was trying the same swimsuits. [Frances]

Frances, however, did not directly associate these negative behaviours and images with social class. The type of shop and its environment did not affect her negative feelings towards trying on swimsuits. Rather, she associated her negative feelings with the behaviours of the stranger(s) who had tried on the garments prior to herself. Frances reflected in the group discussion,

It can be the most prestigious, ponciet shop and it can be just as negative . . . I think what makes the difference is just who happens to be trying the stuff on before or after Frances. . . . So the shop makes no difference. [Frances]

So the environment would make no difference, or the shop type? [Annabel]

No, I've tried on some swimsuits in Woolworths and I've tried on some suits in Haute Couture boutiques and I've felt just as suspicious in both environments as to the use of the garments. [Frances]

Frances's decision not to buy any of the swimsuits, due to her disappointment of what they looked like on her body, also contributed to her dissatisfaction with this encounter. In trying on these swimsuits her self-esteem was also threatened. She was distressed that they did not look as good as she had expected, and was disappointed that she could not find an appropriate swimsuit to purchase. In comparing her encounter to Gisela's 'Nasty' experience, Frances

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66 Goffman (1971) discusses how territories of the self can be violated, leading to displeasure and often withdraw.
67 Woolworths was a low status 'variety' store in New Zealand. It no longer exist, as such.
68 Refer to Appendix C for Gisela's 'Nasty' experience. Gisela had purchased a pair of tights on sale that she thought she could wear with a number of garments. But upon opening the package and trying them on at home, several months after purchasing them, she was disappointed. They were not what she had expected according to the information given on the package, and they looked terrible on her legs. She was angry that the product had been mislabelled, and that she was unable to return them.
attributed her own distress and disappointment to the store environment. She reflected in response to Gisela's experience,

Gisela was disappointed that they [the opaque tights she had purchased] didn't look right on her body, like what she thought they would. She had this idea . . . and they weren't very flattering. [Gisela]

And that worried Frances too when she was trying on the swimsuits . . . You know, you just look at yourself and you look so sick in the florescent tube light lit cubicle. I don't know who looks decent. You look like a corpse in a cage. "Oh dear," And I don't know who looks slim in a changing room. I mean I stand there and I see myself in all those mirrors at different angles and think, "Oh great, this lump is sticking out here and that lump there." . . . But I'm thin and look dreadful in the blinkin four mirrors that give you every shot on your different postures and hips. Imagine what any normal sized person feels, or a large person feels. I mean it's a most devastating experience. [Frances]

By comparing herself to others (those larger than herself), attributing fault to the store environment and not purchasing a swimsuit, Frances protected her identity. In doing so, she did not affirm the negative body image she experienced during this encounter. Frances was able to justify her decision, and was satisfied about not purchasing.

In summary, Frances was dissatisfied with this encounter in her disappointment of not being able to buy a swimsuit which affirmed her positive body image. She was intensely dissatisfied with this encounter. Firstly, because of her disgust, queasiness, and the unpleasantness of the 'self' being contaminated by the body fluids of a stranger, and secondly, through her distress of perceiving herself as having a negative body image.

While Frances's 'Nasty' memory-text clearly illustrates how a consumer's self identity can be contaminated resulting in dissatisfaction with her experience, Desiree's 'Nasty' experience shows how a consumer's identity can be threatened through false accusations of who she is.

Desiree's 'Nasty' Memory-Text.

Desiree had been seconded to Lopdell House in Auckland for a week to organise a working party on re-writing the dance curriculum for schools. What a week! Working until 10:30 pm every night, starting at the crack of dawn! It had been really difficult as she was the key link, responsible for drawing together teachers from all areas of New Zealand and finding a common understanding for everyone to work from. They had all met for the first time on the Sunday evening and had been 'full on' for 5 days. It was fun playing ladies for a change even if the work was pretty intensive.... They enjoyed being looked after at this hostel free from the domestic trauma of cooking, cleaning, etc., free from the kids at school... Fortunately for Desiree, one of her teaching
friends, Marcia, was sharing the experience with her. They had been mates for years, always keeping in touch since their daughters had all been to the same primary school. Every opportunity was taken for a relaxing moment, like over the coffee and tea cups, when the chatter was non-stop and the laughter was infectious... but by Friday lunchtime the dynamic duo were strained and tired. Marcia had written all the work for one year group at primary level and Desiree had written a whole new 6th form syllabus.

"How about some shopping, Desiree, before we hit the road home", breathed Marcia into Desiree's ear as they were busy saying goodbye to the others in the working party. "I thought we'd never get the chance", replied Desiree. They dived off to get their bags and then calmly walked to the car, accepting the good words of thanks from the Ministry officials. "God, I never thought we'd get out of there......" gasped Marcia, leaning back into the seat. Desiree was panicking in case our Martha called us back..... "Yippee Takapuna,71 brace yourself, we're on our way...."

Car parking was a breeze across the road from the new centre. The two ladies giggled and chatted as they walked arm in arm across the road into the new shopping complex. Immediately the bright lights of a new clothing shop caught their eye. Marcia, gaily walked down the ramp into the shop, calling out "Shall we start here dear?" Desiree was in total agreement. Marcia continued to chat away as she surveyed the goods. She selected all sorts of garments and headed straight for the changing cubicle. This was almost under the ramp leading to the outer door. For once Desiree was in no rush to 'get into it', she was still fairly shell shocked from the week's work and was quite happy to support her friend in her shopping endeavours. Time after time Marcia put clothes on, took clothes off. Desiree kept feeding the clothes into the changing cubicle. "Desiree, this zip's stuck, can you give me a hand", called Marcia across the shop. Desiree giggled and teased her friend that if she took her time a bit, she wouldn't have these problems." It's all that damned sitting down, eating all week that's the problem." The two girls laughed and giggled struggling to get this zip fixed until the decision was made to try another dress size. Desiree went back to the rack to get another size, picking a selection for herself as she rather liked the style Marcia was considering. As she approached the cubicle the shop assistants asked if everything was okay and if they needed any assistance. "No, thanks, "called Desiree, "we're having a ball!" Desiree disappeared into the cubicle with the two or three dresses. "Oh, at last", teased Marcia." You are going to try something!! You'd better try them on in here in case I get stuck with another zip" The two girls huffed and puffed, laughing, chatting.

70 Sixth form is the penultimate year in the New Zealand secondary school education in which important national assessment takes place.
71 Takapuna is a suburb of Auckland's North Shore.
struggling into the garments before sweeping aside the curtain to survey the mirrors from a distance, seeking the desired effect.... The assistants still calmly stood aside, carefully watching them. Comments of approval passed between the two ladies before they both disappeared back into the cubicle to continue their search. This went on for over half an hour, back and forth, in and out of the cubicle, until Marcia staggered to the counter with two or three items under her arm, dragging her bags, still calling out to Desiree to hurry up now as "we've still got more to do!" "Oh, have we now", said this deep baritone voice. Marcia froze on the spot as this blue-uniform glared down at her. "Do you mind madam, emptying your bags out?" Marcia screamed, "Desiree, get here quick, I don't believe it, what's this.. NO... we're being picked up for shoplifting.!!! I don't believe it." Desiree shot over to the counter, "What are you talking about, Marcia." She looked over to the shop assistants who were glaring at her. "Well", they commented acridly, "What else do you expect us to think, you been in and out of there all morning, scheming and laughing, you've just about tried everything on in the shop between you. You have been acting so suspiciously, furtively trying to fix zips that are not broken... It just all adds up!"

Desiree was mortified "Excuse me, but we have been working our butts off all week writing new education curriculums, we are only celebrating with some shopping, we're teachers for God's sake, not just off the street." "Rubbish", leered the shop assistant, "you are far too immature for teachers, that's all a big con." Marcia lost it. "You ignorant bitch," she screamed, "Stuff your clothes, stuff your shop, we're off..." "Not before I've searched your bags, madam" said this weak baritone voice. "Not on your life", Desiree retorted, "I've never been so humiliated, how dare you accuse us of this" she glared at the shop assistant. She was feeling so upset she went bright red in the face. "Who's not guilty", the spiteful shop assistant said, "Look, it's written all over her face.." "I don't need this" said Desiree, "I've had it up to here,... Marcia we are leaving...now." Marcia did not need a second reminder. She picked up the clothes and threw them over, under and onto the counter, and stormed up the ramp. Desiree crawled up the ramp, she was so flabbergasted, stunned, upset and yet within a few minutes she started to laugh. "Well, I never thought that would happen to me, but she did have a point, we were a bit reckless and high!" "What do you expect" grumbled Marcia "locking us away in that damned hostel all week, but we certainly didn't deserve that reaction from those silly cows..... Let's get a coffee and calm down before we hit another shop. I think I need a fix!!!

Similarly to Helena's 'Impulse' experience, as discussed earlier in this chapter, Desiree was affirming who she was by going clothes shopping with her friend, Marcia. Desiree, even more so than Helena, is a 'dramatic' individual, who continually performs in her everyday life of teaching and dancing, and engages in all interpersonal relationships with exuberance. In this
shopping encounter, Desiree was affirming 'being' her vibrant, energetic, dramatic self, as well as being a successful teacher and leader, and a friend. Moreover, Desiree and her friend were celebrating having escaped from the formalities of the week, the taxing workload and the responsibilities of writing an important National curriculum affecting all New Zealand primary and secondary dance teachers for many years to follow. Besides describing, in the first part of her memory-text, the stress of work and then the excitement of shopping, Desiree reflected,

They were dying to get into the shop. They were going to Auckland . . . and they saw it as a big opportunity to go and do some shopping. But they were so frustrated during the week because they couldn't get out . . . They thought, "Oh, we'll work in the morning and we'll go shopping in the afternoons." (Laughing) They got more and more frustrated . . . Because they were literally [locked in], I don't know if you have ever been to Lopdell House, [but] it's like a Teachers' College hostel; and you are in single rooms and you are locked into the system everyday. From when you walk out of your room and straight into the dining room and straight into the conference rooms and you're full on all day. And they were under this Scottish lady from the Ministry in Wellington who had ruled them like an iron rod. And Desiree was the only qualified movement educator there, and she had to monitor everybody all day, everyday. And we [Desiree and her friend] kept saying, "When are we going to get to go to the shops?" So when they made the break, they were just ecstatic; and yet equally so, Desiree was so exhausted by the time they got to the shop that she really wasn't into it for a while . . . Desiree stood looking around, and just letting . . . the adrenalin drain off . . . But Marcia was full on from the moment they got in there. And she's got such a high voice and great laugh, you only have to be in her company for a minute and you start laughing.

Also, in a similar fashion to Helena's 'Impulse' experience, Desiree and her friend were having a relaxing and exhilarating time participating in their shopping encounter. The shop assistants' behaviours at the time allowed them to comfortably participate, thus facilitating their exhilaration. Desiree reflected,

It was our excitement [of celebrating, escaping, and being ourselves]. . . . We were just so full on. We could not stop laughing, and we couldn't stop talking. And it was as though we had just been released from, um, something. And the fact that both of us got in a cubicle, in the end to fix the zipper . . . and then the assistants . . . never said anything to us the whole time.

*The two girls huffed and puffed, laughing and chatting, struggling into the garments before sweeping aside the curtain to survey the mirrors from a distance, seeking the desired effect. The assistants still calmly stood aside, carefully watching them.*

*Desiree*

Shopping in this new shopping centre also contributed to Desiree's feelings of relaxation and exhilaration, affirming and providing status to her identity. The brand new store environment was exciting and bright, as were they, being dancers and star achievers of a long, hard, and important performance. Furthermore, having escaped after the intense work which contributed to the well-being of society, the fresh, clean, comfortable and easily accessible environment added to her new found esteem of being worthy and free. Desiree wrote,
The dynamic duo were strained and tired. Marcia had written all the work for one year at primary level and Desiree had written a whole new 6th form syllabus . . . .

The two ladies giggled and chatted as they walked arm in arm across the road into the new shopping complex. Immediately the bright lights of a new clothing shop caught their eye.

Unlike Helena's 'Impulse' experience which resulted in exhilaration and satisfaction with her participation and purchase, Desiree's encounter ended in distress and dissatisfaction. However, it differed from Helena's encounter in that it was the actions of the sales assistants which destroyed their fun. Gisela noted in the group discussion how the sales assistants' negative judgement about Desiree and her friend completely altered Desiree's resultant judgements and affects about this encounter.

It [the sales assistant's negative accusation] changed the whole experience, because if Desiree had satisfactorily made her purchase and walked out of there, she would have been on a high. But because of what happened, the whole experience just took a different slant. . . . It wasn't a positive experience, which is what would have happened if she'd just walked out of there. They would have been ready to shop at the next store. [Gisela]

It just brought us down to earth with such a bang. [Desiree]

The accusation by the sales assistants that Desiree and her friend were shoplifters was a threat to Desiree's core identities which she was affirming in this encounter. She considered herself to be a successful teacher, leader, friend, and a vibrant individual who contributed to society. Desiree's response in proclaiming their innocent and the sales assistant's reply illustrated the implications of this accusation on her identities.

"Excuse me, but we have been working our butts off all week writing new curriculums, we are only celebrating with some shopping, were teachers for God's sake, not just off the street." "Rubbish," leered the shop assistant, "you are far too immature for teachers, that's all a big con." [researcher's emphasis] [Desiree].

As a teacher, Desiree saw herself as being a trusted member of society and contributing to its well-being. Not only had she contributed at the community level, but in having just written the national dance curriculum for the New Zealand Ministry of Education, she had contributed to society at the National level. In the accusation that Desiree was a shoplifter, her identity of being a teacher and a leader in her field were threatened. She was being accused of robbing society, rather than contributing to it. No longer could she be a worthy, trusted member of society. Desiree reflected,

We were just so blown away with the fact that we were such outstanding members of society, upright, principal people. . . . What sort of person do I look like? . . . I'll have you know I'm a teacher. It is real pride . . . and it is just so cutting. . . . It is absolutely horrifying. [Desiree]
Moreover, in the sales assistant's reference to her being immature, her character of being an energetic, vibrant friend and teacher was under threat. Her way of being was viewed as immature. Desiree reflected,

Yeah, "you are far too immature for teachers." That was a classic! She just refused to believe who we were. We were teachers. "That was just a big con." [Desiree]

In the sales assistants' disbelief of Desiree's and Marcia's explanations of who they were and why they were acting in such a manner, the sales assistants' responses and demeanour also contributed to Desiree's threatened identity. Again they were not to be trusted. She reflected in the group discussion,

They [the sale assistants] were really nasty. Yeah, they turned straight onto us, straight away. . . . [Desiree]

They sound like they sort of went over the top. . . . They were very anxious, [when they said], "Look it's written all over her face. Who's not guilty?". . . . They didn't maintain their cool. [Gisela]

They were unprofessional. [Frances]

[T]hey were just furious. [Desiree]

Desiree was surprised and distressed by the accusation and its extreme incongruency with whom she really saw herself to be. She felt shocked, mortified, flustered, humiliated, and upset by the experience. Desiree reflected on how she felt about and responded to the moral injustices of being accused, not being believed, and the attempt of having her property searched when they were innocent.

Desiree retorted, "I've never been so humiliated, how dare you accuse us of this" she glared at the shop assistant. She was feeling so upset she went bright red in the face.

She was more upset than angry. She wasn't really angry, angry. Desiree just couldn't believe it. She was mortified. . . . Marcia was really angry. . . . She just lost it. She just threw the clothes all over the shop. She was angry. Desiree was distressed. . . . [J]ust walking down the road [directly afterwards], Desiree was all flustered. She can remember her heart going thump, thump, thump (making pounding noises on her chest), and thinking immediately, "Gosh, what would my family think?" . . . All these things go through your mind. That ramp was significant, because Desiree felt . . . like [she was] going to the hangman's noose, walking up that ramp. You know what my imagination is like. I'm shocking, everything seems so dramatic, but . . . humiliation . . . "How could anyone dare to accuse me, someone who is so upright and honest." . . . I mean she was totally innocent. [Desiree]

Desiree also felt symbolically contaminated by the accusation. She was no longer pure, but dirty and tainted. While she did not necessarily feel this internally, she felt others could see this taint. Desiree reflected in the group discussion,

Oh, that ramp, crawling up that ramp, Desiree felt dirty [researcher's emphasis]. She felt sort of yuk! It made all her spine chill. She couldn't believe that someone had the
audacity to accuse her of doing something like that. When all they had done, you know was... They were people of such good standing. I mean they'd just come out of... writing a government statement all week. It was so ironic. It just absolutely blew them away... [But she] never felt guilty. Not for one minute, did she ever feel guilty.

By promptly leaving the shop, not allowing the policeman to examine their bags, and laughing about the accusation, Desiree avoided any further humiliation, protecting her self-esteem. The whole idea of them being shoplifters was a big joke. Desiree laughed at the accusation to disclaim her hurtful feelings of being tainted. Further, by laughing at the accusation, she protected her identities, both then and now, of being pure, honest and trust-worthy. From the group discussion,

*Desiree crawled up the ramp, she was so flabbergasted, stunned, upset, and yet within a few minutes she started to laugh.* [Desiree]

And she walked up the ramp out of the situation. [Frances]

Out of the situation, yeah. Desiree was half way up the ramp when she looked back and saw Marcia was throwing the clothes over the counter, under the counter, all over the shop... Marcia just kept saying all day, "I don't believe it, I don't believe it," and going into hysterical laughter. "I don't believe it." [Desiree]

Laughter is a form of release. But it [being accused] is still quite hurtful. [Sweetie]

Yeah, they still laugh about it. But boy, they were mortified at the time. [Desiree]

Even though Desiree laughed at and tried to brush aside the accusation, the shock and the resultant affects of the encounter distressed her. She did not continue to shop. In that her identities had been threatened, she no longer could enjoy partaking in the encounter. Rather, she felt uncomfortable trying to affirm and enhance her identities that had been tainted.

*Desiree was just so traumatised by the whole thing... Desiree lost interest completely. I think that was the last straw for Desiree. She was just so wiped out after that. Because, ... Desiree was strained as it was. They just made their way home after they'd had a long coffee.* [Desiree]

Desiree acknowledged that she and her friend must have behaved badly for the sales assistants to have made such an accusation. In doing so, Desiree internalised this negative judgement. She reflected,

*When they [the sales assistants] made that judgement onto us, Desiree supposed they [Marcia and herself] were terrible. We were terrible.* [Desiree]

In her shock and disbelief at the accusation, Desiree questioned how the sales assistants could justify such an allegation of wrong-doing, saying,

*What on earth did they [Marcia and herself] do that... made them [the sales assistants] suspicious?... We analysed it quite careful on the way home. We analysed why they*
reacted the way they did. . . . We had to analyse it within ourselves as to why we were accused. [Desiree]

In retrospect, Desiree understood why the sales assistants were so convinced that she and Marcia were guilty. She attributed part of the fault to herself and Marcia and their 'terrible' behaviour. She reflected,

You could see why they thought that we did it. . . . Because we were totally irrational in our behaviour. . . . They were so convinced. . . . It must have been because of all the tooing and froing. . . . [At first] Desiree was so exhausted . . . that she . . . stood around looking around, . . . and probably because Desiree was walking around looking like something from outer space, she might have looked like she was casing the joint. . . . [Marcia] had got the zip stuck in a new dress straight away. They were in hysterics over this zip. They were in absolute hysterics. . . . They were just silly, and . . . they were going out, picking clothes up, going into the cubicle, trying them on, taking them off, going in, you know. . . . They were calling out to each other from the cubicles, down the shop. They were really quite terrible. They must have looked a bit suspicious for someone looking on. They were so indecisive. They were frivolous. . . . [The sales assistant] probably thought they were making a lot of fuss and covering up what they were up to by laughing and giggling and making it seem so casual. . . . [Plus, the sales assistants thought that] they must have put the clothes in their bags in the cubicle. . . . On reflection, . . . everything must have looked like that. [Desiree]

Desiree, however, acknowledged that part of the blame was due to the sales assistants and the store environment. She appraised that the sales assistants might have been stressed since the store had just recently opened and it had a poor layout. With this appraisal, Desiree is indirectly protecting her identity. This indicated to Desiree that their terrible behaviour was not necessarily as bad as it might appear. There were others factors, besides their behaviour, that lead to the accusation. Desiree reflected in the group discussion, that perhaps,

the sales assistants were scared because the dressing room was so close to the ramp. I think they were scared that Marcia and Desiree would run up the ramp and out the door with all there clothes. . . . The cubicle was right next to the ramp . . ., so you could just walk out of the cubicle and straight up the ramp and outside. . . . They were sort of standing over the ramp, and I can remember . . . walking in and seeing the [sales] lady standing there [guarding the ramp]. . . . I don't remember anything about them. Just the figure at the ramp. Desiree was subconsciously aware that she was there. But they were so excited by all the garments, and so excited by all the trying on and off, and the freedom of the shop, and the exhilaration of being out of the session. . . . Whether it was because it was a new shopping complex, I'm not sure. It had only just opened. It had only been opened for about a month, and they were very much on their guard. . . . I think in a way it was very much the fact that it was a new complex and they'd got this new shop.

By acknowledging that Marcia and herself had behaved terribly, Desiree empathised with the shop assistants. She appraised that Marcia and herself should not have placed the sales assistants in a situation where they felt they must accuse them of shoplifting. Desiree commented,

We did feel sorry for them, for putting them through the experience. . . . Because we were so high. "[S]he did have a point, we were a bit reckless and high!"
Desiree, however, in protecting her self identities indicated how Marcia and herself were not to blame for their irrational, loud behaviour, nor was it appropriate for the sales assistants to respond in such a way. Desiree and Marcia were letting 'off steam' after having been trapped and under extreme pressure to produce a National curriculum, which was a difficult task and of great importance. In escaping after achieving this task, they had exploded back into life. This was not their normal behaviour, and was incongruent with their identities of being 'sensible' individuals. Desiree wrote,

"What do you expect" grumbled Marcia "locking us away in that damned hostel all week, . . . "

Desiree further explained in the discussion how she found this memory-text difficult to write so that their terrible irrational behaviour would be placed in context and understood by the readers. It wasn't how Desiree and her friend normally behaved, but rather how the circumstances had influenced their behaviour in this encounter. In the process of writing this memory-text, Desiree was trying to protect their identities. Desiree reflected in the group discussion,

[It was difficult to write,] because of trying to explain that caged in feeling before they got the freedom of the exhilaration. . . . The emotion was very strong in this one. . . . The drain of working all those hours under the situation. Because the situation they were under was very pressured time wise. It was very pressured curriculum wise - the standard of work which they were expected to do, which was National curriculum. . . . [It was trying to get the comparison. Trying to explain why they reacted [the way they did]. They don't usually go into a shop and act so wild! . . . [T]hey had the freedom of being looked after and spoilt at the hostel, and yet it was all a strain . . . The freedom of the shopping was . . . wild because they'd accomplished what they'd just done. They were ecstatic. They had written this syllabus and completed it, and they had achieved. . . . They had that 'high', and yet they couldn't wait to escape. It was a real cross emotion.

Desiree also indicated that the sales assistants should have dealt with the situation differently, perhaps by talking and getting to know them during the encounter, thus avoiding the incidence. She explained,

"[B]ut we certainly didn't deserve that reaction from those silly cows...." You know, they never came over and asked us what we were looking for. They didn't have anything to say, they just watched us. . . . In fact, I can just still see them being like sentries, one standing by the counter and one by the ramp. [Desiree] They didn't at any stage say, "Do you need a hand?" [Frances]

Just the once. Just once [when Desiree was taking garments back to the dressing room for Marcia and herself]. [Desiree]

Desiree, however, by attributing fault to her own behaviour in this encounter, is able to control any future threats to her identity. She explained in the group discussion how she now polices her shopping behaviour. With this control she can feel comfortable and enjoy the encounter.
As such, she avoids her identity being questioned, and having to find fault with who she is and how she behaves; she is not a potential criminal. Desiree reflected,

It really had an impact on them. They talked about it all day. When they were driving back to Hamilton, they couldn’t stop talking about it. . . . It has certainly made Desiree think twice about her behaviour when going shopping. . . . Ever since, Desiree has been really careful about what she takes into shops. What shopping bag she’s got. How she goes into cubicles. You know, it is something that you don’t forget. You actually learn from the experience. [Desiree]

Has it actually modified the conversations you have with a friend in a shop? Are you less likely to call across the shop? Get into the same cubicle? [Frances]

Oh yes, definitely. Yeah. [Desiree]

Desiree, both at the time of the encounter and in future adventures, was able to limit or diffuse the distress. Being innocent of the crime of which she had been accused, she was able to take control of the situation and protect her ‘self’. Not only was she able to laugh at and partly forgive such an accusation, she learnt that she could still participate in a personally valued activity by altering her behaviour and thus avoiding any further personal distress.

In contrast, Gisela’s ‘Quick Exit’ memory text illustrated how she was unable to diffuse or eliminate the distress she experienced, as Desiree had done. This was because Gisela no longer fitted into the sought after social norm of having the body shape associated with youth. In this loss of identity, which both she and society valued, she was unable to diffuse her distress. Gisela could neither laugh off nor expect to fit into future encounters by changing her behaviour. She had little if no control over this experience, and could only accept the negative implications with dignity, and control her response to her distress.

**Gisela’s 'Quick Exit' Memory-Text.**

Gisela really did need a pair of jeans. The last ones she had brought had been at least three years ago and were stained and frayed.

The jeans are always stacked so neatly on the shelves. Her first problem was finding out which were the females and which were the males. Then, which size to try. With no sign of any sales assistance she grabbed three - one from each pile going across the top, then headed for the cream calico curtains. (Why do those curtains always hang with gaps either side?) She whipped off her skirt and started on the first pair. They got just past her knees, but would rise no further. She discarded those and started on the second pair - half way up her thighs and the sales assistant now materialised, outside the curtain gap (was she squinting through?) with a, "Can I help you with any of those?". "They’re a bit of a tight fit," she responded, handing the first and quickly removed second pair to the assistant. "Perhaps you could find something about two sizes larger, please."
While the assistant was gone she tried the third pair to no avail - top of the thighs only! There was then a period of time she spent surveying the curtain and awaiting the return of the sales assistant. She was aware of something annoying her, it was that incessant music playing over the speakers. Two more pair of jeans appeared through the curtains and she tried both of these on. The larger of the two made it over her hips and the zip did up, but they seemed to be remarkably tight in the crotch. By then she was also breaking out in a sweat from the confined space of the changing room and the lack of ventilation in this part of the shop.

The sales assistant returned - "How are they?". "The cut wasn't quite right," she responded. "I'll get you another style, won't be a sec," and she disappeared to appear quite quickly with two more pair in hand. "Try these." She found that neither of these fitted - one pair hung in a particularly unflattering manner, the other seemed to cause her stomach to protrude because they had a button fly, which was not what she wanted.

By now sweat was running down her front and she just wanted to get her skirt on and get out of this place. Jeans never seemed to fit right, she wondered why she'd ever decided to get new ones.

Out through the curtain - jeans slung over her arm and over to the counter she went. "How did you get on?" smiling sweetly the sales assistant in her size 8 jeans (with gathers at the waist!) enquired. "Sorry, none suited," she responded backing quickly away and moving as fast as she could to the outside door and fresh air. She couldn't wait to get out of there - not only was it hot and stuffy, but her body just didn't seem to be the right shape.

By wearing jeans in the past, Gisela felt that she belonged to the highly valued youth culture. It had, however, been at least three years since she had brought her last pair of jeans, and they now were stained and frayed. In this encounter, Gisela sought the reassurance that she still had the neat, trim, slim, active, youthful body which is symbolised by the wearing of appropriate jeans, and is highly valued by herself and society. Gisela reflected,

It had been a few years ago now [since she had brought her last pair of jeans] . . . She really thought she needed [new] . . . ones because her other ones were quite grotty looking . . . Looking at the pictures [in the store] that advertised the jeans, she had this mental picture of there's me up there. She was going to put them on and she was going to look like that. It didn't really matter what style they were, she was going to look like that mentally . . . The way she looks is important to her. It has a major influence on the way she feels when she goes somewhere. If she feels . . . [that she's] dressed inappropriately, she actually will have a bad . . . time (laughing). [Gisela]
Gisela also indicated how important it was to her to reconfirm her personal identity of being trim and youthful by noting,

If they would fit, she would pay the earth for them. [Gisela]
Would you really? [Desiree]
Desperate . . . [E]very now and then you get desperate to have another pair of jeans. [Gisela]

Moreover, Frances noted the importance that Western Society places on this ideological body image of the extremely slim, active, youthful body, and the pressure this places on women to conform to such an unrealistic standard.

It's so strongly engraved [in women that they need to be slim, youthful, and dressed appropriately]. . . . But it's far more than that. It is [socially] constructed all the time that . . . woman aren't quite adequate until they have the right garment at the right time. . . . It's that whole cumulative process where . . . we are expected to fit into . . . certain roles . . . and made to feel inadequate when we don't fit what is held up as the perfect image of the feminine shape, which is so bizarrely anatomically almost impossible. . . . It is amazing that some women do have that shape. But you know, that is not the norm. These sort of size 8 jeans that Gisela was talking about, that is abnormal. And it is held up as an image for a woman to live up to, or feel inferior about. So you desperately keep shopping until you do find something that might fit you, or looks a little bit more like that slim and trim salesperson. [Frances]

Upon entering the store, Gisela perceived that she no longer belonged to the 'jean culture'. At first, with no sign of any sales assistance, she felt unwelcomed and uncomfortable participating. In not being personally welcomed and attended to, she was disappointed. She reflected,

Gisela expected to have someone say . . . what size [the jeans were], so she could do some comparisons. . . . [Like this is] a 10 or a 12 or whatever, so Gisela could actually make an appropriate selection. . . . She didn't resent it, [not getting any attention or help], but . . . just thought it was a bit slack that . . . there wasn't actually anyone visible, and there wasn't actually anybody else in the shop (laughing). [Gisela]

Gisela did not have the expertise to select the appropriate size. She was unfamiliar with how the jeans were labelled, indicating she did not belong to the jeans culture. As such, there was discomfort and distress in the trail and error process of selecting the appropriate size and cut. Gisela reflected,

She finds it really hard with jeans, . . . knowing which size is which, because they seem to have funny codes unless they're actually a size 10 or a 12, or the numbers that we are use to. If they call them 86 cm, she's got no idea what size she fits. So she had to go a lot by trail and error (laughing). [Gisela]
Because Gisela was also unfamiliar with the typical store environment associated with displaying jeans, she had to rely on store advertising to locate the female jeans. Gisela reflected,

Gisela sort of actually had to look around. . . . She sort of got her clues from the pictures that were hanging there. But sometimes they have a male and a female in the jeans, and you can’t figure it out.

She subconsciously realised, as a maturing woman72, she no longer had the slim, straight, unisex body for which jeans are normally designed. Instead, she had curves which were no longer neatly 'stacked' and conformed to the straight stick figure of a young teenage woman, or man. Gisela responded,

Gisela made a point in her story about how things were neatly stacked. How did that affect Gisela when she went into the store and found the jeans neatly stacked? [Annabel]

Gisela doesn’t actually like mucking them up. Gisela always folds them and puts them back the same way, or tries too. But sometimes they don’t go back as well as the way they actually started. [Gisela]

Gisela's feelings of insecurity and being too old were again reconfirmed as she headed for the cream calico curtains. She found little security and thus comfort in the unstructured curtains which hung with gaps either side. Nor did she find reassurance and comfort in the fresh, pure, unmarked, almost stark, appearance of the changing room. To Gisela, it appeared as a bland, sterile unit without any character or structure, accentuating the differences between herself and the youth culture. The group reflected on how these large awkward, unstructured curtains, reinforced Gisela's feelings of discomfort and distress, as she felt 'big' and clumsy, and lacked control in this young and trendy store environment.

Those big baggy cut curtains, . . . why is it that every time Desiree goes into one [a changing room] with those [curtains], one of the hooks come off? They don't seem to keeps a check on their hooks. [Desiree]

And you trip on the curtains, and the hooks break. That is how they break. [Frances]

Yes, that's what happens. [Desiree]

Gisela, however, was still hopeful that she would fit into the jeans culture when [s]he whipped off her shirt and started to try on the first pair of jeans. In the past she had occasionally managed to purchase the 'odd' pair which fitted perfectly.

You keep on trying, and then you actually manage to pick up a pair that is 30 or 50 dollars on the sale rack, that actually fit perfectly, and you've been looking at these 120

72 While this researcher notes that Gisela was a maturing woman, she was in her mid-thirties and thus by no means old. Nor was Gisela even slightly overweight.
dollar ones (laughing); trying them on periodically. So there are ones that are obviously for strange shaped people (laughing). They're not able to sell them. [Gisela]

As Gisela tried on the three pair of jeans, struggling to pull the jeans over her thighs with no success, she became aware of her womanly curves and struggled to 'fit'. She was also threatened by the sales assistant's sudden appearance when she peered through the gaps in the curtains. Not only had the sales assistant violated Gisela's personal space by squinting through the curtains, but she also intruded on Gisela's personal being by viewing her body and her struggle to be. Gisela responded to Annabel's question.

How did Gisela feel when she felt the sales assistant peering through [the curtain] at her? [Annabel]

A bit . . . vulnerable. . . . Because here you are with your jeans half way up and you can't get them up any further (laughing), and there is someone you don't know . . . [looking]. [Gisela]

Gisela, in her request to the sales assistant for a larger size, had to admit to herself and to a stranger that she did not 'fit'. Gisela was embarrassed and distressed by the assistant's intrusion on her personal space and being, and her need for a much larger size. She had lost her dignity. The sales assistant had become aware that Gisela did not fit, because of Gisela's lack of knowledge of the jean culture and her body shape. Gisela, however, relieved some of her distress by attributing the bad fit to her misinformed random selection of sizes and the sales assistant's lack of help. Gisela felt that she could still fit, if she had the appropriate size and cut. She reflected,

Gisela had made a bad judgement about her size (laughing). . . . It was really guess work, the ones she took. Not very good guess work. . . . [She had] no idea what size she fitted. So she had to go a lot by trial and error, and just try (laughing). [Gisela]

As she surveyed the situation and waited for the sales assistant to return with a larger size, Gisela felt unimportant and thus threatened by the lack of attention. She became annoyed and frustrated by not being in control of the situation and having to wait. Gisela had to rely on the sales assistant to help her find the perfect fit, when the assistant did not actually know what she wanted, nor who she was. She explained,

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73 According to Goffman (1971) violation of one's personal space and glancing, looking or staring are two of six modes of interpersonal contamination. "The prototypical territorial offense occurs when one individual encroaches on the preserve claimed by and for another individual, the first thereby functioning as an impediment to the second's claim. . . . [E]ncroachment involves two types of different kind of sin. One is . . . 'intrusion': this is the obvious case of an individual entering a territory to which he has no right of access, or otherwise contaminating a preserve. . . . To intrude . . . is one way to encroach; a second is to obtrude. I refer here to the capacity of the claimant to press territorial demands into the wider sphere than others feel is his due, causing them to feel that they themselves could be seen as functioning intrusively, even though they feel this is not the case. The standard example occurs when an individual makes what are taken as overextensive claims to personal space, incidentally encroaching on the personal space of those adjacent to him or on areas felt to be public in the sense of being non-claimable (Goffman, 1971 pp. 50-51).
She [the sales assistant] took a long time to come back with the first two [pairs of jeans] ... which annoyed Gisela quite a bit. ... She hadn't bothered to find out what Gisela really wanted. [Gisela]

Sometimes ... [Sweetie] just wants to sort it out and look for herself, and she resents it when someone comes in and wants to help. ... I know a lot of people like Sweetie that don't like to have assistance. They just like to find their own things and then ask for help when they are ready for it. [Sweetie]

Yeah, yeah. . . . Gisela doesn't mind them not being there. But when they do give assistance, she expects them to . . . try and establish what your needs are, rather than having to say that you want something bigger or whatever. [Gisela]

Well, . . . if you go and try something on and it's not right, and you've got to get all your clothes back on and go out to find the next pair (laughing), there is nothing more frustrating. [Sweetie]

Standing in your underwear waiting for or trying to get help [is more frustrating] (laughing). [Gisela]

Moreover, as Gisela surveyed the situation and waited for the sales assistant's return, she felt increasingly uncomfortable in the store environment. The incessant music 74 playing over the speakers added to her feelings of being annoyed. Gisela couldn't remember what the music was, but she reflected,

It just got on my nerves. . . . It was probably gentle. You know, it was just an incessant sort of going on and on and on, no break, no change in tempo or tone. It was just a background hassle. She can usually blot it out for a while, but then . . . she gets really irritated. She suddenly becomes conscious of the music. [Gisela]

Frances, in comparing Gisela's Quick Exit' memory-text to her own 75, commented on how the music invaded both hers and Gisela's personal space.

The music came through, and . . . feeling hot and stuffy in the changing rooms. Frances wasn't hot and stuffy [like Gisela], but there wasn't enough space and it was unpleasant. [Frances]

To Gisela, the music reinforced that the store environment and service was ambivalent to her as a consumer. Sweetie noted how "the tone of the shop, [and] the music" put "pressure" on Gisela to fit into the norm without making her feel valued or special. The group commented on how the sales assistant contributed to Gisela's feelings of not being valued as an individual.

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74 Goffman (1971 p. 46) also classified sound interference as one of the six modes of interpersonal contamination. This includes any noises that intrude disruptively on an individual or prevail over the given norm.

75 Frances wrote, Some sort of background music was playing; a disco version of 'Greensleeves' or an orchestral version of 'You light up my life.' Immediately she wondered if this was appropriate for her needs. Still she needed a swimsuit desperately so she persevered. . . . The music followed her. Refer to Appendix C for Frances's full 'Quick Exit' memory-text.
It is interesting that the shop assistant just produced two more pairs of jeans when Gisela said, "Could I have something about two sizes larger." Were they a different cut or were they just the same as the ones you'd been trying on? [Sweetie]

They were the same. [Gisela]

So she made little attempt to really find out what suited you and your body? [Frances]

There didn't appear to be any attempt [by the sales assistant] to form any relationship with [Gisela] . . . when she was trying on the jeans. [Sweetie]

You know, . . . [the sales assistant] was just going through the motions of . . . passing Gisela things. [Gisela]

When Gisela tried on the next two pair of jeans, she became more distressed. Even though they were two sizes larger than the previous jeans, she could only just squeeze into the larger of the two. [T]hey seemed remarkably tight in the crotch. In her need to fit, and in the confinement of the jeans and the changing room, she felt as if she was suffocating. She began to sweat in her fear and recognition that she no longer was youthful as defined by the jean culture.

Still hopeful that the problem was the cut of the jeans rather than her shape, Gisela tried on two more pairs, different styles, recommended by the sales assistant. While neither of these two pair of jeans were too tight on her body, they did not provide the trim, sleek, youthful image sought by Gisela. She wrote,

[O]ne pair hung in a particular unflattering manner, the other seemed to cause her stomach to protrude . . . which was not what she wanted [researcher's emphasis].

[Gisela]

These two images conveyed the body shape of an older women. When she realised that neither of these two styles made her look youthful, and that she had failed to fit into the jean culture, Gisela became extremely distressed. Adding to this was the implication that the sales assistant associated her with the unflattering styles. Sweetie commented on the styles the sales assistant had brought for Gisela to try on.

Gisela said, . . . [these jeans] didn't fit and they were unflattering, . . . [so] it sort of made Gisela feel, "Oh she [the sales assistant] classified me as . . . frumpy and dowdy and therefore these are the kind that I should be wearing." [Sweetie]

Gisela had lost her identity of being youthful as defined by the jean culture. There were masses and masses of jeans in this typical speciality chain store, of which she had tried on six pairs, and none had suited. As such, Gisela appraised that it was not just this store which did not offer an appropriate style, but instead, it was her body shape that was at fault. Gisela reflected,

It makes you want to question your body shape and your body size. Why do they have so many racks [of jeans] and none of them fit me? So, it must be me that has the
problem. . . . And the worst part is, Gisela found whipping off and whipping on clothes so strenuous that she actually did get really hot and bothered. They . . . [didn't] ventilate the changing rooms or have a fan or anything, so Gisela did actually get really hot and bothered. And I guess she probably had the adrenalin flowing, she actually got really hacked off. [Gisela]

Gisela became frustrated through this experience. Desiree and Sweetie noted, comparing Group 2's 'Quick Exit' memory-texts (see Appendix C),

I think we all had some frustration. . . . The frustration of the swimsuit looking so gorgeous on the hanger, and why can't it look like that on Frances. . . . [She] took it off the hanger because in her own mind . . . she could sort of see herself looking gorgeous in it. And the frustration [for Gisela] because none of the jeans fitted. [Desiree]

The frustration because she [Gisela] did not look like the image on the posters. [Sweetie]

Gisela, however, became extremely distressed rather than angry because she blamed herself rather than the store for the lack of 'fit'. Gisela responded to Desiree's question,

Desiree would get angry. Did Gisela get angry? Were you angry at the store for not providing...? [Desiree]

No, Gisela internalised it onto herself for not being the right shape. She felt . . . [she] didn't fit the criteria, yeah, the norm. [Gisela]

In her distress of not being able to identify with the youthful jean culture, and her inability to alter this situation, Gisela exited to protect her identity. She wrote,

*By now the sweat was running down her front and she just wanted to get her skirt on and get out of the place. Jeans never seemed to fit right, she wondered why she'd ever decided to get new ones.*

Rather than directly fleeing, Gisela however tried to alleviate her distress by taking control of the situation and accepting who she was. She casually, with the *jeans slung over her arm*, confronted the salesperson to acknowledge that the jeans were not appropriate for her. Gisela, instead, found again that her identity of being trim and youthful was under threat. In the group discussion, when asked about the sales assistant, Gisela explained how the sales assistant's appearance reconfirmed her feelings of a lost identity and distress.

Skinny, Skinny. Which just reinforces the whole thing that you're not the right shape. She's got the jeans on that are pulled in at the waist and Gisela can see that she's pretty thin. And Gisela felt as though they were pretty much like the ones she'd just been trying on. . . . She made Gisela feel fat. (Laughing). [Gisela]
Moreover, Gisela felt uncomfortable acknowledging that she did not fit by apologising. She apologised to conform to the norm of being polite, but in doing so, placed the fault on herself. This contributed to the threat of her lost identity and thus her distress. She reflected,

Gisela didn't like the way she apologised, because she said sorry to the sales assistant. She felt that she had to say sorry, and she didn't like that. Particularly in retrospect when she was writing her memory.... She knew that she had said it though, because it would have been automatic what she said. [Gisela]

And that's part of the protocol. Isn't it? [Sweetie]

You don't want to be too rude because you might run into that person again, or you might teach their children, or they might teach your children (laughing).... [So you aren't] losing face by leaving the shop hastily. [Frances]

Or maybe Gisela is just apologetic. [Gisela]

Apologising for the fact that she couldn't fit into that shop's jeans.... Why should she have had to do that? [Sweetie]

It makes Gisela feel bad having said it.... Yes, definitely. Absolutely.... [It was a guilt feeling, saying I'm sorry. Gisela was putting the guilt on herself.] [Gisela]

To protect her self esteem, Gisela has avoided that particular store and any further attempts to buy jeans. She responded to Sweetie's questions,

Did Gisela go to any other shops afterwards [to purchase a pair of jeans]? [Sweetie]

No, no.... Gisela hasn't actually bought any jeans since then. You know, it was probably a good 18 months to 2 years ago that this occurred, and Gisela hasn't bought any since (laughing). [Gisela]

How does Gisela feel about going back to that shop? I mean that brand of shop? [Sweetie]

Oh, that particular shop, Gisela wouldn't go back in a hurry. [Gisela]

Similarly to Susie's 'Quick Exit', Gisela protects herself from humiliation, guilt, and distress through her avoidance of any similar future encounters. Gisela's dissatisfaction with her encounter, however, was caused by a negative, internal belief that her body just didn't seem to be the right shape, whilst Susie's was caused by the salesperson's false negative accusation about what sort of person she was. Gisela's negative judgement of herself was based on comparisons of her body shape to the models in the store advertising, the sales assistant, and the cut of the jeans offered in the store. Thus, the source of Gisela's distress was the store, rather than herself. The store threatened Gisela's sense of worth, esteem, and identity.

**Overall Summary.**  
The analysis of these reconstructed memory-texts illustrated how judgements of consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction with a clothing retail encounter clearly relates to self identity, that
is, who she believes she is and/or desires to be. These identities depend on what she and/or society values plus her need to belong to a specific social world. This in turn determines the motivation and goals of the retail encounter itself.

A consumer will be either satisfied or dissatisfied with an encounter depending on whether she achieves and/or does not achieve her goal. In other words, a consumer will be satisfied with her experience when she affirms who she is and/or desires to be by 'doing' and/or 'having' and thus 'being'. On the other hand, she will be dissatisfied when she does not affirm her desired identity through the encounter.

These memory-texts showed that there were degrees or levels of intensity in consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction according to the judgements made and the affect felt in the encounter. For example, the achieving of a goal can lead to satisfaction in a retail encounter, but if the encounter strongly affirms something positive and valued in a consumer's identity, the evaluation of the experience becomes more than simply satisfying; it can be exhilarating.

The memory-texts reported in this chapter illustrate that a satisfying experience can be judged as exhilarating when at least one of the following outcomes occurs in the encounter, all of which enhance the consumer's identity and contribute to her judgements of self worth or esteem. First, a retail encounter could be appraised as being exhilarating when the consumer has had 'fun' achieving her goal and it has affirmed something about her identity which she enjoys. In the excitement and exhilaration of having fun, the consumer defines her satisfaction with the encounter. Secondly, an experience can be exhilarating when it marks a positive, new transition in the life of the consumer. By participating in and/or obtaining needed resources during the encounter the consumer can become who she 'aspires' or values being, and as such may appraise the experience as not just being satisfactory, but exhilarating. Thirdly, an encounter may be judged as exhilarating when the consumer overcomes an expectation which threatens her identity. In doing so, the affirmation of who she sees herself being is intensified. The threat(s) may derive from the store, the 'self', or others in society, and originate from the consumer not feeling as if she belongs and/or is valued in the encounter or by society.

Fourthly, and closely connected to the previous outcome, when a consumer overcomes a moral injustice of being labelled inappropriately, her feeling of satisfaction with the encounter may be heightenened. While these outcomes or responses are discussed separately, they often occur together and are interrelated in determining the intensity of the consumer's satisfaction with her experience. All these responses of exhilaration can be even further intensified if there is an element of surprise in the encounter. A positive contrast between the expectation and the outcome of the encounter contributes to a greater intensity in the satisfaction.

Levels of dissatisfaction indicated in the memory-texts tend to relate to possible negative consequences to the consumer's identity. In other words, the degree of dissatisfaction
experienced depends on the level of threat felt by the consumer to her desired identity. For example, where the threat to identity is based upon a serious accusation of wrong-doing, such as breaking a cultural Law or damaging property, the distress is felt by the consumer at an intense level. The humiliation or disgrace experienced is constructed by moral obligation and based upon judgements made by societal rules. A consumer can also feel disgraced in a retail encounter based upon her own internal sense of inadequacy, derived from not fitting social expectations or belonging to the norm.

Other threats, with lesser social consequences but which may still intensify the dissatisfaction experienced, are concerned with contamination. The strongest of these is direct contamination of identity through body fluids and the possible transmission of germs, symbolising the compromise of personal integrity by forced intimacy. Others include body odour, other offensive smells, uninvited gazes, invasion of personal space, and offensive music.

Of lesser negative consequence are threats to a consumer's identity which she personally values but are not necessarily overt or prescribed by social morals or norms. When a consumer's identity is threatened or lost in this manner, she will feel dissatisfied in her disappointment of not having her identity affirmed but it will be felt less intensely than if the identity was prescribed in a way that was socially valued.

Just as an element of surprise may intensify the level of satisfaction felt by the consumer, so may the shock or surprise of the unexpected intensify the degree of dissatisfaction experienced by the consumer. The negative contrast between the expected and the outcome appears to heighten the dissatisfaction felt.

The store environment and service facilitated consumer satisfaction by helping the consumer affirm or enhance her identity. On the other hand, the environment and service can be instrumental in threatening a consumer's identity, leading to her dissatisfaction. While all judgements made in the encounters by the consumer describe her overall experience, it is the combination of the 'evaluative' responses, both cognitive and affective, in relation to 'self' which define the nature of the satisfaction and dissatisfaction construct, with some being more important than others. Which of these are most important depends upon how they relate to the consumer's identity, either enhancing or threatening who she is.
CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the conclusions of other researchers (e.g., Hunt, 1993; Mano & Oliver, 1993; Yi, 1990) which support the need for a better and richer understanding of consumer satisfaction, memory-work methodology was adopted to examine its conceptualisation and process. In doing so, this research has been able to extend current views regarding the understanding of satisfaction and dissatisfaction in three important respects. First, it provides us with an understanding of the complex conceptualisation and process of satisfaction/dissatisfaction, set within 'real life' experiences, which is often lost in positivist empirical and experimental studies. Secondly, it theorises and illustrates the importance of the role of 'self' as an agent and moral evaluator in the process. This links the social construction of self with consumer behaviour and the evaluative processes associated with satisfaction and dissatisfaction. In doing so, it explains how the consumer's actions, goals, values, expectations, attributions, behaviours and especially emotions within an encounter contribute to the process and conceptualisation of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Thirdly, it demonstrates the importance of the social realm to the interaction process and provides a basis upon which this can be theorised. It is through the consumer's social relations, her expectations of others and the social rules and norms which govern these relations, that she judges and gives meanings to her interactions and evaluates her self in the encounter.

The Importance of Identity.
The data in this study illustrates that the process of consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction is centred around the evaluation of self rather than the service/product attributes and performances. It is, however, the interaction of the self within the specific context of the encounter which involves the evaluation of service/product attributes and performances that facilitates the resultant meanings and judgements made. That is, it is the consumer's responses to the evaluation of these meanings and judgements made within the encounter in regards to self that ultimately defines the nature of her satisfaction or dissatisfaction judgement.

Identity in the form of doing, having, and being is the driving factor determining how the consumer appraises and responds to the clothing retail encounter. Because identity is a socially constructed repository of learnt values and roles, it delimits how the consumer will define and thus judge the encounter in relation to herself. Identity determines the consumer's salient social needs and goals of the encounter, and consequently its success and failure. This in turn defines whether the consumer feels satisfied or dissatisfied with the retail experience.
When the consumer's identity is either enhanced or threatened in some manner during the retail encounter, the resulting cognition and emotion, along with the positive or negative cognitive and affective appraisals of success or failure, define the nature and intensity of the consumer's satisfaction or dissatisfaction. That is, the resultant evaluative emotional and cognitive responses which are experienced in relation to affirming and/or threatening the consumer's desired salient identities within the encounter combine together, with some responses pre-eminenting, overriding, and/or reinforcing others, to define the nature and intensity of the consumer's satisfaction and dissatisfaction judgement.

Threats to self identity in the clothing retail encounter result not only from the consumer being unsuccessful in achieving her goal, but may also be from (a) moral judgements which relate negatively towards the self, (b) self contamination by another, and/or (c) self inadequacy in playing a role and/or fitting within the norm. The enhancement of self may also result from not directly achieving an immediate or specific goal. For example, a consumer may affirm or enhance the self by just receiving positive confirmation of being or having fun when participating in the encounter.

The level of threat also appears to contribute to the intensity and/or nature of consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction. The level of threat depends (at least partially) on the perceived negative consequences to the consumer's valued identities. That is, the more a consumer's salient identity will be or is challenged by the threat, the more important it becomes to the process of determining and defining satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Threats which are overt and based on the consumer following prescribed socially constructed morals and norms appear to be more threatening than those which are based on the consumer's personal aspirations of being.

In the situation of an extreme threat to a consumer's identity, or in the event of an extreme threat being overcome, the resultant cognitive and affective appraisals may override and/or dominate other evaluative cognitive and emotional appraisals experienced in the encounter. The surprise and/or shock of a threat, or the surprise of overcoming a threat, appears to disrupt and override former cognitive and affective processes and responses in the experience. Usually, and particularly for satisfying encounters, the cognitive and affective appraisals of the encounter build and support the satisfaction or dissatisfaction judgement.

The Significance of Belonging.

In terms of identity, a consumer's sense of whether or not she 'belongs' in an encounter is the reference point by which she bases her judgements of self evaluation. Identities anchor the self in socially recognisable categories. People derive meaning from being linked to socially collective entities through their identities (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Gecas, 1982). The only way individuals can know who they are is by observing themselves in comparison to
others, and in this regard, belonging provides them with a sense of self. We identify ourselves
with a desirable set of values and traits (Belk, 1988). These reference points of social
categories and/or meaningful other(s) provide an individual with 'consensus' information from
which she bases her self evaluation and thus her identity. In this way, individuals can interpret
or give meaning to their self evaluation.

Through the appraisals of belonging, the consumer defines her identity, what she values and
finds threatening. When the consumer judges that she belongs to the encounter she feels
valued, comfortable, committed, in control, and an integral part of the encounter. Through
belonging, she feels satisfied with her experience. By affiliating herself with the encounter, she
is affirming what she values and who she desires to be. However, when a consumer judges
that she does not belong in the encounter in some way, and desires to, she will feel threatened,
devalued, uncomfortable and dissatisfied. She is unable to control the interaction and resultant
outcomes, affirming who she is or desires to be. In her fear of being pressured, humiliated,
manipulated, taking on negative connotation of any affiliation, and/or being devalued the
consumer avoids becoming associated with and/or committed to the encounter. Moreover, if a
consumer becomes too involved or committed in the experience, she may also loose control,
feel threatened and judge it as being dissatisfactory. Being involved in the encounter also
intensifies the resultant emotions, and as such, intensifies the consumer's resultant feelings of
satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

This study specifically illustrates that a consumer may feel as if she belongs or does not belong
in the encounter by (a) her ability or inability to perform adequately, (b) the congruency or
disparity between hers and the store's economic status and/or social tastes, and (c) her feelings
of being valued or devalued through the intimacy created within the encounter.

The image of the retail store shapes the strength of the consumer identification with the store,
and serves as cognitive reference points in attracting the consumer to the store. A sense of
belonging instigates the consumer to partake in an encounter, and elicit satisfaction from
activities and symbols that are congruent with her identity. Moreover, the store's images are
employed by the consumer in the construction of self. When the consumer, however, does not
identify with the store, she will not be attracted to it and will find its images threatening to her
self, and thus dissatisfying.

The Contribution of the Judgement Process.

It is through the sequence of judgements regarding the attributes and performances which occur
within the encounter in relationship to self that the consumer determines whether or not she
belongs and if her desired identities are affirmed or threatened. Judgement processing is the
mechanism by which the consumer gives meaning to and evaluates her retail experience in
regard to who she is or desires to be. Specifically, the consumer provides meaning to her
judgements through the meaningful interactions which occur within and in regards to the encounter. She then evaluates those meanings in comparison to who she is or desires to be. In doing so, she judges whether she belongs or does not belong and if the encounter affirms or threatens her desired identities.

The reconstructed memory-texts in Chapter 5 provide verbal mappings of the judgement process and illustrate how the consumer gave meaning to the attributes and performances in the encounter. These mappings of judgement processing describe how the appraisals are based on a complex and intricate chain of meanings which are inferred from the components involved, related to the consumer's previous experiences, and created within the current retail encounter.

The data in this study illustrates how the cognitive-affective appraisals and responses are constructed, interrelated and interconnected, and what they mean to the consumer in each specific retail encounter. It depicts how the affective and cognitive evaluation responses occur in regard to self evaluation in the judgement process, and how these evaluative responses explain and describe the nature and process of consumer behaviour and the satisfaction and dissatisfaction judgement. Specifically, it explains how both negative and positive emotional and cognitive responses may result during the process and the extent to which these may influence or totally dominate the nature of the satisfaction or dissatisfaction judgement. Emotional responses are shown to be a very important part of the process and the nature of the satisfaction and dissatisfaction judgement. This helps to illustrate, as suggested by Mano and Oliver (1993 p. 464), "that satisfaction has many antecedents and is a much more complex 'emotion' than may have been suggested".

The Meaning of Social Context.
Previous research, mostly derived from a psychological perspective, has focused on the cognitive and/or affective constructs of the satisfaction/dissatisfaction judgement process. These include expectations, disconfirmation, equity/justice, performance, causal attribution, desires/values, product/service attributes, affect/emotion. Recent work has started to consider how some of these components, in particular the cognitive and affective constructs, might combine and integrate together. While my research, at this stage, does not specifically analyse the cognitive and/or affective constructs presented in the earlier literature, it affirms that a multiplicity of constructs occur and are intertwined in a complex system of symbolic interactions which are derived from and represent the consumer's 'lived' experience. The data in this study also suggests that other constructs, such as the process of social comparison, may be as important, if not more so than those already extensively addressed and supported in the literature, to our understanding of the consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction judgement process and resultant behaviour.
Exactly which constructs are present and relevant to the consumer's satisfaction or dissatisfaction judgement, however, depends on the meanings that the consumer gives to the interactions which occur. This in turn depends not only on the contextual components of the encounter, but more importantly on what the consumer brings to the encounter. The analysis of these reconstructed memory-texts reveals that the consumer evaluates the encounter based on her self, the situation, previous social experiences and their attached social meanings. Specifically, it illustrates how the cognitive and affective appraisals and responses are socially constructed and reconstructed. In doing so, the consumer gives meaning to her interactions within and related to the encounter.

As noted by Crawford, et al. (1992) there is, however, not one shared social world of meaning, nor is there one common understanding of what 'ought' to be. Rather, there are multiple social realities which are constructed out of different individuals' distinct cultural, historical and hegemonic backgrounds, and their social matrix (e.g., gender, class, race). This gives support to and an explanation of Oliver's (1989 p. 13) proposition that "satisfaction is not well defined across consumers" in that it means different things to different people, depending on the consumer and the context.

The data from this study indicates that there is a complex cultural ideology underlining the psychological internalised process of consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction as examined in previous research. For example, past research in consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction (e.g., Olshavsky & Spreng, 1989; Spreng & Olshavsky, 1993; Westbrook & Reilly, 1983) has conceptualised 'desired' values in terms of valence in expectancy theory. That is, values are assumed "to influence a person's subjective definition of a situation, so that objects, activities, and states of affairs within the immediate situation are seen as having positive valence (they become attractive) or negative valence (they become aversive)," and as such, they "influence a person's cognitive-affective appraisal of a situation in relation to both the means and ends" (Feather, 1990 p. 160). From this perspective, the consumer is viewed as being disconnected from society. The data I have presented, however, indicates that values should also be conceptualised in cultural terms of the 'desirable' as discussed by Kluckhohn (1962). What is 'desirable' is culturally defined. The 'desirable' demands something of the consumer according to cultural rules and norms, rather than just describing what she wants or needs. For example, not only do values reflect what the customer needs (i.e., the desired), but they also demand that the consumer and the other parties involved in the encounter fulfil their moral obligations (i.e., the desirable), as defined by the consumer's values. By being moral and following social norms, the consumer not only gains social recognition, but she affirms who she is by expressing the appropriate values which represent her self identity. My data illustrates that the consumer judges herself and others associated with the encounter according to (a) her and/or their competence in the attainment of and/or having attributes that are socially as well as personally valued, and (b) her and/or their sense of virtue or moral worth in regard to her or
their respective conduct in the encounter. Both of these, a sense of competence and worth, are internalised standards used by the consumer to evaluate her self and others in the judgement processing. In doing so, the consumer uses self attribute reference points or 'consistency' information as well as social reference points to affirm who she is or desires to be.

As suggested by Crawford, et al. (1992), the acquisition of, and response to meaning is not a straight forward process. Understanding the satisfaction and dissatisfaction process is not a simple case of the consumer and the retailer taking prescribed roles or scripts, as suggested by Smith and Houston (1982) and Solomon, Surprenant, Czepiel, and Gutman (1985). Rather, social meanings are constructed through human consciousness in relation to socio-cultural practices. The appraisal and reappraisal of the social experience only becomes meaningful when there is 'reflection' with one's self. These meanings are thus defined and interpreted through lived, interactional process (Mead, 1934).

The findings in my research are bound by the values and meanings specific to the cultures and social backgrounds of the participants, as well as the types of product and service encounters examined. That is, these findings are situated within the socio-cultural experience of middle class, well educated, well travelled Western woman living in New Zealand, and within the context of women's clothing retail encounters. It will not be until other types of individuals, products and/or services are examined that we can gain (a) any certainty to the generalisation of these results and (b) an understanding of how the nature of the satisfaction or dissatisfaction judgement and process may differ according to the type of product, service, the individual involved and the cultural context of the encounter.

Summary.

In summary, this qualitative research method of memory-work enables us to see the complexity of the processes involved and places them within the social context to further our understanding of the meanings of the individual models of consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction. It draws these processes together, puts them into context and illustrates how they are connected to and driven by the concept of identity. Specifically, these research findings indicate that the process and nature of consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction is a function of the interaction that occurs amongst the consumer's self identities, the attributes and performances of the products, environment and people in the encounter, and the situational and socio-cultural context in which it takes place. Accordingly, the nature, intensity and process of the consumer satisfaction or dissatisfaction judgement appears to depend on how the consumer's identities are enhanced, affirmed, and/or threatened within the encounter. While these research findings are plausible and textually supported, there is no pretence to have developed an exhaustive nor predictive account of the nature of the consumer satisfaction or dissatisfaction judgement and process. Besides the necessity for additional analysis and interpretation of other memory-texts constructed of experiences from different types of individuals and product/service encounters as
noted earlier, there is also the need for further analysis and interpretation to understand the complexities of the nature of the satisfaction and dissatisfaction judgement and process. Specifically, we need to gain an understanding of how cognitive and affective components are constructed, interrelated and interconnected, and how these relate and link to the consumer's behaviours and actions.

This research, through the use of memory-work, can give retail management an understanding of how meanings are created in the encounter which contribute to the consumer's satisfaction or dissatisfaction with her experience. Further application of this methodology using service personnel rather than consumers would provide management with a better understanding of how their employees' interact within the encounter and experience their job. In doing so, management could gain a better understanding of problems which occur within the retail or service encounter and how these can be altered to improve both customer and employee satisfaction. Perhaps more importantly through participating in memory-work sessions employees may learn how meaning is constructed within the service encounter which would enable them to improve the consumer's as well as their own experience. Such an exercise could enable management to improve their ability to satisfy their customers, employees and own goals.
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APPENDIX A

DETAILS OF WOMEN PARTICIPANTS

GROUP 1
Annabel
Aged 43; University student; Previously a university lecturer; Male partner; No children; White American (USA); Lived New Zealand for 16 years; Rural midwestern upbringing; Travelled internationally frequently, but not widely; High interest in clothing and clothes shopping; Has shopped frequently for clothing in the past.

Helena
Aged 33; University lecturer; Male partner; No children; Born in Finland; Lived in USA for six years; Lived in New Zealand for two years; Grew up in a rural area; Travelled internationally frequently and widely; Shops infrequently for clothes, but is interested in and enjoys shopping for clothing.

Priscilla
Aged 38; University student; Previously a Pharmacy Technician and a housewife; Male partner; Two children; White New Zealander; Lived in Canada for one year; Urban upbringing; Travelled internationally infrequently; High interest in clothes and shopping; In the past has shopped frequently for clothes.

Susie
Aged 51; Teacher, counsellor, and in the past a housewife; Male partner; Two children; White New Zealander, Lived in USA for one year; Rural upbringing; Travelled internationally infrequently; Moderate interest in clothing; Low interest in clothes shopping; Shops infrequently for clothes.

Wendy
Aged 43; University lecturer; Male partner; No children; White New Zealander; Lived in Canada for five years and Australia for six years; Grew up in rural area; Travelled internationally extensively; Low interest in clothing and shopping; Shops infrequently for clothes.
GROUP 2

Desiree
Aged 52; University lecturer; Male partner; Two children; British (White); Lived in New Zealand for 21 years; Grew up in a small village in England; Travelled internationally frequently and extensively; High interest in clothing and shopping; Shops frequently for clothes.

Frances
Aged 34; University lecturer; Male partner; No children; White New Zealander; Lived in London for two years; Grew up in small town; Travelled internationally frequently and extensively; High interest in clothing and shopping; Shops frequently for clothes.

Gisela
Aged 38; Teacher; Previously, as a summer holiday job, worked as a shop assistant in a jewellery store; Male partner; Two children, White New Zealander; Lived in London for one and a half years; Travelled internationally occasionally and widely; Small town upbringing; High interest in clothing and shopping; Shops frequently for clothes.

Sweetie
Aged 47; University lecturer; In earlier years was a fashion designer; Male partner; Two children; Polynesian New Zealander; Lived in Cook Islands for five years; Travelled internationally frequently and extensively; Urban upbringing; High interest in clothing; Moderate interest in shopping; In the past made her own clothes, but currently shops more frequently for clothes.
APPENDIX B

RESEARCH PROJECT BRIEF AND INSTRUCTIONS.

Information About this Project:
Constructing Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction from Women's Memories of Clothing Retail Exchanges

1. Who are the researchers and where can they be contacted?
Lorraine Friend is conducting this research as part of her PhD study through the Department of Marketing, University of Otago, Dunedin. All enquiries and/or problems regarding this work should be directed to Lorraine. She can be contacted as follows:
Before 8:00 am and after 7:00 pm on weekdays and anytime on weekends:
14 Fowlers Ave
Hamilton
ph. 839-3882
Between 8:00 am and 6:30 pm on weekdays (B Grant’s phone, ask for Lorraine or leave message):
MS3 - Management Building: Room G04
Waikato University
ph. 856-2889 ex 6206
Dr Amy Rummel, College of Business Administration, Alfred University, PO Box 515, Alfred, NY, USA - [(607) 871-2295] and Professor David Buisson, Department of Marketing, University of Otago, PO Box 56, Dunedin - [(03) 479-872] are Lorraine's PhD supervisors.

2. What is the study about?
This study describes and analyses yours and other women's clothing store and social world experiences to identify and explain factors that lead consumers to being satisfied or dissatisfied with a clothing retail exchange.
Specifically it examines:
1) the meaning of satisfaction and dissatisfaction to yourself and other women consumers,
2) the process of creating satisfaction and dissatisfaction, and
3) how and why different variables are used and/or created in the above process.

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3. What will you and other participants have to do and how long will it take?
You and four or five other women will meet regularly over a three to four month period in 'memory-work' sessions. It is anticipated that there will be between six to ten sessions and each one will last between two to three hours.

At least one week prior to each session, you and the other participants will be asked to write a memory evoked from a 'trigger' topic regarding a specific clothing store episode or event. For example, you may be asked to write a memory regarding a particular time when you could not exit from a clothing store fast enough or a time when you wanted to stay and explore a store and just couldn't leave without buying something. For each session you will be asked to write a different memory which will be discussed by the group. Suggestions for each trigger topic may come from the group itself as well as from the researcher.

To write each memory you will use the following rules:
- Write each memory in third person. That is, describe the specific episode from the point of view of an outside observer.
- Write in as much detail as possible including circumstantial, inconsequential and trivial detail. (It may be helpful to think of key images such as the sounds, visual environment, individuals, smells, behaviours, actions, discussions and/or tactile sensations that were present in the episode.)
- Write without interpretation, explanation or biography. That is, write your memory without warranting or justifying it in terms of things that are specific to you. Past events should not be used to explain consequences or events in a memory.
- Write one of your most 'vivid' memories.

The researcher will collect the written memories from you and the other participants a day or two before each session. Thus, you and the other participants will receive a copy of each person's memory (including your own) at the beginning of each session. Lorraine will organise all memories so that they can be easily read and compared during the session. This means that you will not have to spend time and effort on the presentations of these written accounts.

During the session you will read all the memories written by the members in your group. You will then discuss and theorise what has been collectively written. In doing this, you will look for similarities and/or patterns across the memories. As the discussion develops the group will also look for differences among the memories as well as cliches, contradictions, absences, metaphors, and inconsistencies in individual memories. During the discussion you should avoid autobiography and biography statements which emphasise any individual aspects of an experience. For example, avoid statements in response to memories such as: "Oh the sales
person didn't!, How awful for you!, and You poor thing!" Instead, you should theorise by asking and discussing questions such as:

- What is this telling us about the customer and retailer's relationship (e.g., honesty, trust) and how does this affect satisfaction or dissatisfaction?
- What strong social norm(s) or rule(s) have been broken in this account and how does this contribute to consumer satisfaction or dissatisfaction?
- What is there about this event that made the consumer and/or salesperson feel or behave in this way and how does this relate to consumer satisfaction or dissatisfaction?
- What physical and/or mental steps has the consumer gone through in the written memory and how do these contribute to satisfaction or dissatisfaction?

You will theorise by moving back and forth from individual memory analysis to analysing the set of memories. An individual memory analysis may suggest an interpretation of a common pattern across a set of memories or may indicate a revision of a past interpretation.

In these memories you will be looking for things that society is telling us, things that we have taken for granted, underlying assumptions and cultural imperatives that have occurred. Thus, the group endeavours to uncover the social meanings embodied by the actions described in the written accounts and the process whereby the meanings, both the then and now, are arrived at. At some stage a coherent picture will emerge and the analysis of the episodes for the session will be complete.

4. How will the information collected in these memory-group sessions be dissemination or used?

First and upmost the data collected from your group sessions along with at least one other group's sessions will be used in Lorraine's PhD dissertation. It is also anticipated that several publications and conference presentations will result from this work.

5. What degree and kind of confidentiality and anonymity will be provided to yourself and the other participants?

While it is not anticipated that the gathered information will be harmful or sensitive to yourself or the other participants due to the subject context and the methodology used, the following procedures will be used to protect your anonymity. Each participant's memories will be coded rather than marked with their name. Since it will be obvious during the sessions who has written each memory, group members will be asked not to discuss any sensitive personal issues or to connect names to others' stories outside the group. During or at the end of each session, you may request that certain information remains confidential to the group or not be used in the reporting of the research.
All sessions will be audio taped. Sections of the tape will be transcribed verbatim either by Lorraine or a reputable, discrete transcriber. Pseudonyms rather than personal names will be attached to the transcripts. You will be invited to view the transcriptions and may request that certain personal sections not be used.

Since lengthy excerpts are most likely to be used in reporting of this data, you will be invited to read and comment on any relevant sections to ensure that you can not be identified in any way which would be objectionable.

This also gives you the opportunity to question any analysis of your personal statements which you believe the researcher has misinterpreted.

6. How will the tapes and information collected be stored and disposed of to ensure your and other participants' privacy?

All consent forms, written memories, tapes, transcripts, computer disks will be stored and locked in Lorraine's office or home files. When the transcriber has access to the tapes, they will be secured in some manner (e.g., locked in a filing cabinet while not in use) to ensure privacy and safety.

Upon the completion of this project, each group member's original written memories will be returned to her. All tapes and copies of the memories which could identify yourself or another participant will be erased or destroyed respectively.

Discussion sessions will be considered the property of the resultant group members and the principal researcher. Upon request a participant may have access to her groups' transcripts, but she would be required to keep them confidential and return them to the principal researcher. If a group member subsequently wishes to use any memories, comments or quotes resulting from the group discussions, she must first obtain the consent of her group members and the principal researcher. However, her own personal written memories will be considered her personal property. Thus, she will be able to use or dispose of them accordingly.

7. What will you gain by participating in this research project?

While there is no monetary payment for your participation, it is hoped that these memory-work sessions will be both a social and learning experience for yourself and the other participants. Other memory-work groups have reported that sharing, discussing and theorising their memories have been an enjoyable and valuable task in understanding how we interact, experience and give meaning to our social worlds. In doing so, perhaps you can achieve a better understanding of how you contribute to the social construction of yourself and thus, improve the quality of your life and others through your decisions and actions.
INFORMED CONSENT

Participation in the Study:
Constructing Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction from Women's Memories of Clothing Retail Exchanges

I have read the project information sheet and have had the details of this study explained to me. My questions regarding this study have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand I may ask further questions at any time.

I also understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time, to decline to answer any particular questions, and/or request that specific personal information about myself remains confidential.

I agree to provide information to the researchers and to protect other group members' anonymity as set out on the information sheet. Furthermore, I consent to the publication of the results from this study with the understanding that my anonymity will be protected.

I wish to participate in this study under the conditions set out on the information sheet and this consent form.

Name (Printed):

Signature:

Date:

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Ethics Committee, Department of Marketing University of Otago
APPENDIX C

THE PARTICIPANTS' MEMORY-TEXTS

All the participants' memory-texts are listed in alphabetical order under the appropriate trigger topic and group heading. Each memory-text is presented, unedited, as written by each participant.

A QUICK EXIT

GROUP 1's MEMORY TEXTS

Annabel's Memory-Text.
Annabel was shopping with her partner (a very rare occasion) as they took in the sights of downtown Vancouver where they were visiting for the day. Both were casually dressed; Annabel in her baggy stoned-washed rugged over-alls and her partner in his jeans and runners. It was a beautiful summer day and both were enjoying walking through the city, popping in and out of stores which interested them both. Although he was agreeable about visiting women's clothing stores, he was not overly enthusiastic.

It was Annabel's last chance to find that something special for her 20th high school reunion. They entered into a shop that looked relatively expensive, but perhaps affordable (even when considering the exchange rate). The store divided into two main sections - a casual/sports wear section and a formal work-wear and dress section. It was almost as if it was two individual shops. Annabel and her partner stepped up from the entrance into the casual/sports wear area.

The shop was a corner one housed within of a small contemporary mall or group of shops in the busy downtown business area. The two outer walls of the casual/sports wear area were almost completely glass and mirror with striking visual displays. Off the back of this area was another room which displayed shoes for sale. Again, this shoe area was almost a completely separate shop with just a small archway (a bit larger than a regular size door) opening into it. The casual/sports wear selling floor appeared nearly square with spacious, individualised dressing rooms in the centre. The clothes were neatly displayed and organised against the closed walls and dressing rooms. The aisles were abnormally spacious with a slightly off-white tiled floor which matched the rest of the decor. At the far side of the room a casual, inviting chair and sofa setting of furniture blended into the decor adding to the overall shop environment. It allowed individuals to relax comfortably viewing both the inside and outside of the shop without being either conspicuous or hidden away.
Annabel's partner quickly found refuge in a chair when she began to look seriously through the clothing racks. He took little notice of any store details such as the price tags. Upon browsing Annabel saw that the clothes were branded with well known top American and European designers and that they were very expensive (e.g., $2,000 for a jacket; $1,000 for a skirt - Canadian). However, there were a few brands much, much lower in price (still expensive) which were affordable to her. Annabel wandered around the shop more through curiosity, enjoyment and fashion trend hunting than in serious anticipation of purchasing anything. After looking, Annabel decided to try on one outfit (just affordable). It was not exactly what she had envisaged and was expensive, but thought it might do if nothing else was to be found and if it was absolutely stunning on. She was escorted to a dressing room by a salesperson who chatted pleasantly to her, carefully and politely gaining information about her.

Meanwhile, the salesperson had been quietly chatting to Annabel's partner; finding out where they lived, how they were enjoying their visit, etc., etc. By this time she had already offered him a beverage and brought him a cup of cappuccino (not yet trendy or available in NZ) which he had consumed. He was actually enjoying being there. He was relaxing, chatting, and watching the happenings inside and outside the shop. He was on holiday.

As Annabel tried on the outfit, she heard the salesperson chatting away and offering him a second cup of cappuccino, which he graciously accepted. He thought the treatment was great, he had never experienced anything like this before when shopping for clothes with Annabel!

When Annabel stepped out of the dressing room to show her partner and the salesperson that the outfit did not work, the salesperson quickly offered her another outfit to try on. It was a beautiful, short (above the knee) chiffon full pleated skirt with a tapestry, short tailored jacket. Annabel fell in love with it, but was hesitant to try it on. She explained to the salesperson that it would not suit because she was unable to wear an appropriate shoe style due to her disability. She also silently anticipated that it would be expensive. With some encouragement from the salesperson (but no pressure) Annabel tried it on. She was dying to see what it would look like on. -Yes, it looked absolutely gorgeous. But when she looked at the price tag - over 3,000 Canadian dollars, almost 6,000 NZ dollars, - she almost died of shock. She panicked a little, but thought she had a legitimate excuse - she could not wear the appropriate shoe style. But when Annabel came out of the dressing room to show her partner, the salesperson was armed with a pair of shoes and socks that fitted the brief perfectly along with a couple of other outfits to try on. The shoes were flat, heavy, lace-up ones (Doc Martin style). They were to be worn with an ankle shock. The look was very new, but Annabel knew it would work. It would look fantastic.
Meanwhile, Annabel's partner had just finished his second cup of cappuccino and another salesperson had gone across the store to get him yet another. Annabel was also offered a beverage, but politely declined. He commented favourably about the outfit and made strong remarks that he thought she should purchase it. Annabel was unable to tactfully inform him of the price without indicating that they should not be there drinking this store's cappuccino and trying on this store's clothes. It was out of their league!

Annabel tried on another outfit she liked [whether it was cheaper or not and what it looked like can not be remembered]. She felt uneasy about waiting for her partner to finish his third cup without buying something. She knew that somehow they needed to tactfully leave the store without purchasing anything.

As Annabel tried on the third outfit, she heard her partner telling the salesperson that she was an expert in fashion retailing, etc., etc. At this point she was feeling very embarrassed.

When Annabel came out of the dressing room for the third time, it was obvious that the dress did not fit properly. It made Annabel feel at bit more relaxed, taking some pressure off her to buy. The salesperson automatically, but politely started to pin out the excess fabric, to illustrate how it would fit perfectly with a few alterations. She was prepared with a pin cushion wrapped around her wrist and it was obvious to Annabel that she knew exactly what she was doing. She proceeded to explain that the store could do the alterations that afternoon and the dress could be collected before Annabel had to catch the ferry that evening.

Annabel was startled. She felt embarrassed and guilty. Her partner, however, was relaxed and content. He chatted away as if Annabel would definitely purchase one of the two outfits. He was completely unaware of the price. Annabel politely explained by telling a little white lie that she wanted to look some more. She was unsure if either of the two outfits was exactly what she wanted or required. Her partner was somewhat persistent that perhaps she should just purchase one. After all, she did not have much time.

Annabel was anxious to leave as quickly as possible. She could not exit with her partner soon enough.
Helena's Memory-Text.

She was standing in front of a large window of a clothing store mall. The clothes on the mannequins looked exactly what she had been looking for: natural white silk-cotton long sleeved blouse and blue ankle length skirt with a slit in the back. The blouse was loose and flowed nicely on the contours of the overly skinny mannequin. The skirt hugged the mannequin’s long sleek legs. But the clothes fit to her newly awoken sense of style. She stretched her neck without moving from the front of the window to peek inside the boutique.

No music inside the store, no neon lights, but soft yellow lights. No customers were in there, only the saleswoman at the counter filling out some forms, her spectacles hanging in a chain from her neck. She had very blond, short hair, permed and perfectly in place and her face was covered with perfect, but clearly noticeable make-up. The colours of the make-up weren’t too offensive, like her lipstick was pink, but not bright pink. She was frowning over her papers. She was about 40 and clearly projected classy, expensive taste. The saleswoman scared her. She walked quietly away avoiding the open door so she wouldn’t be seen inside of the shop. She was wearing a blue T-Shirt tucked into her lose jeans that stayed up with her hipbones. Her once white aerobics shoes were worn out into every day street colours. She certainly didn’t want to bother the lady.

She always hesitated to go into clothing stores, although she liked nice and usually expensive, good quality clothes, but she never had any apprehension about going into a health club. She was one of them with the right gear. This time she had on her black, sleeveless, cotton bike shorts, just long enough to cover the whole length of the quadriceps; a white T-shirt and a blue sweat shirt on top of it as it was cold inside. It was fall. She carried her pink water bottle in her hand, paid at the counter, marched into the aerobics class. She left her water bottle on the side and took a place toward the mid front of the rectangular large aerobics room. The well acclaimed athletes smiled at her from all of the four walls. Were they suppose to inspire someone? The room was full of people, mostly women - young - but also men. It was packed. She felt like a fish in an overcrowded aquarium where the fish were trying to stay in one spot by paddling their little fins nervously back and forth. The instructor was a sinewy, fit, lean small short man, probably Polynesian decent. His mannerism was quick, so was his way of talking. One of her students stood in front of her. This student seemed very muscular. This wasn’t the usual surroundings for an encounter with a student, she avoided to look at her. The instructor started to blast his music; the usual rappy, hip-hoppy aerobics stuff. She could barely see him moving, although he pranced back and forth on an elevated instructor floor; there were so many people. She couldn’t move her arms without hitting somebody. The others didn’t seem to worry about hitting her (she hated when people aren’t considerate like that), they didn’t even notice. Their eyes were clued into the instructor, who changed his quick moves in quick bursts and gave his instructions after these bursts; quick words aided with constant, rapid hand gestures. Everyone was doing the moves wrong, moving into wrong directions and facing the wrong directions but she noticed their eyes were shining; they were
looking at God up there and they were all following his lead with determined, ambitious smiles on their faces - two beats behind or some were two measures behind him. The mass of bodies moved around her in an ever closing circle that was going to squeeze her in its centre, but no one looked at her. She looked down at the pink and rose carpeted floor. She felt she was suffocating, she hated these moves, she thought the instructor was no God, he actually sucked. She tried to understand why people loved this, but got too irritated and angry and aggravated and pushed her way through the uplifted, enthusiastic faces to pick up her water bottle next to the erector spinae machine - this machine was closest to the door of all the white training machines - and ran out after five minutes. She had never done that before, left the class like this without giving it a chance. She did not look at anybody on her way out. She felt bad, like culturally insensitive.
Priscilla's Memory-Text.

On this particular day - yet another busy one - she zapped off shopping to purchase a classic stylish black cardigan. She thought about which shop would be the best to try, which had the easiest access, and felt confident she would find what she wanted in a shop she was familiar with.

She set off purposefully. As she entered the shop she was surprised to be met by the smell of cigarette smoke. Priscilla was not a smoker.

Where on previous visits she had found the clothes to be displayed in groups - either -jackets or skirts or shirts - today it all appeared rather dishevelled. Extra racks of clothes were taking up any available floor space and she found it hard to actually view the clothes.

Deciding it would be easier to ask for some help, she approached the shop assistants. Unfortunately for Priscilla they seemed in deep conversation and did not take any notice of her standing there. There were two assistants on this day. The conversation between them continued as one moved off through a private entrance in the back of the shop. This also sent a strong wave of smoke out as she pulled the curtain defining the entrance - or exit.

Priscilla, not being one to wait forever for service, decided to abandon her mission and spend her money elsewhere. She was frustrated and disappointed with her visit to the shop and has not yet returned to it.

There were no other customers in the store at the time.
Susie's Memory-Text.

It was a warm sunny day - Summer was almost here. The wardrobe was looking pretty sad - time to go shopping for summery clothes. Susie was in her thirties - decided to try an ethnic type dress. The dress shop had exactly the style - longish flowing, white and just the thing for summer evenings. She went into the fitting room. There was a skylight there where the sun was streaming through. She tried the dress on. Someone else had already done so because she could smell a strong deodorant type of smell. A bit off putting to say the least. The dress was almost what she wanted, but then she noticed a split of about three inches where the stitching had come undone around part of the waistline. Susie took the dress off - changed into her own hot winter clothes and took the dress to the owner of the shop at the counter. She pointed out the problem. The look of utter disdain on the Manager's face made Susie feel as if she had in fact split the dress. Feeling hot prickles climbing up her neck it was time to leave!! Messages were being sent to the legs "lets get out of here!" - but the lead feet seemed stuck to the floor - and the mouth kept chattering on non-sensically. It was at least two more years before she went near that shop again and she made quite sure the manager was nowhere near at the time. She still did not buy anything!
Wendy's Memory-Text.

Leaving.

She had not bought any article of clothing for a long time. Being a student with little income, new clothes were not a priority. But a new swimsuit was a necessity. Her old one was literally falling apart and in that climate, living by the sea, swimming was an essential part of her lifestyle.

It was late summer. She knew there wouldn't be a huge selection of swimsuits in the stores but she thought there should be a few at sale price. She had put aside this particular Saturday morning to find one, knowing it was going to be a hunt. She was very particular about the style of swimsuit she would wear and had a limit on what she could pay.

She started in Fremantle where she lived, going to every women's clothing store. Nothing. Into the car, she drove down the highway to the next shopping centre, Grove Plaza on the edge of the very prestigious residential area of Peppermint Grove. Nothing in the department store. She wandered into the Plaza and took the elevator up to the second level. From the top of the elevator she saw a rack of swimsuits hanging near the entrance of a small boutique. She went in. There weren't many. It didn't take long to find her size range and she immediately fell upon a stunningly beautiful number. It was white with inserts of mesh and a small amount of silver trim. WOW! She grabbed it off the rack and reached for the tag.

The price on the tag gave her such a shock the hanger fell from her hands and the swimsuit to the floor. Suddenly she was aware of how scruffy she looked; of having strayed into the wrong store. How obvious it must be that she could not, would not pay such an extortionate amount for such a skimpy garment. Very quickly, before she could be discovered and confronted by a sales assistant, she picked it up, put it back on the rack and, trying to appear nonchalant, walked out.
A QUICK EXIT

GROUP 2's MEMORY-TEXTS

Desiree's Memory-Text.
Desiree was really excited about her shopping trip. She had waited five years for this moment, to buy the outfit for her daughter's graduation! She wanted something really trendy, something that would make her feel really good about herself. She wanted her daughter to feel proud of her too when she introduced her to all of her University friends. She did not really feel old enough to have a daughter, 24, graduating after 5 years at University. She still took a clothes size 14 !!! A size she had taken all her life. Mind you, she had worked hard to keep her figure, exercising regularly, watching her diet. So when she stopped outside this 'trendy boutique' with some really eye-catching, unusual styles, her intuition said, "Hey Babe! This is your scene!" Without a moment's hesitation she was in the door. Then it hit her, the atmosphere was evil! It was weird! The music that was playing made her stomach heave, Indian-snake-charmer sounds, whining away. "Yuk, not that again".. thought Desiree, but undeterred she made further strides...

It hit her again... the smell...the incense, joss-sticks, "Oh, God.. Not now!!"
Not today. "She jumped as this creature appeared out of the fog and gloom, a witch in gold and bangles.... "Hello, dearie" ..Desiree was gone... She was out of that door so fast, hanging on to her bag, tears pouring from her eyes, her emotions a total mixture of sickness, fear, painful memories......Why.. Desiree thought.. Why ...did you react so much.. the atmosphere within the shop was foul, sickening, putrid, she couldn't breathe, it was dark, the music was awful, but she reacted so fast, so quickly..... it was the memories that all of that atmosphere evoked.... The smell....the music., the bangles..

Visions appeared in Desiree's mind of caftans, of beads, of incense, of long hair .....of her parents threatening her not to get involved in drugs or she would be in big trouble...... when she was at University... Fears and threats... Memories of having to hide a caftan from her parents, a caftan that made her feel 'with it' and accepted amongst her college peers. GUILT...it all flooded back.. She was choking to get her breath and angry with herself for going into the shop in the first place...angry as she had not had the chance to actually see the outfit that she had seen in the window because of the gloom, ..she felt guilty for thinking she was still a young woman ...guilty for being proud of herself for staying slim ....but she wasn't old... fears, anger, guilt and confusion strode into the doors of her mind.. it did not stop the tears.. but it certainly stopped the desire to buy a new outfit.... for that day anyway.
Frances's Memory-Text.

Couldn't leave a shop fast enough.

Frances was in a new city exploring. She entered a store and was immediately hit by the bright fluorescent lighting, the gleam from the polished floors and the glossy make-up of the service personnel. Some sort of background music was playing; a disco version of 'Greensleeves' or an orchestral version of 'You light up my life.' Immediately she wondered if this shop was appropriate for her needs. Still, she needed a swimsuit desperately and so persevered. She walked briskly past the rows of delicately wrapped and displayed designer chocolates and the strings of gold necklaces, bracelets, anklets and earrings. She took the escalator to the floor designated lingerie and swimsuits. The music followed her.

She located the swimsuit rack and started flickering through the garments. Everything appeared to look 'old' (padded cups, large pants) or too young (thong things). Finally she spotted two swimsuits which fulfilled her criteria and looked for a changing room. Instantly, a shop assistant appeared, immaculately groomed. Cordially she enquired as to Frances's needs and made chitchat (Do you want a changing room?; Oh, what do you want a swimsuit for?; Oh, you're going on holiday soon, lucky you, just this way, yes).

The changing rooms were deserted. The rooms were large and white. There wasn't enough room to step back from the mirror to get a decent look. The swimsuits looked rather dreadful. The prices were even more dreadful. The shop assistant enquired as to the progress (How're we going then?). Frances asked if the price tag was for the top and the bottom or were they priced separately. "They're priced separately" assured the shop assistant. Frances's face registered horror (widened eyes, slack jaw). The shop assistant added that the material was good quality you know and of such-and-such label, a top brand you know, wears well you know, etc.

Frances changed quickly and exited by the shortest route, relief in her footsteps and determined escape on her face.
Gisela’s Memory-Text.

Gisela really did need a pair of jeans. The last ones she had bought had been at least three years ago and were stained and frayed.

The jeans are always stacked so neatly on the shelves. Her first problem was finding out which were the females and which were the males. Then, which size to try. With no sign of any sales assistance she grabbed three - one from each pile going across the top, then headed for the cream calico curtains. (Why do those curtains always hang with gaps either side?) She whipped off her skirt and started on the first pair. They got just past her knees, but would rise no further. She discarded those and started on the second pair - half way up her thighs and the sales assistant now materialised, outside the curtain gap (was she squinting through?) with a, "Can I help you with any of those?". "They're a bit of a tight fit," she responded, handing the first and quickly removed second pair to the assistant. "Perhaps you could find something about two sizes larger, please."

While the assistant was gone she tried the third pair to no avail - top of the thighs only! There was then a period of time she spent surveying the curtain and awaiting the return of the sales assistant. She was aware of something annoying her, it was that incessant music playing over the speakers. Two more pair of jeans appeared through the curtains and she tried both of these on. The larger of the two made it over her hips and the zip did up, but they seemed to be remarkably tight in the crutch. By then she was also breaking out in a sweat from the confined space of the changing room and the lack of ventilation in this part of the shop.

The sales assistant returned - "How are they?". "The cut wasn't quite right," she responded. "I'll get you another style, won't be a sec," and she disappeared to appear quite quickly with two more pair in hand. "Try these." She found that neither of these fitted - one pair hung in a particularly unflattering manner, the other seemed to cause her stomach to protrude because they had a button fly, which was not what she wanted.

By now sweat was running down her front and she just wanted to get her skirt on and get out of this place. Jeans never seemed to fit right, she wondered why she'd ever decided to get new ones.

Out through the curtain - jeans slung over her arm and over to the counter she went. "How did you get on?" smiling sweetly the sales assistant in her size 8 jeans (with gathers at the waist!) enquired. "Sorry, none suited," she responded backing quickly away and moving as fast as she could to the outside door and fresh air. She couldn't wait to get out of there - not only was it hot and stuffy, but her body just didn't seem to be the right shape.
Sweetie's Memory-Text.
Could't exit quick enough.
Panic. She needed to find something in a real hurry - they were leaving for Auckland for the party in half an hour. A last minute phone call from the hostess about food-intentions had revealed that it was an ultra-casual event - which meant the planned formalish outfit was 'overdoing' it. Never get it right - blast!

"Just off to get some wrapping paper for the present - be back in a tick".

Trust the sister-in-law to organise a belated 40th for the younger sister - ask us to provide this and that for 80 guests (which implied formality) - then turn it into a 'pool party'! Why do these things always happen! Once again, the glam city sister-in-laws would float in wearing absolutely stunning 'appropriate' creations from overseas, while the 'country' sister-in-law would be off-key and frumpy. Damn! She'd promised hubby she would cut back on spending ... he'd be livid if he knew she was even contemplating buying something just for his sister's party - he'd think it was such a waste ... but this was an emergency! How much could she afford to spend? Couldn't afford to spend, was more like it...! Probably have to pay about $200 for the right thing. Oh lord! Why didn't I think ahead and make something for nothing, she groaned.

New shop in town - Gypsy Karma Bali imports. Hadn't been in there before - too busy - but shop looked more user-friendly than those other class-y boutique-y stores that lined the main street. She always felt the snooty staff probably saw her a potential 'shop-lifter' and watched her every movement - knowing she couldn't possibly fit into the designer garments she was rifling through, so why was she even in the shop?

Gypsy Karma - amateurish signs - faint smell of incense - dangley earrings and opium pipes in a glass cabinet - ex-hippy-type shop assistant - probably stuff will be too young, she thought! First rack - lace and crushed tie-dye velvet - definitely not her style. Next rack - really nice hand printed rayon fabrics. Bright ... like these. Oh dear ... mini-length! Not with tree-trunk legs. Blast the Polynesian build. The sister-in-laws would look fabulous in them - when don't they look fabulous! (Oh to be tall and thin - with their amazing boobs). Oh god, look at the time, she thought. If she didn't find something soon, she'd just have to wear the overdone outfit - nothing else was clean ... if it was clean, there weren't any shoes the right colour... or the only bra that could possibly be worn with it was in the wash. What a life.

Click, swish .. click, swish ... click, swish; - hangers pushed impatiently along the rack. Items quickly appraised. What's this? No! This? Not me. Ah... what's this? ... possibility. Trousers and top. Flow-y fabric. Navy-ish. A bit darker background than wanted - really wanted something with a lighter base - better for the skin tone - but the yellow and orange
splashes on the navy lighten the effect. Size? One size fits all. Ok - what about the bum - yes - looks large enough! No time to try it - risk it - will probably fit. Price? $70 the pair. Hey, that's good. Expected to pay twice that. Yellow shoes will go with it. The yellow earrings too. It'll do.

"I'll take this one" she breathed with relief to the ex-hippie-looking shop assistant - trying non-verbally to convey the urgency, the shortage of time - without spelling it out - will take too long to explain ... quicker not to start. Hubby will be getting suspicious - doesn't take this long to buy 'paper'. Got to have a shower - will there be time? Have it in Auckland! No, have to arrive 'ready' - the casual look remember. Have to look as though it is any old little number from the wardrobe. The extensive wardrobe - ha!

New shop - new assistant - trying to learn how to work things. Blast - taking years to write out the blessed docket - just put 'outfit' and be done with it, can't you! No .. she has to look up the catalogue and find the official title and write it out in neat, slow handwriting ... 'two piece - palazzo pants and top'. What now? She's got to write the inventory number! Can you believe it...she has to get the catalogue out again and find the inventory number! Oh boy ... how can I sneak this in so hubby doesn't notice - get showered - flossied up and .. if he notices I'll say I bought it in a sale last year in Brisbane ... "you remember ... I told you about buying it and then seeing another one exactly the same walking down the street on a short tubby 'tourist-y' looking woman which put me off" - yes, he'll fall for that one! I'll say "after that I didn't feel like wearing it before - but felt like it today, for the party".

Oh god - what's she doing now? Folding it all up carefully, like it's a Christian Dior original - just stick it in the b___ bag and let me out of here! "Look, don't worry about the tissue ... I'm going to wear it today ... won't matter if it's bit crumpled ... I'll fix it ".

"Could you write your address and phone number on the back, please", the shop assistant asked her pleasantly. "Sure" she breathed through her teeth, as she struggled to recall the address she had lived at for the last 20 years where hubby was waiting impatiently for the departure north. Dashing off the address illegibly on the back of the cheque, in a wobbly hand ... God, the shop assistant will think it's a stolen cheque book and I'm making up an address ... she tried to walk calmly to the door to exit in a 'definitely-legitimate' manner, ... God, where did I park the car, she panicked ... before flying up the street to the white Honda.
EXHILARATION

GROUP 1's MEMORY-TEXTS

Annabel's Memory-Text.
Yes, Annabel was once again shopping with her partner, Big Fellow. Another one of those rare occasions, but memorable! This time, however, they were on holiday in San Fransisco. They were staying a few nights with an old university room mate in the suburb and were then continuing on to Annabel's parent's home for Christmas.

They travelled into the city on BART to buy some clothes for Big Fellow at his favourite clothing store, San Fransisco's Downtown Big and Tall, and to do some general Christmas shopping. Big Fellow was always excited (like a little boy) about shopping when they went to his favourite store. There was lots to choose from and he always walked away with several full shopping bags! (This stop at Big and Tall was usually his one and only shopping trip every couple of years!) Yes, the joy of shopping was in his blood, as was almost always, the case for Annabel! As they wandered the streets they came upon the Grand Opening of the new Downtown Neiman Marcus store. It occupied the corner of one of the main ritzy streets of San Fransisco (Union Square). The huge heavy golden doors at the apex of the store facing the Square were held open by two young men in black tucks, top hats, and white gloves with a red rose pined to each of their lapels. The red carpet from the streets' edges literally lead Annabel and Big Fellow through the open doors. As they walked up the carpet and entered into the store they could feel the excitement, the hustle and bustle, of many people coming and going. The aisles were wide which dispersed into columns of expensive jewellery, perfumes and cosmetics. Huge chandeliers fell from the high open ceilings. They sparkled as their light reflected off all the glass and/or mirrored windows, counters, and merchandise. Annabel and Big Fellow wandered through the people and expensive jewellery counters in AWE, as it all seemed to glitter back at them!

Annabel and Big Fellow proceeded up the escalator with great anticipation, asking themselves: How many floors will there be? What will they all be like? As they ventured off the escalator onto the first floor, they found themselves amongst women's evening wear. In every direction they looked there were gowns made of sequences. It was the beginning of (or during) the Dallas and Dynasty Era, so almost everything glittered! Although Annabel did not try any gowns on, she found them all, both short and long, extremely heavy as she held them in front of her for Big Fellow to admire! They giggled and laughed as they admired each gown for its beauty and elegance in comparison to Annabel's quiet and unsophisticated lifestyle, and also as they noted that the prices were in accordance with each gown's weight!
As they headed toward the escalator, they noticed a small group of people standing and staring in amusement at what appeared to be a mannequin in a beautiful, long, white, slinky, but elegant evening gown. They were lured in by the small crowd to see what was so fascinating! As people gradually moved away they found themselves directly in front of the mannequin. Suddenly, but subtly it moved. They giggled quietly as they realised that it was a live model! She was a beautiful black model. They stood in amazement quietly watching and waiting for her to subtly move again. How long could she stand there without moving? Would she move a limb, her trunk, blink an eye or just twitch? Nothing moved, nothing shifted. She stood there in complete stillness. How could she stand there for so long appearing even breathless? Finally, after minutes had passed, she shifted her weight slightly only to start the process again. In disbelief and amazement, they moved on through the rest of the store.

As they left the store, passing again through the elaborate ground floor and out through the heavy golden doors on the rich dark red carpet, they could still feel the buzz of the crowd, the sparkle of the environment, as well as the excitement of their in-store shopping experiences. It was exhilarating, to say the least!
Helena's Memory-Text.

She had just decided to go to a Christmas party after a long period of hesitation. At this party she would not know most of people and she was worried about how comfortable she would feel there. Another source of hesitation was the dress. She did not have a party dress, she didn't think she had any dresses what so ever, if you don't count her one mini skirt. She lived in California at the time and she knew that every woman would really dress up for the occasion. So, she decided to go for a real party dress, the first in her life.

She did not like frills and glitter, she was more for natural materials, simple lines and preferred natural colours instead of neon pink and metallic blue. The Californians, instead, seemed to love bright colours. This was a serious task. She asked a male friend--and American--to come with her to judge the appropriateness of the possible choices and also to drive her around.

They went to her favorite mall and went in a couple of shops. She could immediately see that there was nothing for her taste. Her companion was getting worried and could not understand what she was looking for. And how could she decide without even trying anything on that she did not like any of the dresses available.

Finally, they entered the biggest and the most expensive department store in the mall. She had bought several items of clothing there before, so the place had potential. After wandering around the women's department, she still could not see what she was looking for. He told her to ask for assistance and he was increasingly worried that she will not find anything in this place either. He asked for her when she spotted a possible choice on a glass wall of one the designer boutiques inside the department store. This dress was on sale, expensive, but she had decided that once in her life she can have a NICE dress and NICE dresses cost money. The dress was a body hugging, gray mini-skirt length dress. The saleswoman said they had only small sizes like 4 and 6 and politely suggested that those might not be her sizes after looking at her baggly dressed form. She wanted to try it on anyway with his encouragement (he did not want her to leave without a dress!). It was too big and did not fit anyway. She felt more like a sausage inside of a loose, wrinkled skin. She felt uncomfortable modelling it around for him. She had bare legs and feet.

The saleswoman was getting into it now. She brought dress after dress for her to try on. She tried them all on and she loved the loose, ankle length, natural white, simple silk dress which had a long row of buttons from the neck to the ankles in the front. It was the latest design and very expensive. She almost had decided for that dress, although her friend thought it was a bit too simple and humble and natural when she was turning around and around in front of him to make the silk flow with her movements. She was surprised about his helpful and insightful comments. No other man had ever actually helped her to make a choice with clothing.
As the last resource, the saleswoman brought out a little black dress. They only had this one left and it was also a reduced price. It was a size 4. She might as well try it on. It fit perfectly. He thought it made her look great, even she felt great in it. That was it, one of a kind, the perfect dress. It was black wool with suede waist line and a belt. It had an open neckline and it was short. How could she feel so comfortable in such a thing? The saleswoman asked her whether she was a runner. No, I am actually a dancer, she replied. The saleswoman complemented her about her great looking, strong thighs. Oh God, she always wanted to hide them and although the saleswoman obviously meant it as a complement she still felt bad. The black dress would show her thighs.

Nevertheless, she bought it. She felt very good. It was money well spent. She had never before found such a dream piece of clothing; especially when she was desperately looking for one. Even the sales person had been very understanding and co-operative, not to even to mention him. That was a good team.
Priscilla's Memory-Text.

Leaving a store feeling exhilarated.

It was roughly three months after having her second child. With the baby being born the end of November, Priscilla had made do with any comfortable clothes during the Xmas season. She was too tired and busy to worry too much about fashion. Her pregnancy had seemed long and fraught with sickness for most of the nine months. She was not one to blossom during pregnancy.

At the time she was living in a very run down town. It had once been a prosperous coal mining town but now consisted of mainly run down houses, broken footpaths and no social contact for Priscilla. Her days were spent mostly caring for her two young children. The nearest town of any size was approximately 15 mins away on a country road. This town was not very exciting but Priscilla had met two women who were to become very dear friends. They were her life line at those times when things got her down.

Approximately 50 mins away was a larger town boasting some nice stores. It had seemed like an age since Priscilla went shopping for anything for herself, especially clothes. She felt in the need to at least brave the shops and maybe find some appropriate garment: smart, but appropriate for a young mum forever feeding or washing babies. She felt way out of touch with the fashions and not confident at all. With the help of her mother, who lived in the larger town and had offered to mind the children, she set off. Somehow the thought of walking the streets in the city seemed a little daunting. The weather was hot and Priscilla was still up twice a night feeding her baby. It didn't take much to tire her. But her mother, one to keep her eye on nice stores, suggested a place to go in one of the suburbs.

She set off nervously. She had not left her new baby for more than a few minutes before. She knew the baby was in the best of care though, and her toddler. She pulled in to a park close to the store and entered very tentatively. It had been a long time..... what did one wear and with what and how did one wear it. She fossicked through some of the racks starting to feel rather despondent, very mindful of the time going by and having left her children. An assistant who appeared to be fixing up some racks of clothes struck up a casual conversation. Priscilla had no problem chatting to her and soon relaxed a little. The store was not overly large, had a front window but no other glass walls. It was well set out with a nice area near the end for one to try on garments, come out and have a good look in longer well placed mirrors. As it was not in the middle of the city the shop had a relaxed feel to it. People came in and out and appeared to enjoy browsing without any hassle attached.

Getting back to Priscilla, she and the assistant were chatting along comfortably, the assistant no doubt building up a bit of a profile in order to see if she could tempt Priscilla into buying something. Priscilla saw some dressy jeans she rather liked. Time to take the plunge and try
something on. Oh dear... it had been a long time since she last did this. Great, they fitted, felt good, were practical and would carry through Autumn to winter. One needed a very versatile wardrobe at this stage in one's life. But what to wear them with? No problem, the assistant appeared with a couple of shirts. One looked great. So this is how it feels again. Oh, and something else, the assistant then appeared with a top which she suggested would look good worn over the shirt, or could be worn alone. Wow, felt good, looked smart, was practical and Priscilla was definitely feeling "with it" again. She hadn't even thought about the children for a few minutes. But something was missing from the ensemble. Sure enough the assistant offered a VERY smart black belt, to try on too. Seemed a pity to hide it under anything. Well by now Priscilla was standing there in the jeans, shirt, top and belt. She was a little taken back at the reflection in the mirror- was that her? Yes, to heck with it.... she would take the lot. She had a fair idea of the prices, she always looked at price tickets before trying clothes on to avoid disappointment if the clothes were out of her price range.

By now she was getting hot, and feeling exhausted from trying the clothes on. She was also anxious to get back to her children. It took no time for the assistant to gather up the garments, pop them into a smart shopping bag and casually relieve Priscilla of her hard saved money. Although she felt a wee twinge of anxiety, Priscilla was happy to part with it. She knew she would get heaps of wear from all the garments, together or as separates. She felt great. She literally skipped out of the shop, one very satisfied customer. The exhilaration lasted for days. It was the best tonic for a young mum living in a depressed, run down town. At least when she went out or had visitors she felt quite the part. She was to wear these clothes for years and whenever she did, always felt good.

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Susie's Memory-Text.

Susie has a problem buying shoes. Many of her unsuccessful stories revolve around shoe shopping experiences. If you want a depressing day then go shoe shopping with Susie. [Excuse the alliteration.]

Her winter shoes had reached the point where she prayed for fine days so her left foot wouldn't get wet through the hole in the left side of the shoe. She really must see if the shoes she had ordered had come in. Taking a big reassuring breath and with speech rehearsed, Susie walked into the shop. Pleasantries were exchanged.

There were two assistants. Both were wearing the mandatory uniform of black skirt and white blouse. The more "tailored" one of the two was far too busy to look up - she was doing the inevitable "book work". The second assistant in black high heeled shoes, white legs, no pantihose was most obliging. She had a nice open face, warm smile - was lightly made up.

Susie told her about the order. She went into the store room - seemed to be away for ages. Still the "tailored" one didn't look up -- no music to fill the pregnant pause either. Nice smell of leather- leather handbags, leather shoes. Susie hates that smell of the "spare pantihose" for people to use when trying shoes on - a funny, musty smell.

The assistant finally appears, no shoes in hand. Susie's order doesn't appear to be there. Oh dear! More discussions on names, spellings, addresses. O - Tailored - One comes to the rescue. Yes they had arrived AND they had even managed to get some that were even larger.

Susie tried the shoes. Eureka - a perfect fit. Susie tried the larger shoes on too. What a great feeling to be able to say "sorry - these shoes are too big"! That always gives her a bit of a buzz!!

Then Shop Assistant Two really came up trumps. She said "I think we have some other shoes that you may be interested in ___." Things were getting exciting now. Shop Assistant Two brought the shoes out. Eureka again! Susie was extremely happy. Shop Assistant Two was bubbling now and more keen to help Susie.

Susie made a decision. "I'll take both pairs please." Shop Assistant Two was delighted. O - Tailored - One looked up - and was that a slight trace of a smile?
Susie with not one, but two pairs of shoes and a promise of a phone call when any more of "her" size came in -- left the shop --walking on air -- totally exhilarated.

Back home the "old" shoes were thrown, with due ceremony, into the rubbish.
Wendy's Memory-Text.
The Setting - Auckland on a Saturday morning in July. For Wendy, this place and time held special significance, being loaded with the excitement of new beginnings, new horizons, new spending power and a fresh new way of relating to her partner. They were now only together at weekends and spending time exploring his new home city was a treat. This included checking out its shopping potential, so her needing to buy something to wear to a reunion banquet was a good excuse to go to Newmarket.

After maybe an hour or so of checking many potential shops (one of which would make a great memory story for some other time!) and feeling as if this was not going to be a successful venture, they found a very small boutique upstairs in 247. From the outside it looked as if the garments sold within were all a bit too lurex and spangly for Wendy’s taste but on the other hand she was feeling like something a little glitzy so they went in.

It seemed packed with women having a party! In fact there were only six women inside but because the place was so small and the women's presence so large there appeared to be more. There was lots of chatter and laughter. The four 'customers' were obviously together, friends or family members representing two generations. They looked to be Southern European but spoke with Kiwi accents. Three of them had on clothes from the store and everyone, including the two sales assistants, were bubbling with the special atmosphere it seemed to evoke. Wendy and her partner felt instantly drawn in to their fun.

One of these women had on a patterned velvet jacket which was being much admired. Wendy very much liked the material but thought the jacket itself, on this large woman, a bit too much of it. Her partner however, had already found a vest in the same fabric and brought it to her. She instantly knew -that's it! It would be perfect, versatile, beautiful, a little flair, even the price was ok, but now for the next test - what would it look like on? She tried it. The women around her stopped whatever they were doing to admire it, smiled and said words of approval. Her partner beamed at her. She carefully took it off, noticing how soft it was and how the colours changed in the light. Yes, she would take it.

As she placed it on the tiny cluttered counter and proudly took out her credit card, the sales assistant, an older woman, chatted to her about having bought only one roll of that particular material and how there had been just enough at the end of the role for this one vest. Carrying it away in its oversized plastic bag it weighed nothing at all, but already it was special. Wendy felt exhilarated.
EXHILARATION

GROUP 2's MEMORY-TEXTS

Desiree's Memory-Text.

Exhilaration (An exciting shopping trip).

Desiree was off on one of her world trips again!!! This time to an International Commonwealth Conference of Dance and Physical Education in Canada. There are lots of 'perks' at International Conferences. As well as offering papers and presentations, attending workshops, etc., there are lots of opportunities for socialising... meeting old friends, making new ones. Socialising means dressing up!!! However, an International Conference social is not your 'Bar-by at the sports club!!'.

What to wear!! provides great excitement for Desiree as she has a chance to dress up everyday, instead of running around in sports clothes all the time. What to wear takes as much planning as the Conference paper.... for Desiree anyway. Canada... Summer as opposed to the Southern Hemisphere's winter.... must not be behind the times... (must let people see that NZ'ers do not run around in grass skirts). Desiree did not panic in her preparation as she was going to be in Sydney a month before and planned her shopping for then. In Sydney, nothing appealed... nothing fitted. If it did, it was far too expensive. Desiree was mortified. Where was the magic sign SALES SALES.. Not being financially flushed due to hubby's employment concerns, Desiree was very careful not to get too carried away. Until she saw them.... The most divine pair of pants for semi-evening wear.

Black... slimming!!.. WOW... Size... Yes... WOW... Price.. WOW... WOW... wow.... AUS $180.00. Desiree had never paid that much in her life before for a pair of pants. She was beside herself. They were so ...HER. The mental processes began. They would match my wine and black top.. that's OK. Shoes, yes, I've got those. NZ $ 200.00. Calm down, go for a walk. One hour later Desiree had convinced herself she could not afford them, BUT if they were still in the shop then they were meant for her. Yes... they'd gone. Oh well, Desiree comforted herself with the thoughts that she should be grateful she was going to Canada anyway and not be so greedy. But, she did want to feel good about herself.

The next week, back in Hamilton, she was drawn to the shop with the magic sign... SALES, SALES...... Desiree nonchalantly walked into the shop. 'Just looking,' she called out to the assistant. Skimmed the racks.. No. NO... YES... the material was the same.... yes..., the design... yes.. MY PANTS.... Here!!!! Desiree could not believe her eyes. She calmly looked at the size... oh well... wrong size. She thought it was too good to be true.... Wait a minute.... not wine... wow.... same pants. Her hopes went up again. YES the size was
right. Desiree seized the moment. DAM the price. She did not even look. These were meant to be. She rushed over to the assistant yelling, *these are mine!!*" The assistant looked strangely at this wild woman who was grinning from ear to ear. 'Aren't they awesome,' says Desiree, thinking at the same time, 'I can take on a night job'.

'Yes, excellent design madam,' said the assistant, 'a good buy at $80.00'. 'WHAT....' screamed Desiree in amazement!! 'But, they *are* good quality,' said the poor assistant; thinking this customer was not prepared to pay the price.

Desiree was on her way back to the rack to see if there was another pair. She was on wings.... Whooppe... This is going to be some trip........
Frances's Memory:
Exhilaration in shopping.
She walked past the window of the shop, a shop she had seen a number of times before, one which held little interest for her. It had been a rather trendy place with fun clothes, but another franchise had taken over and the style of the latest owner was a lot older, and more sensible. The clothes were altogether very sensible. Matching scarves and woollen skirts, well made blouses with fancy collars, mix and match tailored jackets with trousers or skirts. Not exorbitant prices but certainly not budget either. She had gone into the shop a number of times previously as if looking for something, only to wander around aimlessly pulling out Angora jerseys with sparkly inset rhinestones and plaid skirts with sensible pleats. Not her taste at all. So why even look? Why even go into that shop, for every time it was the same. She had made up her mind. She was walking straight past this time. She knew it held nothing of interest for her. Nice lighting, nice displays, service personnel pleasant and not too pushy but, this time she was resisting.

So she walked by the window display with a determined stride, the only betrayal to her intent, one eye sliding to the corner of her vision to catch the window display. No harm in that, a quick peep doesn't mean you've done anything- all the tourists in Amsterdam know that. Nice colours, very nice- greens, oranges, you don't often see those colours in clothes, and that looks like a dress with those colours combined...no, can't be, walk on. Stop. Turn. Go back. Stand and stare. Yes. A dress. Orange and green and white and a kind of purple all mixed up like some garish birthday cake, but it looks great. And the style. Not old-fashioned, quite attractive, rather feminine even - may not suit, she didn't really suit feminine things. But this was long and flowing and comfortable looking - it didn't look like she would have to hitch at the shoulders or worry about it gaping or riding up when she sat down... She remembered that gorgeous white dress with spots she had bought that cost far more than she could afford, but looked terrific, if she never sat down in it! The moment she sat down it turned into a nightmare of gaping button-holes and rolled over waist band.

So here was an orange and green creation that seemed to fit all her criteria. Must try it on. Already suspect it will look fine, it looked like her even before she put it on. But, it may be too short in the waist, or gape at the back where the zip went. Or squash her boobs which could ill afford squashing. Or be too low cut for her liking. Must try it on. Panic - what if someone at this very moment is about to try it on and buy it? What if it's not available in her size? What if there's a sudden earthquake and she never gets to buy it? Action. Move in, point out dress to sale's person. Ask for two sizes to be sure. Look menacingly at anyone who may be thinking of intercepting at this crucial point. Take both to fitting room (blue curtains on brass rings). Try both on. Breathe sigh of relief as one fits perfectly. Wonders about 'perfect fit'. Is it altogether too revealing? Does she look a little 'hot' rather than attractive? Who is she buying it for anyway? Start again - does she like it? Yes. Does it make her feel good? Yes. Will she
be comfortable in public in it? Should be. She remembers to sit down in it to check it's gapability. It passes the test.

Payment is quick and painless. Not an expensive item. She smiles to herself. Service person comments on the colours, "So unusual reeeaally, such nice fabric to wear, doesn't crush much you know". No, she didn't know, nor did she care. She didn't even care if it was a big whopping lie. She had it. It was hers and she loved it from the moment it caught her eye.
Gisela's Memory-Text
Exhilaration (Plus)
Gisela would have to admit that SALE signs always gave her great excitement. On this particular day she was walking with her partner and her young 10 month old child in the buggy through the Centreplace Shopping complex, towards Ward Street. The windows of Denim and Blues were extremely sparse - models wrapped in newsprint - but what caught Gisela's eyes were the large painted words - red on white proclaiming first a SALE and second 50% plus off.

"I'll just have a quick look in here," she called over her shoulder as the adrenalin rush caused her to race double speed through the beckoning doors. Amazed, she noticed the racks were brimming with summer creations - she felt as though she was the first person to start swishing through the hangers. Wow - she spotted a bright yellow number - size 12, over her arm it went to be joined by another brown patterned, cut away arm number. She raced over to the next rack - a bit frumpy some of those shirts - on to the evening wear - not that she needed any of those - where did she ever go? But you never know and the weight had come off (thank goodness for breastfeeding!) and a black number was always useful. She grabbed out a short-sleeved black jacket, then spotted another David Pond dress - black, button through, chiffon sleeves. Yum. "How many items were you allowed to take to these changing rooms?" she wondered. Too bad. Arms laden she headed for the changing rooms.

The yellow dress looked fabulous, so did the brown patterned one as did the black jacket and the black dress. Every item fitted as though it had been made for her and Dave and Natahja both thought so too! But a wary look from Dave sort of had an inhibiting effect. (Not much though.)

Gisela did a bit of a quick mental arithmetic - $50 for the yellow one, $50.00 for the black one, $45 for the brown patterned one and $30.00 for the jacket. Forget the patterned one - it was a bit like one she already had. Okay $130.00 all up - for a quick totalling - $560.00 worth of clothing - what a bargain, what a saving!

She felt her spirits rising as she placed the three garments and the visa card on the counter together and moved the brown patterned dress to one side. (This was to prove that she had willpower and wasn't totally indulgent.) Packed carefully into the large plastic bag the garments didn't take much room at all (only one bag, after all).

"Spending money is such a tonic," Gisela thought as she beamed at the shop assistant in farewell. She walked out of the shop doors floating on air - now all she needed was an excuse to wear them. Wasn't it a lovely day.
Exhilaration

Lunchtime in Rotorua. Sweetie was filling in time between visiting schools and the next appointment wasn’t for another hour. Just enough time for a quick whizz around the central town area. Rotorua had some interesting shops. Didn’t need anything - but you never know what you might find! Had once bought a long primary-yellow Angora jersey in Rotorua which had been a raging success for several winters ... so the shops were worth another looksee in case there were any more bonuses like that around.

Souvenirs: tee-shirts, tea-towels with sheep, tacky imitation artifacts. Grief - how gross! Deka: no thanks, not today. No... No... No... nope, doesn’t look like a bonus day, today. Warehouse Clothing ... heaps of everything the same. Hello, what’s this? Jag ... ah, a bit of class and style. Jazzy window - eye catching. Like the look of the little numbers featuring ... not me of course ... might just have a browse though. Long, narrow, sleek minimalist-style shop - instant appeal. Subtle colours. Oiled floors with designer racks placed strategically around the wall spaces and occasionally centre left stage. Not too many garments crammed onto each rack, but well-stocked - tasteful. Elegant. Everything mixing and matching. Nice for a look, thought Sweetie... see how the other half lives ... mentally taking stock of the current state of the cheque account and patting the handbag to check for the credit cards.

A light waft of French perfume and the vendues, very chic and trendy, is at the left elbow. Svelte, immaculate modern haircut, perfect make-up, manicured hands, Italian shoes - looking like something very coordinated out of a Vogue magazine. Size 8 and probably twice that in age - why isn’t she still at school? “Were you looking for anything in particular?” in polite but interested tones. Probably thinks I’m a bit past this stuff, but seems friendly, thought Sweetie. “Not really, no ... just browsing ... (small talk probably appropriate as she hasn’t turned off) ... but I love that dress there on the mannequin, it’s neat isn’t it, great design, ... but not really my colour ... black doesn’t do anything for me”. “It comes in beige, taupe and green, as well”, helpfully. “ Taupe?”. Interest. The newish taupe shoes would go with it - would be really quite stunning together. Mmm. “It’s just come in yesterday - so we’ve still got the full range of sizes in all colours”, helpfully again. Hesitation; so the vendues is in quick - “Here’s the taupes ... what size would you be?” and with an experienced flick of the wrist, out of the orderly rack the size 14 is plucked. Held up for a better view. “Yes, that’s probably the right size”. Sweetie agrees. Mmm ... rather nice ... it’s really very ... VERY! “I like it ... and I’ve got this wedding coming up in a couple of months ... it would be perfect”. Puts it up against herself and appraises in the mirror. Long slimming lines ... (need that), ankle length... (flattering), flowing style ... (neat for a special occasion), heavy-ish fabric with good drape and hang... (nice). Yes, definitely me, she decides. Mmm.
"Why don’t you slip it on?" and the changing room is offered with a gentle sweep of the wrist and a persuasive slide of the curtain. A quick flick of the eyes to the watch - yes, plenty of time - and she surrenders to the beckoning changing room. Off with old and into the new. Feels comfortable. Smells elegant. Looks ... well, perhaps not as stunning as she’d thought. Why? Wrong shoes. Wrong earrings. That would help. Doesn’t kind of sit right ... or something. Not sure.

“How does it look?” enquires Miss Ultra through the curtain. “Don’t know really ... perhaps it’s the colour ...?” “Have a look in the big mirror out here” and the curtain glides open to reveal all. “Oh, it’s the wrong size - you need a 12 - here, let me get it for you”.

12! She knew she had lost a bit of weight, but a 12! Probably too small... wonder if a half size would be better. Probably haven’t got any. “Here we go!” and the size 12 is passed across. This will be a waste of time.

What’s this ... it does up! Hey, it looks good! Like what it looked as though it would look like. Flattering, actually. Quite delicious in fact - even with the wrong shoes. Like this shop. Fancy, a size 12! Wow ... that’s amazing. Makes it even better. This I MUST have! Too bad about the price. This is IT! The buy of the year. Got to have it. What is the price anyway? $250... expensive ... but definitely worth it. Looks and feels great. Can put in on Amex, no problem. Yes! Go for it!

Five minutes later, re-dressed, hair tidied and in good time for her appointment, Sweetie floated out of the shop door. Exhilaration! Wow, she’d really done it! Actually done it! How neat ... well done dearie! Magnificent! Such a thrill! How clever! Don’t you just love life! C’est bon, n’est pas? Tino pai! Malo! Hubby will never believe it.

For the first time in ages, she’d resisted temptation and been sensible - remembering she had several worn-once outfits that would do for the forthcoming wedding - and really, how often would she wear such an expensive dress?. Could make 6 outfits for that price. Didn’t need it. Walked out empty-handed. I must be getting old, Sweetie thought to herself, as she unlocked the car.
AN IMPULSE BUY

GROUP 1's MEMORY-TEXTS

Annabel's Memory-Text.
Annabel had gone to the shop with a friend to help her friend decide as to whether she should purchase an expensive pair of black tailored worsted trousers. Her friend had looked to purchase a pair of black trousers the prior year without success. This particular year she was determined to purchase a pair before the stores had sold out of an appropriate style and cut which fitted her body shape. In the past she had not always found it easy to find trousers which fitted her properly. She had found a pair of black trousers from a store where she often shopped which she felt were comfortable and looked good. She was, however, unsure of the fabric quality. As they were expensive (more than she had ever paid for a paid of trousers before) she wanted a second opinion besides those of the shop assistants.

Annabel went into the store with strict intent not to purchase anything, but just look at the new winter fashions. She (too) was now an older adult student with little or no income. And she had just purchased on sale some summer garments which she desperately needed for the hot summer climate in which she was now living. Besides that, her move North had already been fairly costly. While her friend tried on the trousers to show Annabel, she casually looked through the new winter season fashions. Even though she found some clothes she liked, she was firm about thinking no, "I can't afford to purchase anything."

As Annabel's friend modelled and discussed the trousers with her regarding the fit and quality of the trousers, an older salesperson (perhaps the manager and/or owner) joined into the conversation. Annabel thought the trousers fitted nicely and were of good quality, but expressed one or two concerns which she felt her friend should take into consideration regarding her decision. The main concerns being that the trousers legs were fairly tapered (not a straight classic cut) and were too long on her friend. With the wider look just entering into the fashion scene that season, Annabel was concerned that there was a possibility that this cut of trousers would be obsolete the following year. Her friend could only justify buying them if she was able to wear them the following year. Second, when the trouser legs were hemmed would the proportion of the style suit her friend's figure. The salesperson then became very aggressive counteracting all of Annabel's and her friend's concerns. "This style of trouser will never go out of fashion. . . . . I have dealt with this label for years. They use only the best quality fabrics and we have never had any problems with this label. The leg proportions will be fine. . . . ." She even pinned up the trouser legs to ensure Annabel and her friend that the proportions would be fine; just as she promised! After much discussion and deliberation, Annabel's friend decided to purchase the trousers.
While the sales person was dealing with the trousers, Annabel and her friend started to show each other the new winter fashions which they liked. Her friend decided to try on a white 60ish-70ish style blouse -- long and flowing, nipped in at the back at the waist with a tie string, and long flared sleeves. The latest! Annabel referred back to something that she really liked. They (including the aggressive salesperson) all agreed that it was a beautiful pant suit. It was practical (dressy, but casual) and comfortable (lightweight, roomy, non restrictive). Just what Annabel needed for school and play. It was a good quality (a 100% fine wool knitted fabric with a good label) and yet not overly expensive. Without much convincing from her friend, Annabel tried it on. We all agreed the top was a little tight. What a shock. It was usually the other way around. The bottom half was usually too small. The salesperson brought Annabel the larger size, both top and bottom. It was being sold as an outfit rather than as separate co-ordinated pieces. This time the pants were too big. What a disappointment. Annabel really did like it. It was practical. It was versatile. It would extend her wardrobe in that she could wear the top and pants with different things. The salesperson suggested trying on together the top and bottom which fitted. It looked great. But it was not being sold as separates. The salesperson quietly said, I am not suppose to do this and I will get in trouble with the manufacturer, but I will sale you the top and bottom which fits you. Annabel realised the salesperson was doing her a favour. She knew it could and probably would be difficult for the shop to sell a matching top and bottom that were miss-sized. And the major manufacturer would not be pleased to find the store selling their outfit with miss-sized pieces or to have it returned as being miss-sized when the store received it. Annabel knew she could not afford the outfit, but the plastic card would roll it over until she could. She knew her partner would not be pleased and would not understand why she needed it. But, she decided to buy it anyway. Meanwhile, her friend had given the white blouse a miss. Even though Annabel felt guilty about her purchase, she and her friend both left the store happy with their new purchases.
Helena's Memory-Text.
A friend asked her to go shopping with her at the local mall. It was spring and the teaching had ended, so they both had time for shopping during the day time. In addition, she was baby sitting another friend's car—a rare opportunity—and the friend, being very aware of the transportation possibility, asked her to join the adventure. She didn't really need anything new, except a little relaxation after the school year. The thought of going shopping during the day time in the middle of the week had a scent of forbidden fruit in it: they were supposed to work during those hours and they did not have money to spend in the malls; especially not on sexy underwear that the friend was after. She was not particular to sexy underwear, but for the excitement of it, promised to help her friend to choose something.

They took off on their sinful trip and once at the mall, determinedly marched to 'Victoria's Secret'. After the bright spring day which already anticipated the hot and humid summer, it felt cool and dim in the shop. Neither one of the two assistants was interested in helping them—perhaps they looked too sporty, strong, poor or studenty for anything else but a good giggle. However, they took their time to browse through the reduced price section and moved to the extremely lacy section (and they did giggle). They selected an arm full of silk, lace and strings to her friend's liking and asked the shop assistant if the friend could try them on. "Of course" and they both squeezed into a small fitting room for a better laugh but also for serious decision making. The friend tried on the first combination of black, translucent lace and some silk strings to hold the silk in place. "It doesn't fit", the friend announced after looking at herself from the mirror, "it's too long; you should try it on, it would look really good on you". But she did not care about such things. "Come on, just try it on and have some fun", the friend urged. Caught up with the spirit of girlish excitement of doing things usually only discussed among your best girlfriends, she dropped off her grey, big cotton basketball shorts and threw her T-shirt and sports bra on the top of the shorts to form a messy pile on the dressing room floor. How scratchy was it to be sexy! The lacy material was very uncomfortable. They continued to try on all the garments: the friend first and then her. She had to put on her clothes once in a while to snatch different size or a more flattering color. They almost frantically put different pieces on and off again, faster and faster: "try this; what about that; no that's too small; that's too long".

Finally, they emerged from their little private room, their hair messed up and their eyes shining from all the excitement. They both had decided to buy a comfortable pair of silk shorts and matching tops on sale—she too. After paying the whole thing with a Visa card, they—still filled with the buying spirit—rushed to another shop. Another small, shared fitting room, another "on-off" session, and they purchased similar sweaters. They will need these versatile sweaters—also on sale—once starting their new jobs, they reasoned.
Back in the car, driving home, it began to hit her: what use will she have for beautiful, but impractically thin underwear. When will she wear it? What time of the day? Who can see it, anyway? Coming to think of it now, she has worn it twice just to give it some air. Otherwise, it sits in the closet buried under the sportswear. But it is beautiful.
Priscilla's Memory-Text.
It had been a big year for Priscilla. She had completed her first year at University as a mature student. To do so she had given up her part time job and consequently had missed her spending power. However, being one to enjoy a challenge, she had got through the year without making any clothing purchases that were not absolutely necessary.

This year the pre-Christmas build up had been particularly busy - school was breaking up late, friends arrived to stay and family were arriving for Christmas day. Although a very happy time, by Christmas Priscilla was feeling drained. A little retail therapy was what she needed. By the time the shops reopened between Christmas and New Year she was convinced that what she needed to buy was a dress. The family were meeting another family for a weeks holiday at the beach. How nice it would be to change into a long cool dress at the end of the day and sip on a cold wine. Priscilla was one to romanticise.

So, along with her ten year old daughter Priscilla went shopping. She had set a price limit and had decided to stick to the shops that would cater for that price range. There had to be something suitable and not too expensive. She was determined to stay away from some of the shops she used to enjoy browsing in when she was working. Her young daughter was equally determined she would find something. However, everything she tried on reminded them both of the daughter's teacher who was six months pregnant and dressing in long, high waisted crinkle dresses. Determined not to feel despondent Priscilla decided there was no other choice but to get out the sewing machine and make herself the dress.

By this time they decided to head off home, have some lunch and Priscilla would slip back into town on her own and chose a pattern and material. On her way back to the car Priscilla glanced in shop windows. She was quite happy with her decision. She did happen to notice one dress on display that made her look twice. No, she wouldn't even venture in and check out the price. It was one of the shops that carried a higher priced label - not in her predetermined price range. She made a mental note to tell one of her friends though. The dress would be rather nice on her and she was sure the friend would like it.

As luck would have it, the friend turned up at Priscilla's. After relating to her the morning's shopping expedition and the decision she had made, the friend offered to go back to the material shop and help Priscilla along with her purchase. They did not have a lot of time. Most of the shops were closing at 5 pm. It was now nearly 4 pm. They parked close to the shop, found a pattern easily and some material that would be O.K. Yes, this was a good sensible practical solution to Priscilla's desire to have a dress. They even had time for Priscilla to race her friend back to the shop where she had spotted the dress earlier that day. The friend was definitely interested.
It was still there and looked even better. This shop was not very big but what was in it was well displayed. Clothes were in colour groupings, well displayed so people could see what could be worn with what. It was spacious and tastefully decorated. The shop was staying open until 7 pm so they had time to browse in it. The dress was on a shop dummy. At the same moment Priscilla and her friend requested the assistant to get the dress so they could try it on. Priscilla felt rather embarrassed at her impulsive decision and backed off insisting the friend go ahead- after all that was the whole idea.

However, it was Priscilla who ended up trying it on first. As she did so the friend happily searched the racks and saw other garments she wanted to try on. It did feel nice on. The colour was a different one for Priscilla. She liked it. She stepped out of the changing rooms and met with a favourable response from both her friend and the sales assistant. It was a lovely late afternoon. By now there were not many people around. After the bustle of Christmas shopping, this was relaxing. There was plenty of time for the three of them to engage in conversation. All the time Priscilla stayed in the dress. She felt at ease in it. It was still practical. It could be dressed up or worn casually. But no, she had bought the material and she had set a limit. Priscilla could feel her adrenalin rushing. What the heck, she needed a treat. When was she going to sew the other anyway. No, it wasn't suitable for the beach - but hey, who cared. YES, she would take it. It felt even better that it came from a shop she liked AND it was on SALE. Out with the bankcard. She could sort all that out later. As the shop assistant folded the dress in tissue and carefully placed it in one of those lovely big paper carry bags Priscilla felt her energy level rising again. What is more the friend was sharing Priscilla's pleasure. She loved shopping. It didn't matter to her who made the purchase. Yes, Priscilla felt great. She did not normally shop with a friend and definitely was not one to be impulsive. There were no regrets.
Susie's Memory-Text.
It was a cold, crisp day in the May holidays in Christchurch. Susie had been to her daughters Graduation in Dunedin. Her husband had returned to Levin via Wellington by plane to return to work. Susie was travelling by car with friends and her 17 year old daughter. They had made an overnight stop in Christchurch.

All four plus one child in a pushchair decided on a few hours in the city. Susie had never been in Christchurch before so thought this a good chance to see the Wizard, and other soap box orators in the Square and of course a visit to the Cathedral too.

The sightseeing trip suddenly changed into a window shopping trip and what did Susie see but a beautiful forest green woollen knitted Caroline Sills suit. Don't be silly Susie -- Caroline Sills isn't in your ball park! Wouldn't you know it -- there was sale on!! One more glance of admiration at the 2 piece then onwards with the sightseeing.

The little group walked along a little way, then Susie stopped in her tracks! "I'm going back to try that suit on!! " she announced.

Back everyone marched and Susie duly donned the suit. Wow, it looked even better than she imagined . Eight gore skirt, midcalf to ankle length and the top was a cardigan style - short top, no buttons but the inside band intercrossed at the waist. Great hilarity trying to figure how to get into the top.

Susie remembers standing in the fitting room -- having looked at the inevitable price tag -- desperately trying to justify the purchase of the suit.

- Yes, it looked great.
- No, it cost too much.
- Yes, its just what she wanted.
- No, when will she wear it?
- Yes, weddings, meetings, formals, funerals
- No, how often do they happen?
- Yes, she just has to have it.
- Yes, it feels so good.

Susie stepped out to her audience. Total confirmation - what she expected of course -- what other reason for buying it did she need?

Hot and bothered in the fitting room now, but a sense of exhilaration as she dressed in her winter clothes and then took the suit out to the assistant.

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Susie can only remember the assistants part in all this as smiling and quiet in the background.
Susie paid by VISA "Oh a gold one" said the assistant. Parcel now in Susie's possession and back onto the street.

Now the justifications came thick and fast from the other members of the group as Susie had big doubts about the wisdom of this impulsive buy. It wasn't like her!!

- You'll get loads of wear out of it.
- It is definitely your colour.
- What a great buy - and on sale too!
- You won't regret buying that!
- I wonder what Dad will say? [The most sobering thought of all!]

Susie is happy to report that she did get loads of wear out of it. It was indeed a great buy. In fact one of her better buys. And you'll probably be pleased to know the 'Dad' thought it was really great too.
Wendy's Memory-Text.

Wendy was in Christchurch. It was Saturday. The conference she had been to was finished and she had til mid-afternoon before she caught her flight home. She grabbed the opportunity to spend some time soaking up some of Christchurch's charms and, in particular, to go the Arts Centre.

Wendy loves markets - the bustle, the colours, the vibrancy, the variety, the atmosphere of casual 'bohemian' lifestyle and alternatives. Anywhere she travels she will try to hunt out the local market. She can spend hours there, little matter what it sells, checking out every stall and still being reluctant to leave.

The Christchurch Arts Centre has a little market and Wendy set out to systematically wander its every corner. Near the middle she came across a jumble of racks hung with lots of striking soft cotton shirts. She first noticed a cream t-shirt with tiny pieces of paua shell sewn around the neckline. Most of the shirts, however, were long-sleeved with collars and in plain colours. They were hand-made. Some were reversible in interesting colour combinations, others were hand printed. The young woman tidying the racks was wearing two of her creations. She smiled and said hello as Wendy browsed admiringly.

Wendy moved on. She walked right through the market until she was convinced she had seen absolutely everything. She bought a couple of small gifts to take home. She sat and had a cup of coffee and enjoyed watching people go by. Soon it would be time to leave for the airport. Suddenly she thought, "I must have one of those lovely cotton shirts. They're unique and they're my 'style'."

She raced back to the stall. Yes, the young woman did take VISA. Now, amongst them and looking closely, it was difficult to decide which. Should she take a printed one or one of the beautiful plain colours? The young woman chatted about the man who did the dyeing for her and the difficulties in getting some colours exactly as she wanted.

There was a little mirror and Wendy held some colours up against her. The young woman held the bright green sales-tag away so as not to detract from the shirt colour. "Oh what the hell!", thought Wendy, "why not buy two. I need a dark blue shirt and this other, reversible printed one is a little different. You wouldn't get that in a regular shop". Then, as she handed them to the young woman she remembered the shirt which had originally caught her eye and said, "Oh, and I'll take one of those t-shirts too".

So, when Wendy left the market that day she had bought, not one, but three shirts!
A PRESSURE EXPERIENCE

GROUP 1's MEMORY-TEXTS

Annabel's Memory-Text.
Before leaving the city, Annabel and her partner stopped at the mall to determine whether he
should purchase a pair of shoes he had seen a few days earlier. It was going to be a quick stop
since they had a three and a half hour drive back to Annabel's mother home. Annabel's partner
was leaving early the next morning and they had been away visiting friends for a few days and
her mother would be very disappointed if he was unable to spend his last night in the US with
her. Annabel and her partner were already running late.

Six years earlier, Annabel had purchased from a store at this particular mall a pair of over-alls
which she dearly loved, but which were now unwearable due to a big rip in the bum. As they
were leaving the mall, Annabel thought she would just pop in and see out of sheer chance if
they had a similar pair. She really didn't expect to find anything (after all six years had passed)
and thought it would just be a quick walk through the store.

The store wasn't anything like Annabel remembered. While it still catered for the younger
generation (teenagers and those in their earlier twenties), it appeared to be more cluttered, carry
lower quality merchandise and was duller and dimmer. The two sales personal were both in
their late teens and were busy behind the counter or in the shop. Annabel felt a bit
uncomfortable entering into this store thinking, "I'm too old to be in here looking at these types
of clothes. What would the shop personnel and the other customers think." But the thought of
finding a similar pair of over-alls which she believed still would look okay on her, lead her to
enter and preserve with the hunt.

She walked casually but quickly through the store with her partner close in tow trying not to
draw too much attention. At the back of the long thin store she spotted some over-alls.
Nothing like the stylish ones she had purchased six years ago. They were more like the regular
workman over-alls - perhaps just a little baggier - the kind the teenagers were currently wearing
- straight and loose without a belt but with belt loops attached. Annabel and her partner
zoomed in for a closer look. They were on sale, only 20 US dollars. Yes, they did have her
size. Annabel thought, "This style is perhaps a bit young for me and won't be as flattering as
my previous overalls. And this fabric is a bit heavy and stiff. They probably won't be as
comfortable to wear as my others (which were made of softer fabric in a fuller non restricting
cut), but perhaps they will soften with a few washes. And what the hell, they were only 20
US dollars. If I were buying them in New Zealand, I would pay at least twice this amount.
Oh well, I might as well try them on. Perhaps they will look and feel better than what I anticipate."

Annabel grabbed the overalls and quickly advanced towards the dressing rooms which were in the middle of the store across from the service counter. She was met by the salesperson who was designated to work the floor. He appeared to be about sixteen and was very very pale, short and slight in build. His clothes literally hung on him. With his bulging white eyes and very white skin he appeared to be anaemic. It gave Annabel an eerie, uncomfortable feeling, but she thought, "Don't be critical. Perhaps he is sick, or maybe it is just the current 'look' which teenagers are trying to achieve and I am totally out of touch." He unlocked the dressing room for Annabel to enter. He said little, if anything. As Annabel entered the dressing room, she again became very conscious that this young salesman might be thinking, "What is this older woman doing trying on these overalls. She will be a ewe in lambs clothing."

Annabel quickly threw off her winter layers of clothes, leaving on just her long underwear since her sweatshirt was too heavy and long to fit under the overalls. She pulled on the overall to find all her thoughts confirmed. "Yes, they were not as comfortable or as flattering as her previous pair. The cut was a bit restricting, particularly around her thunder thighs." But she couldn't make up her mind as to whether they looked all right and would be comfortable if they were to soften in wear and laudering. She examined herself in all directions. "Yes, they good from the side, and from what she could see of the back they looked okay. But when she looked at herself from the front they appeared to make her look wide, particularly around those dam thunder thighs. Yes, for the last six months she had been out of her regular good eating and exercise patterns due to being away from her home base. But would these over-alls look okay when and if she got her body back in shape? It was getting harder to take off those extra pounds that she always put on when she was away from her routine."

She was aware that time was ticking on and they needed to start towards her mother's home to arrive at the set dinner hour. She couldn't make up her mind. One side of her thought, "they are only 20 US dollars." But these days being on one income and just having spent big bucks on airfares to be with the family in times of need, they didn't have 40 NZ dollars to waste, and her partner had just finished a much needed clothing shopping spree while in the US. Annabel had been very good and had not purchased one bit of clothing. She hadn't even looked.

Annabel decided to model the overalls for her partner to see what he thought. She stepped out of the dressing room. The pant legs dragged on the ground as she walked towards her partner. The salesperson finally spoke, "The pant legs are worn rolled up." Annabel thought, "Oh yes, I've seen teenagers in these and the legs have been rolled up. A bit sloppy! Definitely a younger 'look'." Annabel quickly rolled the pant legs up to get the full effect. 

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Annabel hummed and haled to her partner. Want did he think? She was not too sure. "Did she look ridiculous? Did they make her look heavy?" "No", he said, "they were fine."

Annabel was still not convinced. Knowing her partner, they were okay, but were not necessarily flattering. She wandered why she had even asked for his opinion. Time was ticking on. She needed to make a decision. She couldn't come back. She would have to buy them now, if she wanted them. She really wanted a new pair of over-alls, but knew that they weren't quite right. Could she find anything better in the short time she had left in the States? Would she even have time to look? She was leaning towards leaving them behind. Her partner finally said, "You need a new pair of over-alls. You are always telling me to throw away my old disgusting grabs. You can't wear your old pair any more, the rip is too big. They are disgusting. Practice what you preach." Okay, yes she would take them.

She quickly dressed and handed the over-alls and her Visa to the young teenage saleswoman working the sales counter. She too was white, but with caked make-up. "It surely must be a fashion trend, even though she had not noticed it elsewhere. It looked awful." She remembered her mother telling her how awful she looked in the sixty and seventy fashions when she thought she looked great. "Annabel, you must be getting old." The young saleswoman said nothing, but then as she handed Annabel the sales receipt she rattled off a quick rehearsed statement, "You have two weeks to return it and you are required to have the sales slip. Otherwise, you can't return it." The comment shocked Annabel. Never before had she heard such an impersonal statement, particularly in the manner in which it was said. (At least which she could remember.) "She wasn't close enough to the store to return them anyways."

Annabel walked out feeling that perhaps she had not made the right decision. But then thought, "it is only 40 NZ dollars."

Annabel wasn't excited about her purchase as she usually was with other buys. She didn't even show her mother. Annabel's partner, however, was busy showing her mother all that he had purchased while they were away. Even though she was not thrilled with them later, Annabel did, however, get a slight sense of pleasure when purchasing the over-alls.

A few days later, after the departure of Annabel's partner, Annabel thought about the saleswomen comment regarding returning the over-alls. "Perhaps she could return them if there was a chain store in the city less than a hour away, and if she still had her receipt." Yes, she still had her receipt and yes, there was a sister store in the nearby city. "Great, Annabel and her mother could adventure into the city on the weekend after she had done some work which she desperately needed to finish, and before her air plane left early Monday morning." But on Thursday evening a major snow storm hit. It snowed all day Friday, it snowed all day Saturday and it was still snowing Sunday morning. Annabel gruntingly packed the heavy
overalls in her suitcase being very aware that these days she was trying to pack lightly. She hated to lug around heavy bags. Upon arrival in NZ, the overalls were thrown in the wardrobe and have yet to be worn.
Helena's Memory-Text.

Helena is spending her Christmas vacation at home. It has been raining the whole holiday time. It is unseasonable warm, but the darkness of the Scandinavian winter is even deeper with the grounds bare of snow. One night when she is watching the Bold and the Beautiful on television with her Mom, Helena receives a phone call from her partner presently staying in New York. Helena is about to leave to visit him in a week. He is excited; his parents want to offer a memorable time for Helena once she is in New York. They have invited Helena and her partner to dine in a very up-scale restaurant in a prominent location, downtown New York. "Great", Helena says and stares to the darkness outside of the window. Her reflection on the window-glass shows a wrinkled forehead, she is biting her lower lip. While chatting away to her partner, she is occupied with other thoughts. She did not pack any dresses, any make-up or any high heel shoes for her trip home. What is she going to do? Those three items are essentials for a woman in American society -- one cannot appear in a restaurant without these basic features! To make things even more morose, Helena was so unprepared during her last visit in New York that she was forced to borrow a dress and shoes from her partner's sister to attend a wedding reception. She couldn't possibly do that again.

After hanging up the phone, Helena runs to her Mother. Helena can still remember the numerous times her mother has had an emergency like this. Helena's mother quite likes shopping, also window shopping. However, they live in a countryside about 70 km from a nearest city. So, her mother does not have many opportunities for shopping and usually while in the city, she feels forced to buy instead of just trying clothes out at the time and coming back later. Helena also remembers the many unsatisfying purchases her mother has been pressured to do. Who could be more understanding of the circumstances than Helena's mother? It turns out that her mother is also planning to go to a birthday party of a dominant person in the town. She needs a stylish dress as well. Immediately, they decide to take a trip to the city.

It's winter and they plan to take the bus, because they don't feel comfortable driving on the icy roads. In the morning, Helena does not wake up in time. Mom thinks it's too late to catch the bus, but Helena insists that they will be going. They arrive a couple of minutes too late, but Helena sees some people still standing on the bus stop and totally out of character for her, she steps out to ask the nearest man whether he is still waiting for the bus. Yes, he is. Good, they are on their way.

Once in the city, they march straight to their favorite shop. Neither one is checking for the sales; they need something nice and they have limited time. It feels good to have other constrains than price tags! Nothing nice in their favorite shop; it has never before let them down like that. Disappointed they cross the market place to the department store known to all original city habitants as very reliable in emergencies like theirs. They wander around the clothes racks. Mom finds a blouse she likes, now they need to find a skirt to fit with it. Once
again shop assistants are engaged in their mysterious tasks and show no interest to Mom and Helena who are not, once again, dressed well for the occasion. However, Helena who after attending an empowering memory workshop on shopping, decides not to be another victim of dominance by distant and secluding shop assistants. She determinedly interrupts one of the customer servants and asks her to help Mom. Mom has an armful of skirts with the blouse and she heads to the fitting room. Meanwhile Helena collects her own armful of things and heads to the fitting room next to Mom. Now Mom likes one of the skirts, but not the blouse. Helena likes her red jacket top and her long, narrow black woollen skirt. Jacket is on sale, but the skirt has to be purchased with its top, not separately. Helena does not like the top at all; it has a tube collar that annoys her. "Nobody would buy such an ugly thing by itself", Helena mutters, "no wonder they force it on people with the skirt". Helena is mad, she buys the jacket top, Mom buys the skirt.

Mom wants to go the shop next to the department store, because the shop assistants there are always very helpful. First, all them are occupied with customers and Helena runs around to find a blouse for Mom. She is unsuccessful. One of the shop assistants views Mom's present combination with suspicion: "Are you being helped?". No, we obviously are not. With the help of the assistant, probably Mom's age, Mom finds a blouse of her liking.

To celebrate Mom's success, they go to have a coffee. Helena is getting desperate because they are running out of time. Helena is even thinking of taking a later bus. Mom thinks that the black skirt looked so nice on Helena, she should just buy the whole combination, although it was very expensive. Helena leaves Mom in the cafe and goes back to the department store, takes out the combination and tries one more time to buy just the skirt. No, it's not possible, but the shop assistant thinks that one should always buy combinations rather than separate items unsuited with the rest of the wardrobe. Helena knows about such miserable misfits. She feels better and hands over her New Zealand visa for the shop assistant to stare at.

Mom is very happy with her buy. She even shows it to Helena's brother who basically thinks if one already has a skirt one does not need another one. This does not spoil Mom's happiness. Helena does not remember seeing Mom so satisfied with her hastily done shopping ever. Helena herself is still a bit grumpy about having to buy that black top.
Priscilla's Memory-Text.

End of year exams were looming up and Priscilla was rather pre-occupied. As her husband left for work on this particular morning he casually said, "See you at School around 12.00 am." "Scuse me?" responds Priscilla. She had completely overlooked that she was expected to accompany him to another Powhiri, this time on the local Marae, a first for the school where her husband had recently started working.

Protocol dictated that she wear a skirt or dress. During cool days this had not been a problem, but today was hot and she knew she could be out in the sun for a lengthy time. A trip to the wardrobe confirmed her worst fears. There was a skirt she could wear but nothing to accompany it. No problem, she would zip down to the local shops where she knew there were three of four clothing outlets and purchase a plain black short sleeve shirt, preferably one to wear over the skirt and not tucked in. Yes, that was the answer and should be straightforward.

Off she went. She didn't even bother looking through the racks. The assistant would be able to locate such a basic piece of clothing. Oh dear. Not so at the first shop, but there were others. No need to panic. She still had a couple of hours. No... not in the second store. A little anxiety was setting in. In the back of her mind she was trying to come up with an alternative should this mission fail. Four shops later still nothing. She wasn't even being fussy. They just could not help. Time was fast running out. Panic was setting in. Yes, there was just enough time to get into town and back to School by 12.00 am - leaving a quick change stop at her house. "What else could she wear? Why hadn't she given this serious thought earlier?" she asked herself. She did not need this feeling of pressure. Clothes had been a low priority for her this year. She was also aware that she did not want to end up buying something that she would not get a good amount of wear from. Her clothes budget was not very big at this stage in her life.

So, into the City. She had been trying to avoid this. As luck would have it, she managed a park close to where she wanted to look. If there was nothing there, she would just have to wear something from her winter clothes. She wanted to be reasonable dressed as the Powhiri was in honour of her husband and she knew she would also be "on display". A position she was not comfortable with. She knew that feeling good about her appearance would help give her the confidence she needed. The shop she had headed for in the city was a fairly big chain store that should carry a big range and have reasonable prices. By this time it was 11.20 am.

She strode purposefully into the shop. The shop was quite large on today's boutique standards. There was plenty of space between the racks and clothes were displayed in groups of shirts, skirts or whatever. Garments were easy to see. Her eyes were scanning the racks as she headed from the front systematically through to the back. No time to explain to the sales assistant. She was on a very tight time schedule by now. As she got two thirds the way down
through the shop her eye caught sight of some tops that looked like strong possibilities. Please let there be a size to fit her. YES. There was. She literally ran into the dressing room to throw it on just to be sure. YES. Perfect. But her time was running out. She fumbled for her money, barely waited for the formal transaction and certainly didn't have time for the polite small talk offered by the sales assistant. "Sorry," she explained with a smile, "in rather a rush." Out of the shop and into the car. She rushed home, threw on her garments and made it to School right on schedule. The odd comment made to her about looking nice made her smile. If only they knew!!!!!!!

The shirt turned out to be a well worn most versatile garment that summer.
Susie's Memory-Text.

Susie had had a busy few weeks. Lots of meetings, last minute details to attend to. Yes, it was all go being the overseer on the Senior Ball Committee. The week of the Ball, however, things changed dramatically! The Ball Committee had much more important things to organise - like hiring suits and a limo, booking a dinner venue, ordering corsages, photographers, etc. etc. The Ball Committee overseer suddenly realised she had become the Ball Committee!!

Not to worry, the main arrangements had been taken care of - just the barn of a hall to decorate. - Then the major realisation four days before the Ball, "What would Susie wear * * ??"

Susie had absolutely nothing to wear to a Ball. She had some black shoes from a previous "bad-buy" experience. "They look like Nun's shoes, Mum.- You can't wear those!" the sixth form daughter's voice echoed in her head. "They'll have to do. - there wasn't anything else," retorted Susie. Still this didn't solve the dress-to-wear-to-the-ball problem.

Only one thing for it -- down to the favourite shop. They would be sure to have something - after all it was the Ball season. Wasn't it? Wrong - All the evening wear had already been bought by the students. Some eager parent spending over $300. That was not in Susie's budget. Phew! Keep looking. Ever helpful assistant keen to help, but not the slightest bit pushy - she seemed to realise Susie was in a slight dilemma. Oh - try this - a black skirt with a bright pink jacket with interesting black cord patterns down the front. A bit Marching Girlish, but it fitted and at least the nun's shoes would go with it. Susie took it on appro. She really knew it wasn't her, it cost too much - but it would get her to the Ball!

Wrong, Wrong, Wrong. Family comments came thick and fast. None very encouraging. "It looks like the sort of thing Dolly Parton would wear." "You're not going to the races." "You can't wear that." "Take it back in the morning." Great morale boosters families!

Three days till the Ball - back went the Marching Girl outfit. Assistants only to happy to take it back - they understood it wasn't really Susie. Really nothing else in that shop.

Big breath Susie, and across the road to another shop. Feeling fairly hot, bothered and slightly panicky, Susie looked through the evening wear. So much in this shop - all jammed together, difficult to see anything immediately.

The assistant came to her aid and presented her with a navy mid-calf, [good length] no waistline but a hipline [good to hide a few sins], slightly shiny material [good for evening]. And Susie had a pair of navy shoes to match. Well they hurt a bit, but this really was a case of vanity knowing no pain!
On with the dress - yes it fitted. Yes - the price was almost reasonable. Yes - Susie would buy that. Thank you.

The shop assistant then came out with a stock phrase - "I'm sure you'll be very happy with that, Susie. Enjoy the Ball."

The Family's comments were OK. The dress was OK. The Ball was A.OK. All over for another year.

Now would anyone her like to buy a navy evening dress - worn once - Oh, and there is a pair of nun's shoes available too!
Wendy's Memory-Text.
The graduation ceremony at Otago University was about to take place again, and another group of students Wendy had taught would be returning to Dunedin for the ceremony and a week or so of reunion parties. Many would bring their parents with them.

Wendy, not being much into formal ceremony, never went to the actual graduation ceremony but always attended the informal afternoon tea hosted by the department afterwards for the graduates and their families. It was an occasion she always felt ambiguous about and went along with feelings both of excitement and nervousness. It was always good to see the students again, with whom she would have shared four exciting years. They would invariably be looking smart and sophisticated, dressed formally in their gowns, ever so proud of themselves and with a maturity they seemed to have acquired only in the six months since last seeing them. But invariably she had a difficult time maintaining conversations with their parents. She was not great at 'idle chatter' at the best of times, and in this situation she usually got the impression that the parents felt awkward talking to a female university lecturer and did not know what to talk about. She recalled one such occasion when a male graduate's mother had asked Wendy if she was married. When Wendy said no, this woman became exceedingly embarrassed and in her embarrassment had spluttered, "Well never mind dear, your turn will come". Every year Wendy anticipated similar awkward moments.

On this particular occasion, Wendy felt she needed something to wear that was a bit more sophisticated than her usual casual wardrobe. Somehow or other she had to fit into the occasion and give the impression of a mature academic, happy and confident in that role. Obviously it needed to be something classical and conservative, probably not something she would wear much but never mind, it was important for this event.

It was Friday, the day before graduation. Wendy knew of only one store in the city which carried the sort of clothes she had in mind. It was expensive, but she had bought a skirt on sale there earlier in the year and, although she hadn't worn it much, continued to be amazed at how well it was made and how perfectly it fitted her. Wendy went directly to that store. The thought of having to traipse the streets looking for something suitable was intolerable, so she mentally told herself that something in this store would have to do and it was just a matter of choosing it.

She thought that perhaps a suit of some sort would be best but couldn't find anything that was right. Then she discovered a skirt the same label as the one she had previously bought. She liked the material, even though it reminded her of brocade furniture fabric, and the style. She tried it on and discovered it fitted as perfectly as her other skirt. This company must have her body for their mould! It was, however, quite a lot longer than she felt comfortable wearing.
But the sales assistant said, "the style was supposed to be worn long." Still, it wasn't 'an outfit'. What would she wear with it?

The sales assistant showed Wendy the range of knitwear the store carried and, in particular a long cardigan in a colour which coordinated beautifully with the skirt. Wendy saw immediately that she would wear the cardigan a lot. The sales assistant suggested that a cream shirt would go well with the two garments. Wendy had a cream shirt. Her all-purpose black shoes could be worn too. The sales assistant suggested a long string of the beads. Wendy knew where she could buy some that would suit and in fact, thought that would be just the frivolous touch to perhaps balance the dowdiness of the skirt's length. Yes, finally she could see she had a suitable 'outfit'. Happily, she bought the skirt and cardigan and set out to get the beads. She felt that at least she'd be dressed right tomorrow.
A PRESSURE EXPERIENCE

GROUP 2's MEMORY-TEXTS

Desiree's Memory-Text.
A pressure shopping experience

It had been a long hot summer. Holidaying at the beach was a wonderful thought. The family had been offered the house of a friend whilst they attended a wedding in Australia. Hubby had organised the deal with a soccer buddy, much to Desiree's amazement as hubby never organised any holiday. There must be a catch to this pondered Desiree, hubby was never slow to let the chance of a cheap deal slip by so there must be another side to this somewhere. Desiree knew hubby pretty well!. Desiree and daughters dutifully followed hubby to the beach to find that the soccer family had gone to Australia but left two teenage daughters behind to 'help' look after the house. They arrived at the house to find a mass barbeque in operation for all the young people in Papamoa. Desiree did not explode, she just walked calmly down the beach to think about it.

"It's only for 10 days" reassured hubby, "they won't be here all the time." But things did not improve, Desiree could not relax, the house was always full of people and they could not leave, as hubby had promised they would stay and keep the property secure.

Desiree kept her wrath at bay by running on the beach every morning for an hour and at all times of stress walked the dogs. Losing weight was the only perk of the holiday, she was wasting away. After five days hubby got the message that Desiree was not too happy with the situation so he offered to take her on a shopping trip to cheer her up. Desiree was not slow on the uptake and readily accepted. Lost weight, new outfit mmm... He owes me .....he owes me....she could not get rid of the thought.....

Now it must be made clear at this point that hubby never volunteers to take Desiree shopping, as he hates it..... but it's amazing what guilt can force a man to do, so with a big reassuring smile for Desiree they headed for the shops in the nearest town.

At the time hubby was very important in the world of soccer so it was not surprising that every second person they met in the town was a soccer player who just needed reassuring by hubby that 'this season was going to be the best yet' etc. Desiree spent another two hours walking and listening to soccer conversations, it was not surprising that shopping excitement was fading away.
Half an hour before closing time the dynamic duo are found standing in front of this shop window, full of very elegant, boring 'up-market' fashions. "Let's go" said hubby and dragged a protesting Desiree through the door. "But... but..." she choked, "this shop is far too expensive, and what's more it's so old fashioned!!" "Nonsense, dear, there are some really lovely unusual things in here, look this is great" he held up this horrendous shapeless 'frock' that would have looked perfect on his mother, but certainly not for Desiree. "Madam, you look distressed, surely we have what you need?" this creation in thick make up and purple hair swooped down on Desiree. "I'm fine... just looking," murmured Desiree already moving towards the door. "We are looking for something really special for my dear lady, she has earned it" calls hubby. That was fatal... Desiree felt it before she saw it.... No escape. There was no-one else in the shop either, she had all this lady's attention...

Two more vultures with dyed hair swooped in and immediately started assisting hubby with his search whilst the purple creation guarded the door. I don't believe this thought Desiree, hiding behind a dress rack. There was hubby surrounded by these smarmy women, at his beck and call, falling over backwards to assist him and he was loving it. Desiree heard his conversation even though she was hiding at the back of the shop, informing them of the dreadful trials she was under whilst she was on holiday and that he just had to buy her something to cheer her up....

Desiree was enveloped by a stale perfume, the thick mascara was pushing her into a curtained area with a pile of clothes that, yes," would look divine!! "Madam has a wonderful figure ....for her age ...." "Oh, she runs five miles every day you know...." chips in hubby. "Oh, my God," was Desiree's reaction to the bright cotton bermuda flared shorts flung under her nose. "Very trendy for one so FIT!!" Oh, thank goodness they're too big, phew. ." A smaller size perhaps? "shrieked the stale perfume, as she swooped past hubby who was now sat down on a pink velvet couch talking to the ...Manager? The horn-rimmed spectacled, black suit gestured to the vultures that no effort was too much to serve this lady who needed all their support to be able to enjoy this wonderful holiday in their wonderful town. Desiree murmured that perhaps it was time to close the shop and that they had to get back to the house before more teenagers wrecked it. "NOoooo rush, dear," says hubby with the glass of cold drink in his hand, "take all the time you need."...(There was still no-one else in the shop.) The clothes were frightful, they were shapeless, old-fashioned, so expensive, what could poor Desiree do. Hubby was chatting away non-stop to the mascara and the Manager. The purple hair had taken every piece of summer clothing in Desiree's size off the rails and Desiree was standing knee deep in clothes, too big, too tight, too boring... She had no option but to buy something so she decided to leave it totally to hubby.. "DARLING," she drooled, "DO come and help me choose, it's just TOO much for me." Hubby was dragged into the changing room and held in a tight clinch before the very eyes of the vultures.. "You get us out of this mess, dear!!!" said Desiree under her breath. He looked at the vultures, grinned and picked up the whole pile of
clothes off the chair and sat down on it. "You try them on, I'll pick them dear" he murmured, knowing full well he was for the hang rope... and pulled the curtain across the changing room. "Excuse us," he charmingly said to the three vultures hovering by the curtain. "We'll be a while......" Desiree giggled as he casually placed garment after garment over the curtain to the ladies on the other side keeping up a running commentary as to why none of them fitted. The ladies had other ideas, as hubby gave one back another mysteriously appeared through the curtain. Desiree got the hysterics, poor hubby was really in the soup now, he was being faced by a pressure buy, which was not his scene at all... To end this fracas Desiree chose the most trendy little top and shorts the shop carried in their stockpile and even though she did not like it, insisted that it was 'perfect' just to get out of there... The manager personally saw us to the door, quite upset because he had not conquered the Man... and persuaded him to by the whole shop... the ladies were left preening their feathers, leaning on the till... Hubby was in shock... "Gees," he gasped, "they were a bit full on... just like bleeding vultures swooping in on the kill.... Let's get home, the kids will be wonderful after that experience!!!" Desiree smiled, even she had to agree with that comment.
Frances's Memory-Text.

Pressure in Shopping

Shopping with a man tends to be recipe for frustration Frances had decided. If, she was shopping with him for his clothes it was O.K. though. He would start off glum and unmotivated and end up virtually buzzing with excitement as he tried on more and more and realised that he did need those clothes after all (and furthermore they looked rather good if he did say so himself).

But shopping with a man for her clothes was a very different story. Occasionally she had met that rare male who had not only tolerated shopping for women's clothes but obviously enjoyed it, enjoyed finding new designs for her to try and made positive and encouraging comments. That was like shopping with a trusted girl friend. But mostly it wasn't like that at all.

This particular day she wandered into the women's clothing shop and he had rolled his eyes, tilted his head and let out a big sigh. "We're not looking for clothes today" he stated. "I thought we had come to town to buy (a light bulb/ a photo album/a birthday present/a door mat)?" he added in a voice strangled with exasperation. She smiled at him and continued to walk purposely forward. "Won't be a tick" she placated, roving her expert eye quickly over the racks and shelves, eliminating possibilities in the blink of an eye and using her radar to discern whether there was going to be an outfit for her or not in this shop.

"That wasn't long was it" she told him as she met him outside the shop. He was standing near the shop's entrance like a sentry, not a sentry who enjoys their job but one who is grudgingly fulfilling their duty, in the pouring rain, when they would rather be home watching league or reading the newspaper. It wasn't raining though and they were in a large covered shopping mall. Grabbing her determinedly, but with a touch of affection, he marched her on from the distracting shop she had entered. He nearly had her home free when she saw the next tempting array of clothing in a shop packed to the gunnels with latest season's summer wear in a range of interesting fabrics and designs. She gently but determinedly unwound herself from his clasp and said "I'm just going to have a nosy in here". He stopped and his mouth dropped open in disbelief "But we've come here to..." She didn't hear the rest of the plaintive statement as she had disappeared quickly into the body of the shop and immersed herself in its colours and cloth.

She could see him through the window for a bit and then he walked off. "Oh well" she thought, "he knows where I am." She choose 2 lovely dresses and took them into the changing room which was large and white - one of those open changing areas for everyone. There was no one in there which relieved her somewhat as she was wearing old, unmatching underwear. One of the dresses was designed in a fashion that required her to take her bra off too so she was doubly pleased to have the changing room to herself. Could she get away
without a bra in that dress? Did they sink too much like sad eggs? Did she look like she had lemons for breasts? She needed an opinion and the man who could give her an honest one was nowhere to be seen. She stood at the edge of the cubicle for a bit and caught the attention of the service personnel. "If you see a tall man with red hair can you tell him I'm in here?" she asked. They smiled agreeably and said nothing about the dress. "I bet they think my boobs are droopy but they're just not saying" she thought. Back at the mirror she scrutinised herself. Perhaps she could wear a bra with it after all. That would solve the problem. Decision made. Purchasing was swift and painless 2 dresses for under $80. Another bargain to notch in the belt. Just then he emerged, just in time to watch the transaction of payment, saying nothing, not moving, hardly breathing.

They emerged from the shop, she beaming and he far from it. "I need a coffee" he said rubbing his temple.
Gisela's Memory-Text.

A Pressure Shopping Experience

Normally an invitation to a poncy 40th birthday event which specifies 'evening dress' would pose no problem to Gisela who has something to cover most occasions in the wardrobe. However this was not 'normal' since she was in the 32nd week of pregnancy with a body reminiscent of a whale and clothes appropriate for work and slopping around home. None of her 'evening' type wear would go anywhere near her enlarged waistline (most of the gear was quite the opposite - tight fitting pants, silk shirts, tailored jackets, fitted silk suits or tight-shaped dresses). Still, there had been no hesitancy in accepting the invite a month earlier - a twelve piece band, continuous supper and Woodland Estate as the venue were enticement enough - plus Nadinea was a good friend of Dave's.

Mentioning her need to a friend resulted in a jacket that looked great but the skirt didn't fit and none of Gisela's limited pregnancy skirts matched or looked anywhere good enough for the event.

2 am. in the morning - 10 days before the event Gisela had a brain wave - she had a good pattern (maternity) for a large T-shirt and skirt. She had a mental image of black fabric with gold lurex through it made into this style. After work that afternoon she raced into Barkar and Pollocks - skimming her eyes over the fabrics she quickly picked out one that featured in her mind's eye earlier that morning - $39.95 metre and she needed 3.5 metres. "#*" she thought. "We can't afford that. What if it doesn't look like I've imaged it would? What if I don't get time to sew it? There must be something here a bit cheaper that would look the same as she has been imagining." Gisela did a slow circuit of the shop, carefully examining anything remotely suitable. Nothing! Maybe she'd missed something - another walk around to check out the black and gold - no, just too much expense at this stage. Feeling sick, disappointed and very desperate, Gisela walked slowly out of the shops, head down because she was so embarrassed to find that she was actually crying about it all. As she got into her car and glanced at her watch (5:05; time to get to the creche) she reassured herself, she'd never have had time to make it anyway. Perhaps Dave could go on his own! (But then again, that's not such a good idea.)

She rang Kay that night to tell her about her lousy luck at Barkar & Pollacks. (Kay was a sewer - she'd empathise.) "What about I grab some clothes from here and bring them around next .....; what about Tuesday?"

"Wonderful, sounds great" Gisela replied. Feeling a bit more relaxed about the weekend, Gisela made it through to Tuesday evening and Kay's arrival, arms laden with hangers from hers and her daughter's wardrobe. A couple of outfits would have been okay (mainly because they were something different from the current work/home wardrobe Gisela possessed) and
there was a black cotton dress twisted dress of Becky's (Kay daughter) that fitted and looked passable too - with the right accessories. Kay departed leaving this.

By Thursday pm Gisela was not so sure about the black dress, after all, cotton-musliny type fabric - twisted, not a sophisticated number considering there were going to be some 75 guests clad in the latest of evening wear designs at this event. It just wouldn't look right she thought as she glanced at the twisted (screwed!) up dress, held by rubber bands, on the wardrobe shelf.

4 pm. Friday - a quick departure from work - into the car and into town. Desperation starting all over again. An aimless wander through Centreplace - nothing for the large waist here - definitely not entering that Kooky Fashion place. Through to the Downtown City Centre, into Zacharys. A quick glance along the racks revealed a lot of drab coloured winter type clothes. Desperation rising. Then she spotted a sale rack. Left over summer bits and pieces. Brownish cream and Khaki patterned pants - drawstring waist, Khaki jacket; Navy and cream pants (drawstring tie), navy linen shirt - big, hey there is a navy and cream shirt - same fabric as the pants - grabs that too. Now where to try them on? "Would you like to try those" the blonde curly hair - not immaculate, friendly smile, hesitant approach almost (unusual for this 'sort' of shop). "Yes, thanks" and Gisela was directed to the dressing room. Where to start? "Gosh," Gisela thought, "my hair looks a mess" as she glanced in the mirror. Khaki jacket was nice. Start with that and the pants. It would be passable - just. No, not really, too mix and matchy looking. Looks like something you might wear to work - but nice jacket. Could use that again. Out to the big mirror. It's okay - if there is nothing else.

Navy shirt (lovely shirt) and navy and cream pants - okay but still like something I'd wear to work. (Now who's being fuss) Shirt off. Navy matching shirt on. Now this has possibilities! Out into the shop to the big mirror for a check. "Baggy - I hope those other shoppers aren't anybody I know," Gisela thought. Sales assistant comments, "That looks good." "Hmm, slightly reminiscence of pyjamas though, don't you think - all this patterned fabric?" "What's the navy shirt like with it?" "It didn't look formal enough for what I have in mind" Gisela responded outlining the type of event she was attending - tomorrow! Perhaps the Kaki jacket and pants could suit better Gisela thought and stripped to try them on again. She'd get heaps of use from the jacket later on (even if it was unlined for that price), but the pants - size - 14 - they weren't really her!

Stripped again - back into the navy pyjamas. She seen pictures of models in this kind of outfit and they seemed to look elegant enough.

Damn - it's 5:15, creche closes 5:30. Quick change back into the tent (favourite, large, accommodating dress) and into the shop. "Got to go, creche closes at 5:30" to hovering
friendly sales assistant. "What say I hold that navy outfit for you?" she asks. "We're open tomorrow." "I'll be back tonight" Gisela responded - "yes, thanks that would be great." (What's $150, if I'm going to look right and I will get heaps of wear out of the shirt later on.) Feeling relieved that she'd finally made a decision, Gisela raced to her car and the creche, arriving there at 5.29 and feeling totally exhausted but motivated by the fact that she had found "something to wear" for tomorrow night. Her navy shoes would be fine with it. Gold earrings and necklace - gold armbands. It will be perfect she thought with a self-satisfied smile as she negotiates the traffic heading home. I don't know what I was so worried about!

Epilogue

Gisela looked at all the women wine glasses in hand, elegant shoes and gorgeous dresses. (Don't worry about the men!). Really there were some 'beautiful people' here tonight. Behind the green umbrella she spied a woman in a 'pyjama pant suit outfit. Looked very stylish - and there was another woman in black tailored pants with a purple velvet, no brocade jacket - lovely jacket. She felt quite comfortable. With her orange juice in hand, she made her way over to a seat. Lots of black. In this dusky, half-light the black cotton didn't look like black cotton, it hung with quite a nice texture from the twisting and being able to wear the black high-heal shoes was a real bonus. Her pearl cluster earrings and pearl necklace really did dress up the outfit well and with her hair up she felt quite in keeping with the surroundings (so what if no-one else had a bump in front!). And it had cost her nothing.
Sweetie's Memory-Text.

A Pressure Shopping Experience

The invitation was for the Cambridge Rugby Referees 'wives' to attend a 'winter lingerie evening' - and having never been to such an event before, Sweetie entered Jeanette's lounge with curiosity. She imagined coy Elle McPherson-type bras, knickers, spencers and pyjamas at a bargain price - and with her underwear drawer in need of replenishing, looked forward to a pleasant Avon-lady type, relaxed evening - with probably a cream-sponge supper at the end. 'I'd really like to get home early enough to finish some marking' she thought to herself. Oh well, a mid-week night out is a bit of a luxury - so might as well make the most of it and do what has to be done - forget about work - meet some new people - and have a nice 'ladies evening' for a change.

Several women were enjoying a glass of wine when Sweetie made her entrance and she registered their coiffures and fashionable gear as she was introduced. Mainly secretary or non-working types. Perhaps I should have changed out of my school clothes (sweat shirt and jeans) and got a bit flossied up, she thought. Too late now - have to try to look as though I thought this was a 'jeans' occasion - and dressed in my best Levis - intentionally.

Glass of medium cask-wine in hand ('why is there never dry?') she plonked down into the obviously - Farmers, patterned, plush-velvet corner-suite - next to a primish-looking woman she vaguely recognised but couldn't pinpoint. Of course she realised after a stilted conversation, the wife of the most senior referee in the club. Oh Hail Almighty! Her husband did 'national' games and was therefore revered by the lesser minions as the man amongst men. This woman, by default, queen of the evening - and I've made the mistake of not recognising her - faux pas! After such a start, and not really knowing anyone, she feigned interest in patting the small long-haired family dog ensconced in front of the feature-brick fireplace - wondering at the New Zealand preference for mixing patterned wallpaper, patterned carpet, patterned curtains and patterned furniture all in one room. Definitely shades of 'Lyn of Tawa' here, she thought, as she scanned the walls expectantly for three flying ducks flying north for the winter. The plump 'hostess with the mostest'- wearing fluffy slippers that looked somewhat like the family pooch, gaily pressed everyone to refill their glass, take a seat, and then welcomed them warmly to the 'linger-ee party'. Party! Oh Jeez - that means there'll definitely be games - drat it!

'It gives me great pleasure to introduce Angelique from Fantasy Fashions'. She's come all the way from Auckland to be here with us tonight' gushed Jeanette, as she indicated the mutton-dressed-up-as-lamb piece of froth kneeling on the floor in front of a large suitcase in the most amazingly ankle-breaking pair of stilettos Sweetie had ever seen. The over-perfumed, over-made-up, over-smiling Angelique began her spiel with comments about the useless menfolk being banished for the evening - wink, wink - which would give the womenfolk the
opportunity to really enjoy themselves - wink, wink. This seemed to strike the women in the room as enormously funny and there was a round of applause and excited giggles from everyone, except Sweetie. 'What is this?' she wondered.

'Now, just to get you in the right mood - we'll start with a little game' (knew it!!) announced Angelique. The little pen and pencil quiz seemed to focus on the size, shape and performance of men's private parts and by the time more wine was sipped and answers were marked, everyone seemed to be in a jolly, chatty and twittery frame of mind. Suddenly the room started to feel rather hot, stuffy, perfume-y (Angelique/dog?) - and the marking at home quite appealing really. Game over, now it was time for the wares! There was an excited buzz of expectation as the lid of the suitcase was broached by the still-winking (perhaps she's got a 'tick') Angelique - and a reverential hush, followed closely by appr-eciative ohs and ahs, as the first garment 'Hearts Desire' was introduced.

What actually is it? thought Sweetie, slightly bewildered. Angelique held it up against her torso. A scarlet-red, boned, all-in-one, holder-in-her and bolster-up-her! decided Sweetie. Looks darned uncomfortable - you'd have difficulty breathing - and who wears stockings these days - the suspender things are redundant. All that fussy lace, ribbons and frills! And all that padding in the cups! Grief - a nightmare - you'd have to hand wash it - and what would the neighbours think with that flapping about on the clothesline! Seems to have knicker-things at the bottom of it - oh for goodness sake, crotchless knickers - what's the point of having any on! Where on earth and when on earth would anyone wear such a thing. How gross - God who needs it. It must be a joke!

But it was no joke to the others. Out of the suitcase the effusive Angelique produced a seemingly endless stream of such apparel - much to the delight of the enraptured party-goers. An overwhelming tizzy of conversation, admiration, coveting, goohing and gaahing. Garish colours and sultry black. Shiny satins and silks. Lace and leather. Filmy fuss and frills. Wisps and wasps. Exotic or tawdry? The garrulous Angelique (we can supply all sizes to order) encouraged excited forays by everyone to the bedrooms for trying-ons - and false-apology strutty 'parades' - except for Sweetie, who was wondering how often she could go to the loo without it being too obvious she was avoiding joining in. What on earth would their partners think about them wasting money on such stuff, she thought to herself, only to learn, as the laughter grew more hilarious and the comments became more personal, that the menfolk would greatly appreciate the house-keeping being spent on such 'essentials'. Especially it seems, Mr hero referee, whose formerly prim-looking wife was excitedly trying on everything and ordering with great gusto! What am I doing here, she thought despairingly, this is not my thing. Everyone is ordering up large and I don't even want anything. I wonder if I could use the marking as an excuse - perhaps when supper is served, slip away. Quietly thank Jeanette - exit unobtrusively - yes - she won't notice that I haven't made an order.
'Now Sweetie, what are you going to order?' oozed Angelique. 'You are the last to decide. Anything you order will bring the total up to the level required for the hostess Jeanette to get a free gift - she's been eyeing the red all-in-one and I happen to have one in her size in the car. She'd look marvellous in it'. Why was there suddenly a deathly silence? Everyone listening. Jeanette - expectant. Jeanette trussed up in the little red number - Sweetie's responsibility! If she didn't buy anything, Jeanette wouldn't get her hearts desire - wouldn't reach the total needed. The looks on the faces of the women said it all. She had to buy something, otherwise she'd be the traitor who ruined the party. The Party-pooper! Were there any ordinary knickers? Bendon? Those she needed! Nope! Only crotchless and G-strings. She could use them as a joke present for someone! Perhaps the crotchless knickers would be useful under pantihose - there would still be a crotch, of a kind, and could be quite 'healthy' really - non-thrush promoting etc. Couldn't just buy 1 pair - too miserly. She ordered 2 pair of the crotchless (in white) then scuttled, unsuppered, home to do the marking.
A NASTY EXPERIENCE

GROUP 1's MEMORY-TEXTS

Annabel's Memory-Text.
It was the Fall of 1969. Annabel's first year (quarter) at University. Saturday had arrived and
without a football game or any other planned collegial social function to attend, Annabel and
several of her newly acquainted friends from the dormitory went to the main strip shopping
mall which was about a 30 minute walk away. With purses in hand (or over the shoulder) all
were keen to purchase the latest fashions to enable them to fit into the campus scene.

There were several small cheap to reasonably priced speciality clothing stores (among other
types of stores) in the strip which was anchored at the end with an up market (at least for
University students) large department store. As they worked their way down the strip they
were enjoying themselves - trying on all the clothes they liked and purchasing the odd outfit.
Annabel had purchased a bright purple velour pant suit at one of the cheaper stores (Learners
?). The top could be worn as a mini-dress (wouldn't her mother have die if she knew Annabel
wore it as a mini) or over the highly flared trousers. The top was a short sleeve straight shirt
dress with a fabric belt attached by a big gold buckle that set smugly on the hip.

When they reached the grand department store they were still in their shopping mode looking
for the right outfit(s) to dazzle up their social life. Annabel grabbed several garments and
proceeded to the dressing room. Since there was no one on duty to check the number of
garments and give her the proper corresponding number tag, Annabel continued on into the
dressing room. Nothing worked so Annabel got dressed and ventured back into the store.
However, as she left the dressing room there was an attendant checking the number of
garments that went in and out of the dressing area with each customer. Since Annabel had no
number tag, was shy and an inexperienced shopper in such a store (in those days anyways),
she nervously slipped by the attendant holding her breath that she would not be asked for her
tag. "No, thank God." The attendant said nothing so Annabel met up with her friends who
continued to look and try on the new Fall fashions.

As Annabel and her friends left the clothing area and continued to look around the store, out of
no where she was stopped by store security. In the middle of the store in front of other
customers and her newly found friends he asked to examine her bag. Annabel in her shock
and without really thinking quickly handed over her bag which held her newly bought outfit.
As he searched the bag no receipt was to be found. Annabel panicked and scrambled to find it.
"What had she done with her receipt?" Eventually, but not instantly, she found it. (Annabel
can't remember where she actually did find it.) A tall slim well dressed older black women
with glasses and hat watched and listened about a metre away as the incident took place. "What was she staring at? Why was she listening?" It was none of her business, anyways!"

Annabel didn't and wouldn't dream of shop lifting. It had never even entered her mind that people would actually steal things from stores. Upon documentation of Annabel's purchase from the other store, she and her friends left the store never to return during their Freshman year at University.
Helena's Memory-Text.

A panic buy: A very unpleasant shopping experience.

It was Helena's last summer in her University town; she was done with her job hunting and was finally leaving the US after seven years. She had just returned from visiting a friend in San Fransisco. As Helena's tiny University town was not known for its exciting fashion collections, the visit to West coast was also an excuse for shopping for some future working clothes. She returned from her expedition with two leotards, one unitard, three pairs of tights in different lengths and two sport bra tops which were unsuitable garments for her future position. She had, however, admired a pair of nice, dark jeans toward the end of her visit, but had decided that they were too expensive considering that she had already bought all the exercise gear.

Safely at home and away from the temptations of the fitness fashion industry, Helena came to her senses again. After all, jeans were the one American product she respected as well made, yet they were inexpensive. It was well worth putting money into that kind of purchase. Moreover, according to Helena's fashion sense, jeans were formal wear and were, thus, very suitable for her future position as a lecturer. She remembered that this particular pair was sold in a nationwide department store chain that even the University town had. Helena drove to the store with her partner who, she felt, could validate her purchase.

The store did have the jeans. They looked very nice on Helena, her partner agreed. Helena bought the jeans with cash. At home Helena wanted to admire her beautiful and rational buy again. When she took them out of the plastic bag, she realised that the shop assistant had forgotten to remove the huge white, plastic blob which in normal circumstances would indicate a stolen product. Helena thought to take them back next thing in the morning and looked for the receipt from the bag. It wasn't there; in the wallet; it wasn't there, either; where the heck was it?? Helena panicked: now what? They will think she was a thief! She explained the problem to her partner, who, in his male ignorance, asked why Helena just doesn't cut the thing off. Helena is close to tears: Is the partner stupid or what? Attempts to remove it would stain the jeans forever. Finally, it seemed to sink to the partner's head that there is a problem here, but he still could not quite understand why Helena was running around the house crying and frantically, still, looking for the receipt. Well, for Helena it was clearly a disaster. "Now they think I'm a thief! Why now, when I'm just leaving. We just asked for FBI for our criminal records to apply the permanent residencies. Now they will find out that I'm a thief. They will never let me out of the country.... I have no rights here...I'm a foreigner...I'm going to end up in jail!". Helena was almost hysterical. Partner suggested that she called the shop and simply explained that they had made an error. But Helena did not have the receipt! How could she call them? Such a overly simplistic, hyper rational suggestion could only come from the mouth of man! It was too late to call the department store anyway. Besides, her accent might make them suspicious over the phone.
When forced to leave the matter for that day, Helena got even more anxious over the unfortunate jeans. To calm her mind, however, they came up with a following strategy: Helena will call the store first thing in the morning and explain that by accident the white plastic was not removed from her purchase. She was not to mention the missing receipt and experiment what happens. She could hardly sleep during the night and only snoozed off to dream about her future life in jail.

In the morning, Helena called the store right away. Without mentioning the receipt, the assistant asked Helena to bring the jeans back to the store and they will remove the blob. Her drove jerkily, nervously speeding when she could to the store. It was a hot day. She sat alone in the car this time as the partner had gone to work. In the air conditioned cool store, she explained her business to the first clerk who took it the second who took it to the third. The third seemed to have a more managerial position. She said: "Just a moment, please" and hold a meeting with another assistant moving further away from Helena. They whispered together briefly and then both looked at Helena. Helena tried to look pleasant, innocent and unbothered as if the whole matter was trivial everyday business for her. Finally, the manager handed the jeans to the other shop assistant who came over to Helena. "We are very sorry about the trouble, madam", she said and started cutting of the evil blob. Helena tried not show her relief. Although she felt like chatting furiously away and saying that it was no trouble at all, she, instead, calmly smiled and said: "It's ok" and thanked the clerk.

Outside the store she felt like she was enjoying a huge caffeine high: she was light, happy, her senses were sharp and she was very aware of her surroundings. She was not going to the jail after all. At home, when sipping her diet coke, her partner came home talking about office stuff. Then, suddenly, he remembered Helena's distress and asked how it all went. Helena explained that the counter where she paid the jeans did not normally use such white blobs and did not have the equipment to remove them. It was clearly their mistake. Nobody had mentioned the missing receipt, either. Partner laughed and said that he knew all along that everything would turn out well. He started teasing Helena of getting so hysterical over nothing. Helena felt hurt. The partner had never lived in a foreign country. What did he know about feeling helpless and lost in an unknown and mistrustful system.
Priscilla's Memory-Text.

She had gone to Auckland with her husband and young baby for the weekend. At the time, they were living in a rural environment so this was an exciting trip for Priscilla. She could envisage increasing her wardrobe by a few garments. Although she had access to a local town the thought of shopping in Auckland was far more enticing.

They were able to stay with Priscilla's sister who could give them directions to Factory shops. Priscilla had heard that this was the thing to do, tour these factory shops where great bargains were waiting. Better still, it was decided that Priscilla and her sister would "do" the shops without the assistance of other family members.

Great. Up early Saturday, eager and off. What a great opportunity. Priscilla's sister knew just where to go. No problem for her to negotiate the busy Auckland traffic. Priscilla was definitely not used to the hustle and bustle having spent the past few years in rural areas.

They parked close by and started on their expedition. The sister always found heaps of clothes she could buy. She possessed a large wardrobe already. The first shop was up some stairs at the back of a clothing manufacturer. There were racks of clothes all mushed up together. People were expertly fossicking through the racks. Their handbags had to be given to the sales person behind the till. Nothing like being made to feel like a crim.

Priscilla's sister was soon gathering up the garments to try on. "Come on" she enthused. Ever mindful that this was the BIG OPPORTUNITY to purchase new clothes at low prices Priscilla tried to get enthusiastic. She really wasn't excited about what she was gathering in her arms but thought it was time to wear some different styles and colours. She was inclined to stick to tried and true classic lines in a small colour range.

The shop was hot. People waited for the dressing rooms. These were rather primitive, being makeshift type enclosures separated by sheeting pinned up on some curtain wire. No mirrors were in sight. If she left to find one would someone nick her space? Well, some of the garments fitted. Especially the shirts. Surely one can't go wrong here, she thought. The combination of great prices, usually unaccessible to Priscilla, and the knowledge that she didn't have time to think about things gave her a feeling of panic.

By now the sister was happily exchanging money for her armful. Oh dear, thought Priscilla. Come on, just get them. Surely the sister who was OLDER and WISER would tell her if the garments weren't suitable. She hurriedly narrowed her pile down to four garments. Three shirts and a skirt. Very useful. Normally she would only be able to purchase one item for the total price of these. Yes, this makes much more "cents". By now she was thirsty, tired and pining for some fresh air in the outdoors. Decisions, decisions.
She purchased her finds. The person behind the wooden table/counter shoved them into a recycled plastic supermarket bag. Already Priscilla was doubting if she would actually get much wear out of a couple of the tops. Had she become that conservative living out in the country after all she wondered.

They had spent nearly two hours in the shop. Did she want to go on to another one her sister inquired. Ah, no. "This is great" Priscilla lied, not wanting to let her sister down "but let's go and have a coffee somewhere or pick the others up and have a picnic lunch on the local beach."

She should have known better. She tried to wear the garments she had bought but she only ever wore one of the tops. The others sat begrudgingly in the wardrobe until one day on a trip into the local town she donated them to a charity shop. What a disaster!!!!!! Nothing was a bargain if you weren't going to wear it.

Recently Priscilla accompanied a friend (who is an expert clothes shopper) on a factory shopping expedition to Auckland. A decade had passed since the disastrous trip. Within ten minutes of being in a shop the friend had gathered up many garments. "Come on" she encouraged Priscilla.

But this time Priscilla was OLDER and WISER.
Susie's Memory-Text.

Susie's Nasty One!!

Winter was fast approaching. Once again the wardrobe needed attention. Susie thought a nice pleated skirt, maybe a tartan would be just the thing for school and hopefully the colours in it would go with the knit wear "on-hand".

Susie seems to have a bad sense of timing in these matters. Her favourite shop had sold out of the type of skirt she had decided on; so ---- down to "the other" shop!! Quite a pokey shop, but always a very attractive and professional window display.

Madame behind the counter peering over the top of these gold rimmed half glasses asked if she could be of any help. She was able to point out the appropriate rack and yes there was just the skirt - pleated mid calf length mainly camel with lines of navy and wine, a slit up to the knee and covered buttons from there to the waist. Into the fitting room and it fitted perfectly - great. This was the moment when Susie noted the price tag. Hells teeth - she wasn't needing this skirt after all. Now this was all before affirmative - retailing - therapy Susie has since had.

Susie was standing in the fitting room in a skirt that fitted beautifully; was just what she needed but certainly could not afford. So how was she to get out of this? [An aside here - This is the same shop, same fitting room, same Madame of the white summer dress you may remember!]

Then Susie just happened to take a step forward - ah - relief - an excuse - something was making the skirt pucker. Madame was shown this and suggested all would be well - obviously the lining was the problem so the alteration person would fix that - it would be back in two days.

Susie felt as if this was a slight reprieve. This Madame always made her feel uneasy. Susie knew she now did not want the skirt but she did not know how to say "no"! Back to the shop in two days; tried on the skirt, the pucker was okay now. Then Susie did something strange - she tried sitting down in the skirt - I mean it did have a long slit up the slide - had to see the effect. Well the effect was that the lining pulled the slit every which way and looked jolly awful.

Susie said to Madame, "When I sit down look what happens. I'm sorry, but I can't take this skirt as in my job I sit down a lot and this wouldn't do." Madame's reply to this was, "Well of course that would never happen to me because I never sit down at work." I'm always far too busy." Susie could only think of one word here -- B _ _ _ !!! Gave Madame the skirt and just got out of the shop with many thank youse and sorries.

PS. The same Madame told one of Susie's friends (slightly overweight) that perhaps she should join Weight watchers like Susie and Karen and then come back to the shop.

PPS. Madame I hear is now on the Jenny Craig programme!!

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Wendy's Memory-Text.

Years previously, Wendy had won an emerald. Well, not exactly. She won a thousand dollar voucher from a jewellery and gift store in Dunedin and had decided to spend it on something she would never otherwise buy for herself - the largest it would afford of her very favourite gemstone, an emerald.

Wendy has a passion for rings. She has had, at times, large collections of cheap silver rings which were souvenirs of countries in which she travelled, and expensive antique rings, souvenirs of wealthier years. However, both these collections had been decimated by two separate burglaries. The second, which scored most of the antique rings, upset Wendy so much she felt really ambivalent afterwards about owning such treasured items when the loss of them could cause so much anguish, and she stopped collecting them.

So, for about ten years, Wendy's emerald sat in hidden-away places, unset in her dream ring. Firstly, because she planned to take it to a particular jeweller in Perth but found when she went to live there that he no longer did. Then there was the second burglary. Then she didn't have the money to have the ring made anyway. Then she decided that if and when she ever finished her PhD and was on salary again, she would have the emerald set as a special graduation treat to herself. It became an incentive.

The point of this long preamble is to illustrate that when, finally, the day came for Wendy to take her emerald to a manufacturing jeweller in Hamilton to have it set into a ring, it was a very big deal.

She planned it carefully. She checked-out the store, going in to casually look at their rings to see if they were the kinds of designs she liked. It was mainly a traditional looking jewellery store - bright, glitzy, reeking "expensive", with lots of glass, lights and diamonds. But there was a hint of the 'artiste' behind the designs - a large, irregular, cross-section slab of tree sitting in the window which was his work bench, and a portfolio of his previous works lying on a small table in the corner nearest the door. Most of the rings on display were traditional, run-of-the-mill settings too but, again there were a couple that showed more individual flair and interest. The designer was not in the store at the time but Wendy spoke with his sales assistant who told her he could create any design she wanted.

The problem was, Wendy didn't really know what she wanted. She was sure though, that between her, her partner, and the jeweller they could come up with something perfect for the shape and cut of the stone. Her partner, together with the jeweller in Perth, had previously designed a stunning setting for an aquamarine he gave her and she had faith in his ability to do the same again. He was excited by the prospect. However it meant that if Wendy wanted to
take Bob with her to this jeweller, they would have to go on a Saturday of a weekend Bob was in Hamilton.

Eventually a weekend came up that looked like it would be possible. Wendy phoned the store on Friday to ask about their Saturdays hours. She spoke to the designer himself who assured her he would be there until about 2 pm.

Saturday morning. Wendy and Bob had a huge list of things to do and carefully planned the day so as to fit them all in around the varying hours at which shops and services were open on Saturdays. They arrived at the jeweller at about 12.15 pm - Wendy with her precious emerald retrieved from its hiding place and in her jeans pocket. There was no-one in the store except the designer, sitting working at his wood-slab bench, and the assistant.

Bob and Wendy browsed at the rings on display for a few moments and, when approached by the assistant, Wendy asked if she could speak with the designer. There was some exchange between the assistant and the designer then one of them (Wendy can't remember exactly who) asked her abruptly, "What about?" Wendy replied that she wanted to have an emerald set and she would like to talk to him about designs. The assistant then explained that he was busy fixing something for another customer who was returning to pick it up at 1 o'clock, and asked if Bob and Wendy could come back after then.

One of Bob and Wendy's favourite cappuccino places was nearby so they went there to fill in the time. It was in fact a welcomed 'time out' in the crammed day and gave then an opportunity to have lunch.

When they went back to the shop after 1 o'clock, the designer was sitting at the small table near the door with another man, going through some papers. It looked to be some management business. Again, there were no other customers in the store. Seeing the designer was again busy, Wendy and Bob once again went to the display cabinets to browse at the jewellery. The assistant recognised they had returned and was quick to attend.

For the next 15 - 20 minutes Wendy, Bob and the assistant discussed possible ring designs. Wendy tried on several rings from the cabinet. The assistant asked to see her emerald, made suggestions and brought out pictures of rings from glossy magazines for Wendy to look at. Throughout this time, all three were aware that this was 'fill-in' activity while they waited for the designer to be finished with his business in the corner and attend to them. So far he had ignored Wendy and Bob. The assistant did her very best to be helpful but seemed to become increasingly embarrassed by the delay and eventually recognised that there was little more she could do or say. She suggested that Wendy might like to go to a library or book store and look through European fashion magazines for a design to bring in.
At that stage there seemed no point in staying in the shop. The designer continued to ignore them, the assistant was finding the situation more and more awkward and Wendy and Bob were both frustrated and angry. They left. Wendy felt very let down. What was to have been an exciting denouement turned out to be a disaster. There was no way she would go back to that jeweller, and her emerald has been returned to its hiding place.
GROUP 2's MEMORY-TEXTS

Desiree's Memory-Text.
A 'nasty' shopping experience

Desiree had been seconded to Lopdell House in Auckland for a week to organise a working party on re-writing the dance curriculum for schools. What a week! Working until 10.30 pm every night, starting at the crack of dawn! It had been really difficult as she was the key link, responsible for drawing together teachers from all areas of New Zealand and finding a common understanding for everyone to work from. They had all met for the first time on the Sunday evening and had been 'full on' for 5 days. It was fun playing ladies for a change even if the work was pretty intensive.... They enjoyed being looked after at this hostel free from the domestic trauma of cooking, cleaning, etc., free from the kids at school... Fortunately for Desiree, one of her teaching friends, Marcia, was sharing the experience with her. They had been mates for years, always keeping in touch since their daughters had all been to the same primary school. Every opportunity was taken for a relaxing moment, like over the coffee and tea cups, when the chatter was non-stop and the laughter was infectious... but by Friday lunchtime the dynamic duo were strained and tired. Marcia had written all the work for one year group at primary level and Desiree had written a whole new 6th form syllabus.

"How about some shopping, Desiree, before we hit the road home", breathed Marcia into Desiree's ear as they were busy saying goodbye to the others in the working party. "I thought we'd never get the chance", replied Desiree. They dived off to get their bags and then calmly walked to the car, accepting the good words of thanks from the Ministry officials. "God, I never thought we'd get out of there....." gasped Marcia, leaning back into the seat. Desiree was panicking in case our Martha called us back..... "Yippee Takapuna, brace yourself, we're on our way..."

Car parking was a breeze across the road from the new centre. The two ladies giggled and chatted as they walked arm in arm across the road into the new shopping complex. Immediately the bright lights of a new clothing shop caught their eye. Marcia, gaily walked down the ramp into the shop, calling out "Shall we start here dear?" Desiree was in total agreement. Marcia continued to chat away as she surveyed the goods. She selected all sorts of garments and headed straight for the changing cubicle. This was almost under the ramp leading to the outer door. For once Desiree was in no rush to 'get into it', she was still fairly shell shocked from the week's work and was quite happy to support her friend in her shopping endeavours. Time after time Marcia put clothes on, took clothes off. Desiree kept feeding the
clothes into the changing cubicle. "Desiree, this zip's stuck, can you give me a hand", called Marcia across the shop. Desiree giggled and teased her friend that if she took her time a bit, she wouldn't have these problems." It's all that damned sitting down, eating all week that's the problem." The two girls laughed and giggled struggling to get this zip fixed until the decision was made to try another dress size. Desiree went back to the rack to get another size, picking a selection for herself as she rather liked the style Marcia was considering. As she approached the cubicle the shop assistants asked if everything was okay and if they needed any assistance. "No, thanks, "called Desiree, "we're having a ball!" Desiree disappeared into the cubicle with the two or three dresses. "Oh, at last", teased Marcia." You are going to try something!! You'd better try them on in here in case I get stuck with another zip" The two girls huffed and puffed, laughing, chatting, struggling into the garments before sweeping aside the curtain to survey the mirrors from a distance, seeking the desired effect.... The assistants still calmly stood aside, carefully watching them. Comments of approval passed between the two ladies before they both disappeared back into the cubicle to continue their search. This went on for over half an hour, back and forth, in and out of the cubicle, until Marcia staggered to the counter with two or three items under her arm, dragging her bags, still calling out to Desiree to hurry up now as "we've still got more to do!" "Oh, have we now", said this deep baritone voice. Marcia froze on the spot as this blue-uniform glared down at her. "Do you mind madam, emptying your bags out?" Marcia screamed, "Desiree, get here quick, I don't believe it, what's this ... NO... we're being picked up for shoplifting.!!! I don't believe it." Desiree shot over to the counter, "What are you talking about, Marcia." She looked over to the shop assistants who were glaring at her. "Well", they commented acridly, "What else do you expect us to think, you been in and out of there all morning, scheming and laughing, you've just about tried everything on in the shop between you. You have been acting so suspiciously, furtively trying to fix zips that are not broken... It just all adds up!"

Desiree was mortified "Excuse me, but we have been working our butts off all week writing new education curriculums, we are only celebrating with some shopping, we're teachers for God's sake, not just off the street." "Rubbish", leered the shop assistant, "you are far too immature for teachers, that's all a big con." Marcia lost it. "You ignorant bitch," she screamed, "Stuff your clothes, stuff your shop, we're off..." "Not before I've searched your bags, madam" said this weak baritone voice. "Not on your life", Desiree retorted, "I've never been so humiliated, how dare you accuse us of this" she glared at the shop assistant. She was feeling so upset she went bright red in the face. "Who's not guilty", the spiteful shop assistant said," Look , it's written all over her face." "I don't need this" said Desiree, "I've had it up to here,... Marcia we are leaving...now." Marcia did not need a second reminder. She picked up the clothes and threw them over, under and onto the counter, and stormed up the ramp. Desiree crawled up the ramp, she was so flabbergasted, stunned, upset and yet within a few minutes she started to laugh. "Well, I never thought that would happen to me, but she did have
a point, we were a bit reckless and high!" "What do you expect" grumbled Marcia "locking us away in that damned hostel all week, but we certainly didn't deserve that reaction from those silly cows...... Let's get a coffee and calm down before we hit another shop. I think I need a fix!!!
Frances's Memory-Text.

A nasty

Shopping for clothes for Frances was never a nasty experience. It was uplifting, exhilarating, at times frustrating, but never nasty. She loved the smell of new clothes, the smooth way they hung on their hangers and she marvelled at how she could never get a garment to look as neat once she had bought and worn and washed it. There was something about a brand new, pristine, never-been-out-of-the-shop garment. It had never been buffeted by weather, had its hemline slammed in a car door, or had its lapels crushed by overcrowded wardrobes or had it's button holes get worn and the buttons floppy threatening to drop, as they were only held by a single centimetre of thread in the first place. No, new clothes were special, untouched, except by prospective buyers (which she hoped had not just been eating chocolate and licking their fingers - hard to tell on brown garments).

She didn't like to think that they had been tried on by other people, other people who may have just popped in from their aerobics session on their way home to pick up a greasy chicken at Big Fresh and a small salad and garlic bread... Or worse still, had just eaten the greasy chicken, small salad and garlic bread and were on their way to aerobics. Or maybe other people who had not showered recently and had had trouble getting the zip up and stretched the seams, or pulled the hem or started to unravel one of those enigmatic threads which just go on and on once you start to pull at it, wishing you hadn't.

Actually the thought of trying on clothes just after someone else had, was a bit of a nasty for Frances. Fine if it was your girlfriend, or your mother or your relations or someone else you know and love and trust that they wash now and again and don't take the opportunity to wipe their armpits on new blouses. But the thought of a great unknown sticky armpit bristling with wiry hairs and glistening droplets of sweat, was a bit much for Frances. Trousers were even worse and she tended to hunt for the most un-tried-on looking pair. And as for swim wear she knew for a FACT that some women, if not most women, ignored those signs that clearly stipulated that women retain their undies while trying on bikinis and one-pieces. She had been in changing rooms with various women as they came out to get a better view of themselves in the mirrors (like they were walking down the length of a beach) and there was not a skerrick of their undies to be seen. Not a seam or a roll of elastic or a Bendon label sticking out anywhere above their bikini line. Unless they all wore G-strings, chances were they had dropped their knickers on the changing room floor or stuffed them in their handbag while they twirled in their new swimsuit. And horrors, they were ALWAYS trying on more than one pair, like 6 pairs. And Frances understood that. It always took at least 6 swimsuits to get something that looked even half presentable and not like some escapee from an erotic strip-show, or worse, some '50s reincarnation of sensible 2 pieces where belly buttons were heard of but not seen. She remembered one girl/woman trying on copious suits with her mother giving loud and encouraging advice, and her mother didn't even comment on her daughter's lack of knickers.
She wondered what mothers did tell their daughters these days. Probably far more serious and important things like AIDS prevention and the problems about affairs with married men. How did keeping your knickers on in a changing room compare with those eminent topics?

But it was something she couldn't stomach. Trying on swimsuits that others may have just slipped their natural selves into was a bit much. She didn't slip into bed with strange women, or share their toilet seats or their handkerchiefs so why on earth would she want to share their bikini bottoms?? Why didn't all shops line their bikini bottoms? Or provide free showers? Or make darn sure those undies stayed on! A quick whip down of their bikini bottoms would confirm or deny if they had in fact, retained their underwear as requested. And if not, the penalties would be appropriate for the crime. She would like to see notices: "We prosecute knicker-droppers" right up their alongside the shop-lifters and the surveillance camera system.

Frances decided that buying swimwear had always been problematic and it wasn't just because she felt pale and frumpy and lumpy and blotchy in such skimpy garments under the harsh unforgiving lights of the changing chamber. Oh, no. It was more subterranean than that.
Gisela's Memory-Text.

Gisela hated buying pantyhose. This may be related to the fact that she also hated wearing them because they were always so prickly on the legs after a few hours. However there are occasions where one simply cannot wear leggings or jeans or trousers in the winter and pantyhose do afford some form of cover, meagre though it may be -- cover -- as opposed to warmth. Winter legs white, dry skinned and often half-shaven (or half hairy!) definitely need covering.

Gisela browsed through the Farmers noticing there was a bin of reduced price pantyhose. Her other pantyhose purchasing problem related to the colours. She always managed to select the yuckiest, muddiest browns or bright mustards which were supposed to look "natural" on the legs. They looked okay in the packets but somehow -- whether it was lighting or her perception of the colours through the cellophane windows in the packets - Gisela had little success.

Her eye was caught today by some black background with spots "opaque tights". Now, what does opaque tights mean," Gisela thought to herself. Tights must mean no feet in them and opaque means they're quite thick. Plus look at the price - they were $29.25 and they're $10.00. Gisela did a quick mental mix and match exercise - long white jersey, black skivvy, black jersey, black skirt, etc. and decided that they'd be a change, would cover the legs and be appropriate for work. She readily paid the $10.00 and upon reaching her parked car deposited the bag in the boot. In the boot was where the bag stayed for a couple of weeks. When Gisela finally retrieved it she put it in the back of the wardrobe shelf and once again forgot about it.

About three months later Gisela found the bag, opened it to see what it contained and decided to inspect the contents in greater detail. She removed the "opaque" tights from the fancy plastic packaging and discovered immediately that they were a lot more transparent than she thought opaque was. They also had "feet" attached to the bottom of the legs! Not to worry.

However, when Gisela put them on, they were hideous - the spots were all over the place in rows that didn't quite line up over the gussets. Yuck! She rolled them up and put them back in their plastic bag in the wardrobe - back of the shelf. "Thank goodness she hadn't paid a fortune for those," she thought. They might do for a fancy dress party sometime but she couldn't see much future for that purchase!
**Sweetie's Memory-Text.**  
**Sweetie's Nasty Experience**

Enter Sweetie centre stage, biggish, unsophisticated Hamilton department store. Grazing. Not needing anything immediately but 'just looking'. A wedding in the future to gift-browse for (probably towels/bride's request) and Sweetie e-x-t-e-n-d-i-n-g on that task, as a tried and true 'shopper', taking advantage to peruse what is available and what the current prices are, for the sort of goods she might want to buy - and for anything else in the offing!!

'Browsing' for ten minutes - and not a shop-detective in sight! No ferret staff watching her every move. Unusual. Staff cut-backs, perhaps? Could almost go to the changing rooms with more than the statutory 3 garments and no-one would even notice! This is the kind of store where Sweetie usually gets 'extraordinary service and undivided attention', from store personnel. She'll wander around, then realise there are several pairs of 'beady eyes' watching every move she makes - the kind of attention which encourages her hive off to another shop to do her actual shopping! Today, here she is, large as life - and nobody (yes, nobody!) seems to be noticing!

Is it the tight, wet, just-washed-this-morning, 'bun' hairdo (instead of the usual, frizzy ponytail) perhaps looking a bit more 'acceptable'? Or the real leather handbag (from the last trip to Thailand) - disorientating them? Perhaps the Christian Dior designer-label on the outside of today's outfit (a Bangkok imitation) distracting them? Probably too subtle for the sorts who work here. Quite disappointing really! Standards are dropping! Might have to write to the manager!

Nothing here to buy in the women's wear department. Stacks of racks - all the same. Uninspired display. Everything as per every other chain store. Cl-ones!! B-or-ing!! No wonder she doesn't shop here very often! Wait a minute! Wedding presents aside, this looks promising! Just what she's been looking for - a long, olive-green, sleeveless cardigan-thing. Olive is usually a bit dark for her colouring - but needs to get away from blue - and $49.95 is a good price (paid $59.95 for the natural-coloured cotton one that did her well over the summer) and she needs something like this to tide her over the autumn and spring periods. Good for chilly mornings - peelable in the hottish afternoons. Would go well with the yellow top, green and yellow Bali pants and scarf combo, and green Brazilian shoes - or the natural-coloured jeans and long-sleeved cotton-top bought in Brisbane last year.

H-m-m-m - wonder if there are any other colours? Or anything else to be bought? [Browse, browse - olive garment over arm.] H-m-m-m - seems to be the last one on any of the racks - need to try it up against the bod, to check that the colour isn't too dreary on the complexion. No use buying it if the colour is wrong. No mirrors out here - have to find a changing room. Usually ask the shop assistant first - but no one in sight - so find own changing room. May as
well try it on. [Exit left to a nearby changing cubicle - curtain left open as trying on cardigan over clothes].

Minute later. Centre front shop. "Did you notice where that Maaori woman with the bun went?" asked an assistant-sounding voice. Ears pricked. Maaori? Bun? - did she mean me? (Samoan, I'll have you know - can't you tell the difference! That's like saying she's an Australian?) "No, why?" replied another voice. "I can't see that green jerkin she was interested in" said the first. (Green? Jerkin? Thought it was a cardigan? 'Jerkin' - that puts me off! She must mean me. I'm the only person in the shop and I'm looking at the one green cardigan-jerkin! God it's hot in here. Why are the changing rooms always so teeny? Did I remember to put on deodorant this morning - sniff, sniff - perhaps I forgot.)

"Probably pinched it - looks the sort" continued the first voice. (Pinched it? Me? What sort do I look like? I'll have you know I drive a Jaguar!) "Have you seen in the paper - it's all very organised - they go into shops in groups, some distract the staff - and the rest disappear with the till or the goods they want".

"She seemed to be on her own, and looked all right to me" said the second voice doubtfully. (Thanks dearie - you I like!) "Aah, probably part of the plan - 'how not to look like a shoplifter'" suggested the first voice. "They're experienced at trying to pull the wool across your eyes. There were probably others skulking around somewhere. Another thing they do is to pinch stuff and then bring it back and try to 'get their money back'. I think we should tell the manager about her and call the police". (Police? This is too much! All I've done is take the garment into the changing room and tried it on. I'm a bit tired of this kind of stereotyping - in fact I'm darned sick of this kind of thing. Aren't I the one doing them a favour, wanting to buy the stuff from their shop? Isn't the customer always right? Isn't my money the same as and as good as anyone else's? Geez - this gets up my nose. In fact it really gets up my nose - and it's not just PMT!). Exit changing room - enter centre front stage. Seething.

"Excuse me, are you the shop assistant who just suggested I probably pinched this sleeveless cardigan from this shop?". Surprise. Guilt. "For your information, I was just trying it on in the changing room - but you didn't know because you weren't doing your job properly - and weren't around when you were needed!" Glare. "In fact I would say you were a very incompetent shop assistant!" "There's no need to get nasty, madam". Defensive.

Exiting right - set mouth. "Stick the cardigan up your jumper!". Impolite tone.

NB: Title change: Sweetie gets nasty!
AN UNUSUAL EXPERIENCE

GROUP 2's MEMORY-TEXTS

Desiree's Memory-Text.
Desiree's most unusual shopping experience.

Desiree and her male colleague were overseas in Canada at an International Physical Education Conference. They had arrived a few days early at the conference venue in order to acclimatise to the heat of summer, (having left a cold winter in New Zealand), and to allow some recovery time from the journey before the Conference started. What better way to enjoy a few hours relaxation than to go shopping! Her male colleague, Collinson, was all in favour of "doing the shops" as he was eager to buy for himself and his wife a few special items. Desiree was most impressed that her travelling companion was keen and excited at going shopping!! and eagerly agreed with every suggestion to 'go here and go there', happily window gazing and taking in the unusual goods displayed. After a couple of hours of buying gifts and perusing the local artistic delights the coffee shop was targeted. Collinson was even more fired up after a 'humungous' muffin and hot caffe latte. "Just got to go to 'the big and tall shop', Desiree, saved up for this moment!!" cooed Collinson, striding out across the road, dodging all the cars on the wrong side of the road. Desiree was literally run off her feet trying to keep up the pace set by this young man who was totally focused on this mission. "The Shop" is just down here, 3 more streets, on the left, with a huge blue and white awning over the window!!" "How do you know?" gasped Desiree, "we haven't been here before." "Oh, but B.G. has, "he replied," and he told me exactly where it was... "An hour later after walking down every street in the town we saw a window in the distance with a huge green and white awning over it. "Jeromino!!", there it is "called out Collinson with shrieks of delight. Desiree was almost exhausted, but had to smile at the absolute enthusiasm pouring from her buddy. It was then she realised that this was not an ordinary shopping trip. Collinson was over 6 foot 5 ins. tall and this was the only shop in the 'Universe' that catered for tall men!!! and big men.....and he was not wrong. As soon as they walked into the shop, Desiree's mouth fell open. In front of her were these HUGE shoes, both of Desiree's feet would have fitted into one, and she is not very small.... She looked up, literally, at the HIGH racks of clothes to fit giants.... jackets of huge proportions, and the trousers on the model would have gone round Desiree two or three times.... She started to laugh, "I've never seen anything like this in my life, look at this tie wow"....she picked it up and it went from her neck to the bottom of her knees... But her colleague had suddenly disappeared under a sea of anoraks, it took Desiree all her effort to move one or two back on the rack to find her buddy, they were so heavy. As she was struggling along, this huge- girthed man came over to Desiree, "Are you having difficulty finding the right size?" Desiree could not speak, she was so in awe of his size, and the incongruity of him standing next to the tall thin man she had accompanied into the shop. She
started to giggle and was saved by Collinson's eagerness to buy up the whole shop.... It had never struck Desiree before as to what it must be like to be either so tall or so wide that 'normal shops' don't accommodate your needs. She started to look more into all the goods and was quite fascinated by the extraordinary items, from socks to shirts, from undies and hats to all kinds of sports gear. "How can anyone do sports when you are that size?" she pondered looking at these huge satin-type shorts. "They go fishing in those..." the shop assistant answered her glazed look. "Wow."... Her day dreaming of sinking boats was broken by the eager cries of her buddy who was keen for her opinion on a particularly smart anorak..... She then started to catch on to her colleague's enthusiasm and assisted him in trying every anorak of every colour and design on in the shop. For the next hour they had a ball, they tried jumpers, coats, sports shoes, jackets.. jeans that were long enough to reach the shoes..... shirts with sleeves that did not finish below the elbow.... It was fascinating, another world.... but the prices... Desiree was shattered by the incredible price that everything cost...and had to agree that it was just as well there were not that many of these shops around... the giggles stopped then as she felt really sorry for the guys who were not able to just walk into a shop and pick up several pieces of clothing to see which suited them. It was a case of going into a shop just to see if they had a piece of clothing that actually fitted them.... tall or big..."Wow"..... "What an incredible experience that was" said Desiree to her buddy as she helped him carry several parcels out of the shop."....."MMMMmmmmmm grinned her buddy, "Now I can look forward to the Conference". "MMMMmm" agreed Desiree, still in shock and awe over the patience of this man who so totally accepted that it was just everyday that we walked into the 'shop with the red and white awning'.
Frances's Memory-Text.

A most unusual buy.
The visitor from the USA was keen to explore the shops, in particular the craft shops of the Hamilton and Cambridge areas in the little free time they had available. She really had her heart set on a hand-knitted, home-spun, genuine article, just-came-off-the-sheep, still-bleating, jersey. Something original and well made. Something that would make her the envy of the up-state New York crowd not to mention the folks in Washington and Virginia. Frances took her to the annual craft market at the Hamilton gardens on a wet and drizzly afternoon. The place was packed. They found a jumper stall and the visitor tried on a few. None seemed to suit though one or two looked nice. The visitor didn't like the way they hung off her shoulders. The stall owner suggested shoulder pads but was politely declined. They left the craft market and Frances felt disappointed for her visitor. She wanted her to have the best possible time and purchase just what she wanted.

So they tried another place in Cambridge. Frances had heard about it through a friend of a friend. It sounded ideal. They found a park right outside and climbed the steep narrow staircase to the shop which was perched above an antique store. The stair case did not bode well as it was rather untidy and shoddy and smelt damp. The steps were so narrow they had to watch how they placed their feet. The shop at the top was quite spacious though and had many jerseys of just the kind that the visitor had been looking at. They were on poles which were threaded through the arm holes so that the jerseys stood out like scare-crows without heads or legs, just colourful torsos. The jerseys featured many shades from pinks and blues to earth hues. Some had rhinestones and ribbons sewn in as features and others had strips of Angora knitted with the plain wool to give variety in the texture. Frances smiled to herself - perfect! Just right for the visitor. There must be something here to suit her and what's more they would all be originals. The two store owners hovered nearby, not pushy or disinterested but just there. One kept ducking out the back to check on some new garments. The other busied herself at the counter. They chatted casually to Frances and the visitor, conveying interest that seemed genuine and not forced.

The visitor picked over the jerseys with an expert eye. She had clearly been to a lot of woollen stores. She studied the price tags and frowned. She felt the texture of the wools. Frances stood in the middle of the room looking about her nonchalantly. Just a matter of time she thought till her visitor chose what she wanted. Finally the visitor chose one - a fluffy pinkish number with bat wing sleeves. She put it on and took time surveying herself in the mirror. She turned and frowned and frowned and turned. Finally she plucked at her shoulders a few times. One of the shop assistants suggested she could insert shoulder pads but the visitor politely declined the suggestion.
Frances felt sorry for her visitor and she also felt that she had failed as a host! She tried to interest her in something else when just then, it caught her eye... a multi-earth-coloured zappy cardigan with hand-made funky looking femo buttons. The colours were great- murky greens and mustard yellows that everyone she knew thought were YUCK and said that they made them look sick... but Frances was intrigued and tantalised. "Just a quick try on," she thought, "A quick slip over the shoulders" after all it wasn't she who was buying but her visitor. She'd just try it on to fill the time. Nothing more. She watched her visitor circling the jerseys as she shrugged into the cardigan. So light and warm she thought. Comfortable... and the colours... but most of all those buttons. It would have been an ordinary garment without those buttons. "They're baked in the oven you know," said the shop assistant, "All original one-offs". Frances looked in the mirror and felt very peaceful and snug. The buttons had personalities of their own as if they had decided to camp on that cardigan for the mean time but would hive off somewhere else one day. They were like a tribe of gypsies adding their colour and verve to the landscape.

As she paid for the jersey she felt slightly guilty as her visitor stood and waited for her to complete the transaction. This was not at all how Frances had intended things to be. She hoped her visitor would find what she wanted before she left but she suspected that would not be the case.
Gisela's Memory-Text.
Gisela's Unusual Experience
1985

It was quite by accident that Gisela discovered "Reporter". She had caught a bus instead of the underground and not being sure of where the bus stops were, had jumped up when the bus stopped at the beginning of Harrow High Road and walked.

Near the bus stop the window display caught her attention. Unusual windows - small panes of glass but starting about a metre above the footpath and going quite high - the mannequins were viewed through the smallish panes of glass.

Finding the entrance was interesting as she walked right past the windows first and the doors were at a $45^\circ$ angle to the footpath - at one end of the shop and up 3 steps.

Inside was well lit, by natural light from the high windows which, once inside, started at floor level. The walls were white which seemed to reflect the light. The floor looked as though thousand of feet had walked over it - highly polished floor boards which were pitted with many dents and markings.

The counter was on the left - a free-standing polished wood bench with an old fashioned cash register on it and a small vase of flowers. The shop was spacious and airy. Changing rooms were white curtained cubicles along the back of the room.

The shop assistants were both dark haired, dark eyed, olive skinned woman. They both had short spiky haircuts and one had a ruby rose ring while the other wore large dangling silver earnings. They both wore black tops - one was a skivvy. They also had short skirts on. The woman in the skivvy had a black and cream large hounds tooth patterned mini while the other had a short black leather skirt on.

Gisela prowled around the spacious shop browsing through the racks until she'd selected several garments to try. The shop assistants had both made eye contact with her and smiled. The woman in the black skirt suggested Gisela might like to try her garments - gesturing towards the changing rooms. The changing room were large. Lots of curtain to cover the space and a big well lit mirror too.

Gisela purchased a mustard/gold coloured jacket and trouser - a very reasonable price (sale markdown!) Gisela had really liked the atmosphere of the shop - the light airy space, friendly, low key sales assistants and the range of garments that were stocked seemed to be from reasonable priced everyday items to some quite expensive "special event" item.
In the following months Gisela returned to Reporter and purchased, on two separate occasions, blue knit "Pamplemoisse" leggings (for wearing to work in the snow) and a black wool and cashmere coat which, although it was size 14 and rather large, was reduced to L 35 so practicality (warmth!) won over and above fashion and style. On each visit Gisela was impressed by the "feel" of the place - it was friendly and welcoming.

1991
Can you imagine Gisela's excitement. Six years later and back in her old haunts in the U.K. a visit to Harrow was on the agenda and on the appointment day Gisela and Dave opted for a 25 minute invigorating walk to Harrow. Anticipation was mounting as Gisela ascended Harrow Hill - past the school and church (not many changes here!) and there was Harrow High Road within sight - a downhill run. The disappointment was deflating as Gisela approached Reporter and discovered instead a vacant shop. It was a lovely day and the sun shone through the windows onto the empty wooden floor. "Damn, thought Gisela", no bargains here. Still, 6 years have passed and what more could I have expected." Not one of these thoughts had she communicated with Dave although her paced had slowed as she relived her memories of happy shopping.

It was about two hours later, still in Harrow that Gisela noticed a large windowed shop across the road with the sign Reporter hanging over the door and written, up high, across the window. It was on the shade side of the street and looked dark and uninviting - so much so (because Gisela was also overdue on the rendezvous time to meet up with Dave and he hated to be kept waiting) that Gisela didn't feel tempted to investigate - most unusual for her considering her previous affinity with the shop.
Sweetie's Memory-Text.
Sweetie's Most Unusual ...


Senses assayed. Food (fresh, cooked, fragrant, rotting); clogged klongs (stagnant water, rubbish, faeces, waste); carbon monoxide (8 lanes of banked up tuktuks, buses, motorbikes, Mercedes Benz); people (thronges, beggars, tarts, monks); religion (incense, spirit houses, chants, saffron robes); extremes (wealth, poverty, beauty, slums); tradition (temples, wats, palaces, glitter); discomfort (grime, fumes, jostling crowds, bartering); SHOPPING (MBK, bargaining, floating markets, artifacts).


Not real - for sure! And not buy - that's for sure!
APPENDIX D

EXAMPLES OF RECONSTRUCTED MEMORY-TEXT: 'THE QUICK EXIT'

This appendix provides examples of Group 1's reconstructed memory-texts for the 'Quick Exit' trigger. The process from which these reconstructions were created is explained in Chapter 4: Method Application. In the following illustrations of these reconstructions, the written memory-text as provided by each participant to the group for analyses is listed first. Each participant's memory-text is then followed by the researcher's reading of the reconstruction as analysed in the group discussion. The reconstructions were acknowledged by each participant as being an accurate interpretation. These reconstructions were then used by the researcher as the main data base to analyse and interpret how (a) participants attached meaning to and processed their evaluations of their clothing shopping experiences, and (b) how these meanings and processes related to different theoretical perspectives discussed in the satisfaction/dissatisfaction literature.

GROUP 1's MEMORIES AND ANALYSES

Susie's Memory-Text.

*It was a warm sunny day - Summer was almost here. The wardrobe was looking pretty sad - time to go shopping for summery clothes. Susie was in her thirties - decided to try an ethnic type dress. The dress shop had exactly the style - longish flowing, white and just the thing for summer evenings. She went into the fitting room. There was a skylight there where the sun was streaming through. She tried the dress on. Someone else had already done so because she could smell a strong deodorant type of smell. A bit off putting to say the least. The dress was almost what she wanted, but then she noticed a split of about three inches where the stitching had come undone around part of the waistline. Susie took the dress off - changed into her own hot winter clothes and took the dress to the owner of the shop at the counter. She pointed out the problem. The look of utter disdain on the Manager's face made Susie feel as if she had in fact split the dress. Feeling hot prickles climbing up her neck it was time to leave!! Messages were being sent to the legs "lets get out of here!" - but the lead feet seemed stuck to the floor - and the mouth kept chattering on non-sensically. It was at least two more years before she went near that shop again and she made quite sure the manager was no where near at the time. She still did not buy anything!* 76

76 All memory-text in this Appendix is delineated by italics.

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The Group's and Researcher's Discussion of Susie's Memory-Text.

In the ensuing discussion of Susie's memory, the group identified that a moral injustice had occurred when Susie was falsely accused of breaking the stitches on the dress. Although she went to the manager "being helpful, being positive" [Helena], she received a look of utter disdain . . . as if she had in fact split the dress. She could have "sneaked it back on the rack" [Wendy] but did the "womanly" [Helena] thing of endeavouring to be helpful rather than complain. Susie reflected, "I thought I was being nice; taking and showing her [the manager] before the next customer got it. . . . I thought I was being totally honest and lovely. But that backfired somewhat."

Susie had expected the manager to say something like, "Thank you for pointing it out. We can fix it. No problem" [Susie]. Hence, the outcome was totally unexpected. Instead of being thanked for her deed, Susie was made to feel as if she had damaged the dress. Susie reflected, "I felt very guilty77. . . . Just the look she gave me, I knew she thought I was guilty. But I wasn't guilty. But she made me feel as if I were." Furthermore, Susie's behaviour of chattering on non-sensically after being accused, reinforced her feeling of guilt. Susie noted, "The mouth kept chattering on and on non-sensically. Almost, as when some people are guilty that happens."

In addition to Susie's shock of the unexpected outcome, her feelings of distress were intensified by the contrast with how she had felt earlier and the mood created by the setting. As Priscilla highlighted, "The sun was coming through the skylight, the longish flowing white ethnic dress and the sun streaming in. It was a real summer image." "Yes, it is that excitement" [Wendy]. "That carefree feeling of summer and then to have her [the manager] react like that was twice as bad. It shattered the whole feeling of the day" [Priscilla]. Susie agreed, and added, "I [was] probably feeling disappointed that the dress wasn't up to scratch."

Since the dress was not up to scratch it did not match her quality expectations. Hence, there was a negative disconfirmation. Although in need of summer clothes and since the dress was almost what she wanted, Susie was disappointed it was not the quality it "should have been" [Susie]. This contributed to her feelings of dissatisfaction with the retail encounter.

In addition, Susie was shocked by and objected to the smell of strong deodorant from a previous customer. This resulted in disgust which also contributed to her feelings of dissatisfaction. Susie reflected, "I can still to this day remember putting it [the dress] on and thinking, Oh Dear! The strong smell of deodorant. A bit off putting to say the least".

77 Bold words or phrases represent emphasis being placed on them by the participant during the group memory-work discussion.
Although not specifically identified through the memory-text or group discussion, this feeling of disgust could have been attributed to the breaking of a justice norm. In this situation, an individual is entitled to, and thus expects a clean garment and a fresh retail environment. Furthermore, to satisfy the customer, it is the store's responsibility to ensure such entitlements. When Susie informed the retailer of such a problem, her behaviour supported the expectation of justice since she did not want the next customer to be exposed to the same negative experiences.

As indicated by Susie's intense physical reaction to being accused of wrong-doing, it was the emotions of guilt and humiliation which dominated her negative feelings and subsequent behaviour of leaving the store and not returning for two years. Susie reflected,

> If you could underline feeling hot prickles (climbing up her neck). If you could underline that! . . . And the message . . . going to the legs . . . lets get out of here! . . . And the feet . . . weren't going anywhere (stuck to the floor) . . . and the mouth kept chattering on and on non-sensically . . . I wanted to get out of a situation I was not in [being guilty].

Furthermore, because Susie attributed the cause of injustice to the manager, future interaction with the manager was avoided even when returning to the store two years later. This implied a fear that if she were to see the manager again, she would still feel humiliated as before and relive the feeling of guilt. Through the act of avoidance, she protected herself from humiliation while maintaining her identity of being a helpful individual.

Susie reflected on how the situational factors of living and shopping in a small isolated rural town emphasised the significance of how she behaved following the incident; as well as actually leaving. "Where I came from was a small town, so I told lots of people about that. The store wasn't doing itself any good."

**Wendy's Memory-Text.**

*Leaving.*

> She had not bought any article of clothing for a long time. Being a student with little income, new clothes were not a priority. But a new swimsuit was a necessity. Her old one was literally falling apart and in that climate, living by the sea, swimming was an essential part of her lifestyle.

*It was late summer. She knew there wouldn't be a huge selection of swimsuits in the stores but she thought there should be a few at sale price. She had put aside this particular Saturday morning to find one, knowing it was going to be a hunt. She was very particular about the style of swimsuit she would wear and had a limit on what she could pay.*
She started in Fremantle where she lived, going to every women's clothing store.

Nothing. Into the car, she drove down the highway to the next shopping centre, Grove Plaza on the edge of the very prestigious residential area of Peppermint Grove.

Nothing in the department store. She wandered into the Plaza and took the elevator up to the second level. From the top of the elevator she saw a rack of swimsuits hanging near the entrance of a small boutique. She went in. There weren't many. It didn't take long to find her size range and she immediately fell upon a stunningly beautiful number. It was white with inserts of mesh and a small amount of silver trim. WOW! She grabbed it off the rack and reached for the tag.

The price on the tag gave her such a shock the hanger fell from her hands and the swimsuit to the floor. Suddenly she was aware of how scruffy she looked; of having strayed into the wrong store. How obvious it must be that she could not, would not pay such an extortionate amount for such a skimpy garment. Very quickly, before she could be discovered and confronted by a sales assistant, she picked it up, put it back on the rack and, trying to appear nonchalant, walked out.

The Group's and Researcher's Discussion of Wendy's Memory-Text.

Wendy's memory and reflections illustrate two concepts of injustice, equity and social comparison, which are separate but interlinked in her experienced feelings. Wendy first declared these two concepts and their complexity in her memory-text statement, "How obvious it must be that she could not, would not pay such an extortionate amount ($350 Australian) for such a skimpy garment." Upon Helena repeating Wendy's thought of "How could they possible charge that much?" Wendy expanded upon her feelings and experience of these two concepts.

Yes, there was that, there was disgust! Like, this is ridiculous, absolutely ridiculous. I was disgusted ... that some conglomerate ... could actually try to hoodwink women like that. To expect them to pay that sort of money. So there was disgust ... and horror that there actually may be women out there that would do that. ... But there was also, sort of, embarrassment of my own situation ... of not having the money... looking for bargain basement stuff and being out of my league... [I] got beyond my station almost... [As a mature student,] I was back to penny pinching after spending years of having heaps of money. And it was difficult coming to terms with that. It was all part of that. All part of that response ... that I was poor (laughs). And the embarrassment that goes with that - just being poor.

Later in the discussion, Wendy clarified her feelings of dissatisfaction due to these two perceived injustices. First on her position of inequity.

Yeah, ... [it was] a dissatisfying episode because it makes you loose faith in the trade. ... particularly with something like a swimsuit that is a very basic garment and you see price tags on them like that. ... It makes you think that the women's clothing trade is treating you as stupid. [Wendy]
Second, when asked by Helena,

   Would you compare yourself to them [women with unlimited funds]? Thinking, "Gosh I am poor. I wish I was richer." Was it dissatisfying in that sense or was it that you just rather feel like, "No, I don't need to pay this much; this is silly?"

Wendy clarified her feelings of dissatisfaction due to her social standing by stating,

   Yeah, that sort of dissatisfaction with where you are at; and, um, the implications that has on your own self esteem; and yeah, those things. Yeah, I think there would be an element of that [upward social comparison] going on as well. [Wendy]

Discussing her personal situational circumstances and comparing herself to others, Wendy revealed how she had become distressed and how her emotions were intensified in regards to what she considered was such an inequitable exchange.

   You bring the situation you are in to [the exchange]. . . . I can't image myself paying 350 dollars for a pair of bathers . . . but there has been previous times in my life . . . that would have not been so devastating! It would have not shattered me so much, because I could have just moved next door and bought something for half the price. I wasn't looking for bargain basement stuff . . . [I]t was [the] very situation from where I was at, in terms of where my finances were. . . . [Wendy]

However, a downward social comparison of Wendy's situation to those individuals who had less income or spending power than herself, illustrated a coping behaviour which allowed her to deal with her current social position. Wendy reflected,

   It made me stop and think about what it would be like if you were always living on that sort of budget. And I had come from a situation where I was not living like that, and I sort of anticipated that this wasn't going to be the situation for the rest of my life. But it makes you wonder about people who are.

From this perspective, the memory-work group indirectly concluded that for an experience to be satisfying there must be an element of enjoyment in it. "Like, they [the poor] would never get enjoyment [from shopping at an expensive store]. . . ." [Helena]. "Because if you haven't got any money, that would be fairly heart breaking. . . . To know that you, never in your wildest dreams, would be able to afford something like that" [Susie]. This, however, does not imply that because someone can not afford to purchase something, that they will not enjoy the shopping experience. For example, Priscilla commented, "I get pleasure out of looking at things that are beyond my means. I do it all the time. When you are with beautiful things you feel good." Most people, however, would not place themselves into a situation which would cause them distress. That is, where they would not receive enjoyment or achieve a purpose for being there. As Annabel noted, "I would be hesitant to go into some stores. If there wasn't something there for me; if I didn't feel comfortable for some reason."
By not observing the type of store she entered, Wendy had not picked up on the symbolic clues of what to expect. As a result, she placed herself in a situation where she ultimately became disappointed. Once inside, the store environment caught her by surprise which intensified her disappointment. Wendy reflected,

I just wandered in... [Y]ou could just sort of see them [the swimsuits] as I wandered off the elevator. And I really didn't take note of the type [of store], of any of the surroundings. It was just a little boutique, in a little mall, in a little plaza; and I sort of just honed straight into them [swimsuits] not really looking too much; even about... what the store was like... Yes, [even if I recognised that it was expensive.] I would have gone into the store, because I was doing the rounds. I was going everywhere. But I don't think I would have been as **shocked** at the price; and wouldn't have been so "Wow, Wow! Aren't these wonderful" and got so enthusiastic or involved in them, and then shocked by the price, if I had sort of taken note of the surroundings before... I would have expected it more, probably knowing that these were not going to be department store prices.

Susie was quick to joke, "Perhaps the name of the Grove, Peppermint Grove [as stated in Wendy's memory-text] should have suggested that it would have been hot!" Wendy replied,

Well, well I should have know that because in terms of the residential area that the shopping centre serviced. *(Grove Plaza on the edge of the very prestigious residential area of Peppermint Grove.)* You know, gives you a clue about the sorts of stores that are going to be there. But, there was also a department store amongst it.

Wendy became really excited when she **fell upon a stunningly beautiful number.** When asked if she felt really excited about her discovery, Wendy commented, "Yeah, of having found something. Something that may have been suitable. Something that you may have liked to have purchased."

This excitement was intensified by the anticipation of product scarcity and Wendy's desperate need. She knew "that it was last minute" [Susie].

*It was late summer. She knew there wouldn't be a huge selection of swimsuits in the stores... [I]t was going to be a hunt. [S]ince she was particular about the style of swimwear she would wear and had a limit on what she could pay [her selection was even further limited].*

For Wendy, a **new suit was a necessity.** *Her old one was literally falling apart and in that climate, living by the sea, swimming was an essential part of her lifestyle.*

The necessity to find a swimsuit within a time limit and location span also contributed to her excitement of discovering a suit when and where she did. For Wendy, the sooner, the better. She didn't have any luck in Fremantle, *where she lived, going to every women's clothing store.* But, on just her second stop she thought she might have found a swimsuit without having spent too much time and effort or having to experience the hassles of the city. Wendy reflected,
I was into it. That was my mission. I was not leaving without [a swimsuit]. I was going to go down Sterling Highway and stop at all the shopping centres on the way down. Hoping that I would get something before I ended up in the city. Because, I didn't want to go into the city. So it was sort of like a progression and, get one as soon as possible. I don't want to spend too much time doing this. I just have to get this garment.

Even though there was urgency and an element of stress in this shopping situation, there was also a sense of excitement about buying something new. She had not bought any article of clothing for a long time. The thrill of owning something new, created a mood of excitement in which this shopping experience took place.

All these factors which contributed to and intensified Wendy's feeling of excitement also contributed to her feelings of disappointment of not being able to purchase the particular swimsuit she had identified and chosen. When Priscilla asked, "Did she go on to purchase something? . . . You know, sometimes after you see such a beautiful garment, it is hard to settle on something else?" Wendy replied,

Well it knocked the stuffing out of me for a while, but I moved onto the next shopping centre and I actually found what I wanted. . . . It was difficult, but I mean, it was an economic, rational decision, basically. But yeah, it took a while to see things that were...

Wendy's disappointment was, however, overridden by her feelings of distress and disgust by the inequity of such an extortionate amount [price] for such a skimpy garment. Disappointment was a secondary factor to her feelings of disgust and distress. In reply to Annabel's remark, "You really did want that suit?" Wendy responded,

Yeah, except it was too much, and it should have never, ever cost that much. . . . You know, it wasn't sort of going from the excitement; the let down wasn't disappointment. . . . But almost like a betrayal.

Even if Wendy had anticipated the high cost, she would have still been disgusted at such a price. It was, however, the unexpected price which shocked her and intensified her emotion of disgust. As Wendy's memory stated, The price on the tag gave her such a shock the hanger fell from her hands and the swimsuit to the floor.

Furthermore, it was the unexpected and thus the resultant shock which made her aware of her surroundings and personal circumstances. Suddenly she was aware of how scruffy she looked; of having strayed into the wrong store. "This isn't where I should be" [Wendy]. Thus, the resultant shock contributed to and intensified her embarrassment. Not only did she not have 'money' being a student with little income, but neither did she 'look the part'. She feared being caught; being humiliated. Very quickly, before she could be discovered and
confronted by a sales assistant, she picked it [the swimsuit] up, put it back on the rack and, trying to appear nonchalant, walked out. Wendy reflected, laughing, that she had to get out of there as quickly as possible, before she had to explain why she had wandered in. It was avoidance of the salesperson. . . . [It was] avoidance of having actually to admit that this was out of my range, . . . completely out of my range.

In other words, this encounter threatened her identity of who she was and the feminists principles for which she stood. Her "scruffiness" and her "current financial situation" reinforced her feelings. Avoidance was her coping strategy.

Priscilla’s Memory-Text.

On this particular day - yet another busy one - she zapped off shopping to purchase a classic stylish black cardigan. She thought about which shop would be the best to try, which had the easiest access, and felt confident she would find what she wanted in a shop she was familiar with.

She set off purposefully. As she entered the shop she was surprised to be met by the smell of cigarette smoke. Priscilla was not a smoker.

Where on previous visits she had found the clothes to be displayed in groups - either - jackets or skirts or shirts - today it all appeared rather dishevelled. Extra racks of clothes were taking up any available floor space and she found it hard to actually view the clothes.

Deciding it would be easier to ask for some help, she approached the shop assistants. Unfortunately for Priscilla they seemed in deep conversation and did not take any notice of her standing there. There were two assistants on this day. The conversation between them continued as one moved off through a private entrance in the back of the shop. This also sent a strong wave of smoke out as she pulled the curtain defining the entrance - or exit.

Priscilla, not being one to wait forever for service, decided to abandon her mission and spend her money elsewhere. She was frustrated and disappointed with her visit to the shop and has not yet returned to it.

There were no other customers in the store at the time.
The Group's and Researcher's Discussion of Priscilla's Memory-Text.

In Priscilla's experience she was first confronted with a social injustice where her social right of a clean, fresh retail environment was violated. Priscilla's memory-text and reflections indicate her resultant shock, disgust, and the incongruence of her perceived 'self' with the smoked filled environment. Upon entering the shop Priscilla was surprised to be met by the smell of cigarette smoke. Priscilla was not a smoker [Priscilla].

It was the last sort of thing she [Priscilla] expected to smell . . . [Especially since] we are talking about middle range [clothing stores]; not the op.\textsuperscript{78} shop or anything! And I think it was such a shock, yeah, yeah, yeah, to smell (said with disgust) the stale cigarette smell. And I presumed the clothes would have smelled . . . To me, smelling cigarette smoke when you walk into any premises is enough to just turn around and walk out again. [Priscilla]

But due to Priscilla's need and want of the classic stylish black cardigan [Priscilla], she opted to stay, to give the store a second chance. Priscilla reflected,

My initial reaction when I walked in was, when I was hit by the smoke, was just to leave. But I needed, I really wanted this particular garment. So I thought, Oh no, no, no, I'll move through that. . . .

Furthermore, Priscilla had gone to this particular store feeling confident she would find what she wanted [Priscilla], with the least amount of hassle and involvement of time. She had used her prior experience to determine which shop would be best to try, [and] which had the easiest access [Priscilla].

On previous occasions there had been good assistance, and it was a nice shop. People knew what they were selling in it. ([S]he had found the clothes to be displayed in groups - either - jackets or skirts or shirts) [Priscilla]

Instead of finding the "expected . . . [the] preconceived, pre-thought" [Priscilla], it was rather dishevelled [with e]xtra racks of clothes . . . taking up any available floor space . . . [S]he found it rather hard to actually view the clothes. . . . [The two sales assistants] seemed in deep conversation and did not take any notice of her standing there. (It was like the whole atmosphere had changed.) [Priscilla]

When Annabel asked if she felt any emotion when her "preconceived, pre-thought expectations" were not met, Priscilla reflected,

**Disappointment, very disappointed.** It was like I felt let down. It was like here is the shop - I knew it carried good labels, and I knew that probably in there was just what I wanted, and I felt really let down. Yeah, that would be the biggest thing. I didn't feel embarrassed or anything like that. I just felt let down that I had worked this out, and thought, "Right, this is where I will go."

\textsuperscript{78} Opportunity shop; generic term used for second hand clothing stores run by charity organisations.
Not only was Priscilla disappointed, but she was "frustrated and annoyed" [Priscilla] by the lack of sales assistance in helping her accomplish her goal on yet another busy day [Priscilla]. Priscilla reflected, "It is not even as if they [the salespeople] tried to help." Susie noted, "You [Priscilla] were sure you would get it." and Priscilla agreed, "Sure, it was a simple basic garment. No problem, there would be heaps out there." Thus, all Priscilla required was some sales assistance to help her quickly locate the selection of black cardigans.

Priscilla had set off purposefully. Her need and expectation of finding the "simple basic garment" [Priscilla] at the planned place of purchase within a limited time frame all intensified her disappointment when it was not obtained. Priscilla's disappointment, frustration and annoyance were also intensified and reinforced by the fact that she had "been in retail for twenty years" [Priscilla]. Priscilla reflected, I have very high expectations of the sort of service [I] get in all shops. . . . I do [expect service], you know, and being in retail I am there for a purpose. I am skilled in that area, and when someone comes in, your attention should be on that person, and you sustain how much attention they do want. But when someone just sort of rips in and stands there, obviously they want some help.

The disconfirmation that occurred between the actual performance and Priscilla's expectations of the store's performance, both the environment and the service personnel, was a threat to her perceived 'self', as was the image of her shopping at a store where people smoked. Her failure to predict this store's performance correctly threatened her 'expertise' image in that she knows where to shop to purchase the 'right' product with the appropriate price tags and services attached. This is not only revealed through the group's discussion of Priscilla's memory-text such as when Priscilla noted, "I know what I want, and I think about where to go - perhaps which store. I know my local stores, like city stores, pretty well. So I am inclined to know where to head," but in her suggestions to others during the group discussions as where to find exactly what they require. For example, Priscilla noted to Helena in the discussion of Helena's 'Quick Exit' experience, "If you [Helena] went to Max's at Chartwell Square, people there wear jeans and T-shirts. All right?" Helena would not be intimated by them.

Priscilla's memory-text and reflections also revealed that she attributed the insult and disgust of being ignored by the sales assistants and having received another strong dose of cigarette smoke to the sales assistants.

[S]he approached the shop assistants. . . . [T]hey seemed in deep conversation and did not take any notice of her standing there. There were two assistants on this day. The conversation between them continued as one moved off through a private entrance in the back of the shop. This sent a strong wave of smoke out as she pulled the curtains defining the entrance - or exit. (I presume the assistants were smoking through the side unit and it managed to come out through the clothes. Yeah, yeah. I mean, it just had that feel of... [said with disgust]). [Priscilla]
Priscilla's afterthought in the memory-text that *there were no other customers in the store at the time*, revealed also that she attributed her negative experiences and emotions to the sales assistants. After all, there were no other customers to attend to, just Priscilla. Helena specially noted by quoting Priscilla that, "Priscilla, does put the **guilt** on the store. 'They [the salespeople] don't know how to do service! That disgusts me!'."

Priscilla's frustration and annoyance with the sales assistants and store environment were the main cause of her quick exit from the shop.

> Priscilla, not being one to wait forever for service decided to abandon her mission and spend her money elsewhere. She was frustrated and disappointed with her visit to the shop and has yet to return.

It was, however, the smell of cigarette smoke and the resultant disgust which caused Priscilla to vividly remember this particular negative experience. Moreover, it contributed to Priscilla's avoidance of this shop in the future. Priscilla reflected,

> it is the smell, like the deodorant smell [in Susie's memory]. . . . It would be, definitely [my main reason for remembering]. . . . It just stuck! I think of it when we ride past the shop. I think the same thing, and it was a good couple of years ago now.

**Helena's Memory-Texts.**

**First memory-text.** She was standing in front of a large window of a clothing store mall. The clothes on the mannequins looked exactly what she had been looking for: natural white silk-cotton long sleeved blouse and blue ankle length skirt with a slit in the back. The blouse was loose and flowed nicely on the contours of the overly skinny mannequin. The skirt hugged the mannequin's long sleek legs. But the clothes fit to her newly awoken sense of style. She stretched her neck without moving from the front of the window to peek inside the boutique. No music inside the store, no neon lights, but soft yellow lights. No customers were in there, only the saleswoman at the counter filling out some forms, her spectacles hanging in a chain from her neck. She had very blond, short hair, permed and perfectly in place and her face was covered with perfect, but clearly noticeable make-up. The colours of the make-up weren't too offensive, like her lipstick was pink, but not bright pink. She was frowning over her papers. She was about 40 and clearly projected classy, expensive taste. The saleswoman scared her. She walked quietly away avoiding the open door so she wouldn't be seen inside of the shop. She was wearing a blue T-Shirt tucked into her lose jeans that stayed up with her hipbones. Her once white aerobics shoes were worn out into every day street colours. She certainly didn't want to bother the lady.
Second memory-text. She always hesitated to go into clothing stores, although she liked nice and usually expensive, good quality clothes, but she never had any apprehension about going into a health club. She was one of them with the right gear. This time she had on her black, sleeveless, cotton bike shorts, just long enough to cover the whole length of the quadriceps; a white T-shirt and a blue sweat shirt on top of it as it was cold inside. It was fall. She carried her pink water bottle in her hand, paid at the counter, marched into the aerobics class. She left her water bottle on the side and took a place toward the mid front of the rectangular large aerobics room. The well acclaimed athletes smiled at her from all of the four walls. Were they suppose to inspire someone? The room was full of people, mostly women - young - but also men. It was packed. She felt like a fish in an overcrowded aquarium where the fish were trying to stay in one spot by paddling their little fins nervously back and forth. The instructor was a sinewy, fit, lean small short man, probably Polynesian decent. His mannerism was quick, so was his way of talking. One of her students stood in front of her. This student seemed very muscular. This wasn’t the usual surroundings for an encounter with a student, she avoided to look at her. The instructor started to blast his music; the usual rappy, hip-happy aerobics stuff. She could barely see him moving, although he pranced back and forth on an elevated instructor floor; there were so many people. She couldn’t move her arms without hitting somebody. The others didn’t seem to worry about hitting her (she hated when people aren’t considerate like that), they didn’t even notice. Their eyes were clued into the instructor, who changed his quick moves in quick bursts and gave his instructions after these bursts; quick words aided with constant, rapid hand gestures. Everyone was doing the moves wrong, moving into wrong directions and facing the wrong directions but she noticed their eyes were shining; they were looking at God up there and they were all following his lead with determined, ambitious smiles on their faces - two beats behind or some were two measures behind him. The mass of bodies moved around her in an ever closing circle that was going to squeeze her in its centre, but no one looked at her. She looked down at the pink and rose carpeted floor. She felt she was suffocating, she hated these moves, she thought the instructor was no God, he actually sucked. She tried to understand why people loved this, but got too irritated and angry and aggravated and pushed her way through the uplifted, enthusiastic faces to pick up her water bottle next to the erector spinae machine - this machine was closest to the door of all the white training machines - and ran out after five minutes. She had never done that before, left the class like this without giving it a chance. She did not look at anybody on her way out. She felt bad, like culturally insensitive.

The Group’s and Researcher’s Discussions of Helena’s Memory-Text.
Helena uses her second memory-text, the ‘Quick Exit’ from the health club, to address, highlight and explain her general avoidance of clothing stores which is represented in her first
memory-text. In Helena's first memory, her avoidance can be viewed as a pre-formulated type of an exit. Leading into the discussion, Helena explained,

This is a bit different... Why did I put them [both] in here? But that was because I had lots of general memories about clothing stories and they all related to this kind of thing, that I didn't even go in. I couldn't remember even getting myself, even wanting to face a situation where somehow I had to leave. I've always felt very unempowered according to those things... I won't even go in it [a clothing store]. I won't let them intimidate me like that!

The 'Quick Exit' from the health club. Along with the disconfirmation of Helena's expectations of her health club experiences, Helena's memory-text reflected two main injustice concepts, inequity and social comparison, which 'grounded' her 'fleeing'. Specially, it was Helena paying for the service, receiving the unexpected appropriate performance attributes, and at the same time comparing and judging herself to the other clientele who appeared to be satisfied. This lead to Helena's perceived inequity of this encounter. In addition to this inequity judgement, Helena compared and evaluated herself to the other clientele and the instructor which resulted in her feelings of being uncomfortable and not belonging to this health club's 'culture'. It was this combination of Helena not belonging (i.e, being uncomfortable) and the disconfirmation of her expectations that lead to her irritation, anger and aggravation, and as such resulted in her quick exit. Helena reflected,

This [health club memory]... is sort of a story where you buy services and I clearly remember this time that I got so angry and I just marched out and I never did that... This service is no good. I am going out. Helena went along to the session feeling comfortable, enthusiastic and confident, she 'belonged'. Furthermore, Helena committed herself to the encounter by paying for the session. Helena wrote and reflected,

She was one of them with the right gear. (I had my uniform on. I was one of them.)... She carried her pink water bottle in her hand, paid at the counter and marched into the aerobics class. She left her water bottle on the side and took a place towards the mid front of the rectangular large aerobics room.

However, as Helena consumed her paid experience at the club, the physical environment and the instructor made her experience uncomfortable. "It was bad!" [Helena]. Annabel and Wendy noted respectively, "It was that the service and the facilities were not what they should have been," "and not what Helena expected." Thus, there was a disconfirmation of Helena's expectations. Helena wrote and reflected,

The room was full... It was packed. She felt like a fish in an overcrowded aquarium where the fish were trying to stay in one spot by paddling their little fins nervously back and forth... The instructor started to blast his music; the usual

Huefner and Hunt (1992 p. 228) also refer to avoidance as a "persisting" exit.
rappy, hip-hopy aerobic stuff. She could barely see him moving ... there were so many people. She could barely move her arms without hitting someone. The others didn't seem to worry about hitting her ... [The instructor] changed his quick moves in quick bursts and gave his instructions after these bursts; [and] used quick words aided with constant, rapid hand gestures. Everyone was doing the moves wrong ... (I clearly knew that it was **terrible!** ... I **knew** because of all my professional information, I knew it was terrible! I knew it was bad!)

As well as giving Helena comfort and confidence to enter into the exchange, her knowledge, training and experience in teaching and participating in physical education, dance and aerobics\(^8^0\), intensified and reinforced her expectations and judgement of the appropriate quality performance attributes which should be offered. "Because I was the expert, I had the power to judge" [Helena].

On a personal basis Helena compared her social self to the other clientele and the instructor. This contributed to her feelings of the inequitable exchange, and not belonging to this specific encounter. While Helena considered herself "one of them," her description of what she was wearing, how she reacted, her lack of enjoyment, the other client's body images, their reactions and enjoyment, and the instructor's image illustrated how Helen differed from them. She felt she did not belong, and as such had become very uncomfortable in the encounter. Helena's feelings that this gym was not a warm, comfortable environment, and that she did not belong, first emerged and are summarised in her memory-text: it was cold inside. It was fall [autumn].

Helena's image of herself did not fit with her perceived and expected image of the other clientele and the instructor. While the others appeared confident about their images and abilities, she did not appear so, even though she was an 'expert', and a teacher. Helena's muscular framed body was covered and protected, while their's were not. Her black, white, and blue clothing blended into the background, again protecting her image. The others, however, were young, full of self confidence and ability. When Helena entered the gym they stared at her from all directions as to say, "What are you doing here? You don't belong here. You don't look or behave like us - young, athletic, muscular, and confident." Helena further acknowledged that she was different and uncomfortable when she avoided looking at her student.

*This time she had on her black sleeveless, cotton bike shorts, just long enough to cover the whole length of the quadriceps; a white T-shirt and a blue sweat shirt on top of it as it was cold inside. It was fall .... The well acclaimed athletes smiled at her from all the four walls. Were they suppose to inspire someone? The room was full of people, mostly women - young - but also men. The instructor was a sinewy, fit, lean small short man, probably Polynesian decent. His mannerism was quick, so was his way of talking. One of her students stood in front of her. This student seemed very muscular. This wasn't the usually surroundings for an encounter with a student; she avoided to look at her ....*

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\(^8^0\) See Helena's personal details in Appendix A.
Helena felt that "everyone else was really enjoying it [the session]" [Helena], even though they were doing the moves wrong, moving into wrong directions and facing the wrong directions. . . . [S]he noticed their eyes were shining; they were looking at God up there and they were following his lead with determined, ambitious smiles on their faces - two beats behind or some were two measures behind him. . . . [But Helena] hated these moves, she thought the instructor was no God, he actually sucked.

Helena also felt as if she was being abused (i.e., battered), squeezed out, suffocated and ignored by this 'culture' in which she supposedly belonged and was committed.

The others didn't seem to worry about hitting her (she hated when people weren't considerate like that), they didn't even notice. Their eyes were glued to the instructor. . . . The mass of bodies moved around her in an ever closing circle that was going to squeeze her in its centre, but no one looked at her. She looked down at the pink and rose carpeted floor. She felt she was going to suffocate.

Nor was Helena able herself to perform, enjoy and fit into the group by adhering to her expertise and personal values of what she thought this encounter should be like. She couldn't move her arms without hitting somebody. She was actually striking and pushing others away, and not performing to her perceived standard. As such, Helena was also being squeezed and suffocated in regards to who she was, her identity.

In comparing herself to others, she tried to understand why people loved this. After all, everyone else appeared to be receiving from the exchange what they had paid for. But for Helena, having not received the expected experience for which she had paid, having been squeezed and suffocated into a 'pink and rose' illusion of not belonging, and having been threatened as to whom she was, she became too irritated and angry and aggravated . . . and ran out after five minutes.

Helena rationalised that she had due cause to 'flee'. After all, she was the expert. She "clearly knew that it was terrible!" [Helena]. As she pushed her way through the uplifted, enthusiastic faces, she reconfirmed her actions and fairness by noting her expertise by being able to name the erector spinae machine, and that all the training machines were 'white'.

Although Helena externally blamed the health club for her 'bad' experience and thus exits the session with pride, she flees from this exchange predominantly feeling guilty. Helena wrote and reflected,

She had never done that before, left the class like this without giving it a chance. She did not look at anybody on her way out. She felt bad, like culturally insensitive. (I felt totally bad, although I knew that it wasn't good. Although I was the expert! And I feel, I did go out [rather than stay due to her lack of confidence to leave]; so
what helped me there was my whole expertise in the area . . . I felt guilty. Oh gosh, I wasn't nice, and you know, maybe this is because this is just different than what I am used too. You know, maybe it is my fault. Maybe I should try to adapt! So totally putting the blame on myself.)

Helena felt guilty because she did not fulfil the 'womanly' role of being nice. She had broken the socially unacceptable norm of judging another culture's values and expectations. Helena wrote, the instructor was . . . probably Polynesian decent. . . . She hated his moves, she thought the instructor was no God, he actually sucked. She felt bad, like culturally insensitive.

Nor did she complain because she "wasn't nice" [Helena]. Helena internally placed some of the blame on herself. Helena proclaimed in her memory-text and discussion that she felt somewhat ashamed of her actions,

She did not look at anybody on her way out. (Oh no, I didn't talk to anyone. I went out from the whole place so he [the instructor] would have not had any chance [to seek me out and ask me if I was okay]. Also, I felt a bit like, you know, although I don't like it, maybe a New Zealander likes it. So why would I go and say something?)

Even though Helena didn't consider it "worthwhile" [Helena] to talk to the instructor afterwards, she would have been confident and proud enough to express her dissatisfaction with his performance. Helena noted,

if the instructor would have come after me [after she ran out], I would have said, "I didn't like your class! . . . I think you did this and this and that wrong! I don't think it is enjoyable." I would have said, directly, "I don't like it!" . . . I was the expert. I had the power to judge. I felt confident about myself, although I felt a bit guilty.

Avoidance of the clothing store. Helena's avoidance of the clothing store is conceptualised from the two interlinked injustice concepts, inequity and social comparison, which were the main grounding of her resultant anger, irritation, aggravation, and her quick exit from her health club experience.

First, by not 'bothering' the saleswoman Helena did not commit herself, and as such avoided an inequitable exchange where she felt obligated to participate. She certainly didn't want to have to bother the lady. Unlike the health club, Helena felt insecure about entering into the clothing store. Rather than marching in, full of confidence, Helena stood in front of a large window of a clothing store mall. . . . She stretched her neck without moving from the front of the window to peek inside the boutique.

Second, by comparing her image to the store's image, Helena felt inadequate, insecure and uncomfortable with the encounter. Helena's image of herself was incongruent with her perception of the store's display and saleswoman images. Helena reflected about herself,
I am such a clumsy person in there [the store]. I am too big, my clothes are awful and all this. That is the feeling I get, you know. I don't have any make-up, my hair is hanging so.

In contrast, Helena wrote about the elegance and classic sophistication of the store's display and saleswoman images,

The blouse was loose fitting and flowed nicely on the contours of the overly skinny mannequin. The skirt hugged the mannequin's long sleek legs... [The saleswoman... [with] her spectacles hanging in a chain from her neck... had very blond, short hair, permed and perfectly in place and her face was covered with perfect, but clearly noticeable make-up. The colours of the make-up weren't too offensive, like her lipstick was pink, but not bright pink. She was frowning over her papers. She was about 40 and clearly projected classy, expensive taste.

Wendy acknowledged this incongruency, "Yeah, it was like this [sales]person was so different from me [Helena], almost!" In asking Helena, "Did you want to look like that [sales]person?" [Susie], Helena reflected,

No way! And I know I wouldn't look like that. ... But I guess... one hard thing is that I don't really know what I want. I have this idea (laughing) that maybe I should get some other [professional] clothes. But like in that sense, I don't know how to shop like you, Priscilla, with a mission. Then I would feel much better. ... Yeah, or if I know about something... that would help. Because that would give me more power, ... [if] you know exactly what you want: the look; and what material; and what length; and all this stuff.

In reflecting on the last time she went shopping, Helena illustrated how her lack of shopping experience and expertise affected her confidence in purchasing clothing.

I went shopping in San Francisco, actually. And the only things that I came out with were leotards. Mm. Because they were easy for me to buy. I know exactly what I want. (excited) These are good quality, these are bad quality, these look nice and these look useful. But then, like thinking some other clothes? ... I avoided, I avoided the whole business, actually... And like with these clothes [the ones in the window], I could have very well afforded, so it is not the price. ...

Helena, however, wanted to feel confident, to participate, and as such belong to her newly awoken sense of style. The clothes on the mannequins looked exactly what she had been looking for: natural white silk-cotton long sleeved blouse and blue ankle length skirt with a slit in the back.

Furthermore, the store atmosphere (i.e., the boutique [with] no music... no neon lights, but soft yellow lights, no customers) complemented Helena's new sense of style. The environment (i.e., the clothes and atmosphere) were opposite to that of her health club experience of leotards, sweat shirts, t-shirts, and music which blasted in the background, the usual rappy, hip-hoppy stuff.
Having no music in the store sort of added to that classic atmosphere. Rather than having some radio music blasting, like it was all over the mall. That was sort of going from quiet, soft, gentle, nice classy place. [Helena]

"It was the saleswoman" [Annabel], rather than the shop's atmosphere that reframed Helena from entering and browsing through the store. Helena reflected,

Actually, I think I liked the environment, because, you know, it was a nice place. You know, it was out of the hassles of the mall, and the smells, (laughing), and the traffic, and things like that. But I guess that I just felt that lady was going to look up and go like (skewed up her face and shrouded her shoulders), "What are you here for?"

Since Helena felt she was being judged by the saleswoman, was not appropriately dressed, lacked shopping experience and expertise, and her image was incongruent with that of the saleswoman's and the store's,

She walked quietly away avoiding the open door so she couldn't be seen inside of the shop. She was wearing a blue T-shirt tucked into her lose jeans that stayed up with her hipbones. Her once aerobic shoes were worn out into every day street colours. (I didn't have my uniform on when I went shopping.) [Helena]

When Priscilla asked if Helena "wouldn't have been happy to look first, to browse through?" Helena replied laughing, "Oh no, maybe she [the saleswoman] would come along and ask me what I want." The saleswoman scared her. Helena feared that if she entered the shop, especially when no other customers were in there, that the saleswoman would "pounce" [Priscilla]. Nor did Helena want to "bother the lady" [Helena], or commit herself to the encounter in any other way. Helena reflected,

if I did know what I wanted, I wouldn't have needed to bother her. I don't want to have to ask them something. . . . I don't even want to go there to try to fit something. I'd rather buy it large. Because I know it fits! So I don't have to go and try it on. (Giggling) I know their big and it is going to bag, but I say, "Oh, these are good."

When Priscilla asked, "So the easiest way to avoid that [getting trapped] is not to go in?" Helena reflected,

Is not to go in at all. Because you don't know what you want, so then you are not trying something on you don't like; and you don't have to say, "I don't really need this and this," and... Mm. . . . Yeah. . . . It is . . . not having the expertise; meaning no knowledge. So you are totally in her mercy, sort of. . . . She might force me to try on things that I don't want to. . . . Or I might get this pressure to buy something and then I have to say something. Oh God! You know, (laughing). "I don't like this. . . ."

Thus, if Helena avoids becoming committed to the clothing store encounter by not bothering the saleswoman, she need not feel guilty for not being nice, as she felt in her health club experience. In this case, Helena does not need to break the reciprocity exchange rule of equity. Furthermore, in her avoidance of the encounter, she does not place herself in a situation where
she is at the mercy of the salesperson or where she feels that they can evaluate her. As such, Helena does not allow the saleswoman to hurt her by judging her inappropriately according to who she is culturally and personally, as she herself judged others in her health club experience.

On this occasion, Helena lacked experience and the 'image' to comfortably participate in clothes shopping. She did not belong to the 'shopping culture'. By avoiding the salespeople she does not "let them intimidate" her [Helena], nor does she feel ashamed of whom she is.

**Annabel's Memory-Text.**

Annabel was shopping with her partner (a very rare occasion) as they took in the sights of downtown Vancouver where they were visiting for the day. Both were casually dressed; Annabel in her baggy stoned-washed rugged over-alls and her partner in his jeans and runners. It was a beautiful summer day and both were enjoying walking through the city, popping in and out of stores which interested them both. Although he was agreeable about visiting women’s clothing stores, he was not overly enthusiastic.

It was Annabel’s last chance to find that something special for her 20th high school reunion. They entered into a shop that looked relatively expensive, but perhaps affordable (even when considering the exchange rate). The store divided into two main sections - a casual/sports wear section and a formal work-wear and dress section. It was almost as if it was two individual shops. Annabel and her partner stepped up from the entrance into the casual/sports wear area.

The shop was a corner one housed within of a small contemporary mall or group of shops in the busy downtown business area. The two outer walls of the casual/sports wear area were almost completely glass and mirror with striking visual displays. Off the back of this area was another room which displayed shoes for sale. Again, this shoe area was almost a completely separate shop with just a small archway (a bit larger than a regular size door) opening into it. The casual/sports wear selling floor appeared nearly square with spacious, individualised dressing rooms in the centre. The clothes were neatly displayed and organised against the closed walls and dressing rooms. The aisles were abnormally spacious with a slightly off-white tiled floor which matched the rest of the decor. At the far side of the room a casual, inviting chair and sofa setting of furniture blended into the decor adding to the overall shop environment. It allowed individuals to relax comfortably viewing both the inside and outside of the shop without being either conspicuous or hidden away.

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81 This reunion represented 20 years of being out of high school, rather than the 20th reunion Annabel had attended. This was the first reunion she had attended since graduating from high school.
Annabel's partner quickly found refuge in a chair when she began to look seriously through the clothing racks. He took little notice of any store details such as the price tags. Upon browsing Annabel saw that the clothes were branded with well known top American and European designers and that they were very expensive (e.g., $2,000 for a jacket; $1,000 for a skirt - Canadian). However, there were a few brands much, much lower in price (still expensive) which were affordable to her. Annabel wandered around the shop more through curiosity, enjoyment and fashion trend hunting than in serious anticipation of purchasing anything. After looking, Annabel decided to try on one outfit (just affordable). It was not exactly what she had envisaged and was expensive, but thought it might do if nothing else was to be found and if it was absolutely stunning on. She was escorted to a dressing room by a salesperson who chatted pleasantly to her, carefully and politely gaining information about her.

Meanwhile, the salesperson had been quietly chatting to Annabel's partner; finding out where they lived, how they were enjoying their visit, etc., etc. By this time she had already offered him a beverage and brought him a cup of cappuccino (not yet trendy or available in NZ) which he had consumed. He was actually enjoying being there. He was relaxing, chatting, and watching the happenings inside and outside the shop. He was on holiday.

As Annabel tried on the outfit, she heard the salesperson chatting away and offering him a second cup of cappuccino, which he graciously accepted. He thought the treatment was great, he had never experienced anything like this before when shopping for clothes with Annabel!

When Annabel stepped out of the dressing room to show her partner and the salesperson that the outfit did not work, the salesperson quickly offered her another outfit to try on. It was a beautiful, short (above the knee) chiffon full pleated skirt with a tapestry, short tailored jacket. Annabel fell in love with it, but was hesitant to try it own. She explained to the salesperson that it would not suit because she was unable to wear an appropriate shoe style due to her disability. She also silently anticipated that it would be expensive. With some encouragement from the salesperson (but no pressure) Annabel tried it on. She was dying to see what it would look like on. Yes, it looked absolutely gorgeous. But when she looked at the price tag - over 3,000 Canadian dollars, almost 6,000 NZ dollars, she almost died of shock. She panicked a little, but thought she had a legitimate excuse - she could not wear the appropriate shoe style. But when Annabel came out of the dressing room to show her partner, the salesperson was armed with a pair of shoes and socks that fitted the brief perfectly along with a couple of other outfits to try on. The shoes were flat, heavy, lace-up ones (Doc Martin
style). They were to be worn with an ankle shock. The look was very new, but Annabel knew it would work. It would look fantastic.

Meanwhile, Annabel's partner had just finished his second cup of cappuccino and another salesperson had gone across the store to get him yet another. Annabel was also offered a beverage, but politely declined. He commented favourably about the outfit and made strong remarks that he thought she should purchase it. Annabel was unable to tactfully inform him of the price without indicating that they should not be there drinking this store's cappuccino and trying on this store's clothes. It was out of their league!

Annabel tried on another outfit she liked [whether it was cheaper or not and what it looked like can not be remembered]. She felt uneasy about waiting for her partner to finish his third cup without buying something. She knew that somehow they needed to tactfully leave the store without purchasing anything.

As Annabel tried on the third outfit she heard her partner telling the salesperson that she was an expert in fashion retailing, etc., etc. At this point she was feeling very embarrassed.

When Annabel came out of the dressing room for the third time, it was obvious that the dress did not fit properly. It made Annabel feel at bit more relaxed, taking some pressure off her to buy. The salesperson automatically, but politely started to pin out the excess fabric, to illustrate how it would fit perfectly with a few alterations. She was prepared with a pin cushion wrapped around her wrist and it was obvious to Annabel that she knew exactly what she was doing. She proceeded to explain that the store could do the alterations that afternoon and the dress could be collected before Annabel had to catch the ferry that evening.

Annabel was startled. She felt embarrassed and guilty. Her partner, however, was relaxed and content. He chatted away as if Annabel would definitely purchase one of the two outfits. He was completely unaware of the price. Annabel politely explained by telling a little white lie that she wanted to look some more. She was unsure if either of the two outfits was exactly what she wanted or required. Her partner was somewhat persistent that perhaps she should just purchase one. After all, she did not have much time.

Annabel was anxious to leave as quickly as possible. She could not exit with her partner soon enough.
The Group's and Researcher's Discussions of Annabel's Memory-Text.

Annabel was both satisfied and dissatisfied with this experience. "I found it quite hard to say whether I would call this a dissatisfying event" [Annabel]. In this complex story, while Annabel was desperate to 'flee', she thoroughly enjoyed being there. You know, I thoroughly enjoyed being in the store, looking at what was there, ... putting on those clothes, and kind of fantasising. I enjoyed the salespeople. They were very pleasant, they were very polite and they knew exactly what they were on about. ... They weren't necessarily pushy. ... [There was] an array of feelings going on: feeling quite delighted; quite enjoying what was happening. ... It was a wonderful experience. But at the same time, I did get this emotion. (She felt embarrassed and guilty.) And it was not because of the store. It was because of myself and my partner. ... Annabel made herself feel guilty. [Annabel].

Annabel perceived a social injustice when she unexpectantly became committed to this exchange in which she was unable to reciprocate with the appropriate resource(s). She could not meet her perceived obligation of purchasing a garment from this shop in which she and her partner had partaken in the offered resources. As Annabel and Wendy reflected, respectively,

I guess it was my expectation that if I was there trying things on, that I was really there to buy something. ... [Furthermore, my partner] was actually talking to the salesperson assuming that I was probably going to buy something. ... You know, I thought that they would anticipate that I would buy something, and I was feeling guilty about it because I knew that I was not going to buy something. ... [It was knowing that I couldn't reciprocate. ... I was breaking that rule. I knew that I couldn't reciprocate. [Annabel]

And guilty about it, because how they were treating your partner. I mean, that kind of exchange (agreement in the background) of the cappuccinos: one; two; three, and the hospitality and the expectation then that there is something, some sort of trade going on here. [Wendy]

In Annabel's quest for something 'special' for her 20th school reunion, Annabel and her partner entered into a shop that looked relatively expensive, but perhaps affordable. ... [They] stepped up [researcher's emphasis], from the entrance of those less expensive stores which they usually frequented.

Annabel's mood, the importance of this purchase and the limited time frame in which Annabel had to acquire it, reinforced her entry into and her feelings of comfort in this status store. It was a special, relaxed, beautiful day in which Annabel had already been exploring and enjoying new territory and experiences.

Annabel was shopping with her partner (a very rare occasion) [researcher's emphasis]. ... Both were casually dressed. ... It was a beautiful summer day and both were enjoying walking through the city,.popping in and out of stores which interested them both. ... It was Annabel's last chance to find that something special.
Upon entering the store and browsing it became obvious to Annabel that it was a very expensive and mostly, if not entirely, out of her price range.

 Families of major stores in the busy downtown business area. The two outer walls... mirror with striking visual displays. . . . [There were] spacious, individualised dressing rooms. . . . The clothes were neatly displayed. . . . The aisles were abnormally spacious with a slightly off-white tiled floor which matched the rest of the decor. . . . [and with] a casual, inviting chair and sofa setting of furniture [which also] blended into the decor. . . . Upon browsing Annabel saw that the clothes were branded with well known American and European designers and that they were very expensive (e.g., $2,000 for a jacket; $1,000 for a skirt - Canadian). However, there were a few brands much, much lower in price (still expensive) which were affordable to her.

Although the store was expensive, Annabel decided to look, since it projected feelings of comfort, intimacy, creativity and conservatism along with status. It represented exactly the type of garment she was looking to purchase. Annabel's written and spoken description revealed these formal, but casual projected images of the store.

The store divided into two main sections - a casual/sportswear section and a formal work-wear and dress section. It was almost as if they were two individual shops. . . . [The] casual/sportswear wear area. . . . [had] striking visual displays. Off the back of this area was another room which displayed shoes for sale. Again, this shoe area was almost a completely separate shop with just a small archway (a bit larger than a regular size door) opening into it. The casual/sportswear selling floor appeared nearly square. . . . with spacious, individualised dressing rooms in the centre. The aisles were abnormally spacious . . . [There was] a casual, inviting chair and sofa setting of furniture. . . . [which] allowed individuals to relax comfortably. . . . without being either conspicuous or hidden away. (It was like a formal lounge suit in a casual setting. . . . whoever was sitting there could see what was happening in the shop, but also . . . outside. . . . So you would not get bored) [Bold words are researcher's emphases.]

Annabel was seeking pleasure as well as social status, by browsing and anticipating a possible purchase. While Annabel wandered around the shop more through curiosity, enjoyment, and fashion trend hunting, there was a small possibility of finding the 'right' outfit. With her agreeable, but not overly enthusiastic partner having found refuge [researcher's emphasis] in a chair which allowed him to relax comfortably viewing both inside and outside of the shop without being either conspicuous or hidden away, and with the salesperson making him feel at 'home' by quietly chatting about personal details (e.g., where they lived, how they were enjoying their visit), and providing him with a cup of cappuccino, Annabel also became relaxed. He was actually enjoying being there. He was relaxing, chatting, and watching the happenings inside and outside the shop. He was on holiday. Since Annabel's partner was enjoying himself, she decided to try one outfit (just affordable). Annabel, however, had no immediate intentions of purchasing it. It was not exactly what she had envisaged and was expensive, but [she] thought it might do if nothing else could be found and it was absolutely stunning on.
As Annabel was escorted to the dressing room, the saleswoman *pleasantly* inquired about what Annabel was looking to purchase. Upon Annabel's exit with a garment which didn't fit, the saleswoman quickly offered Annabel another outfit which perfectly fitted the brief, but was most likely expensive. It was formal, but casual. It was tailored and distinguished, but creative and fun. It was classical, but fashionable. It was status, but intimate. It instantly appealed to Annabel's sense of style and purpose. Annabel wrote,

> It was a beautiful, short (above the knee) chiffon full pleated skirt with a tapestry, short tailored jacket. Annabel fell in love with it. . . . [But s]he was hesitant to try it own. . . . She silently anticipated that it would be expensive.

Since Annabel's partner was still content in that he had been offered his *second cup of cappuccino* and was still chatting comfortably with the saleswomen, and Annabel was being encouraged, Annabel tried on the outfit. *She was dying to see what it looked like on [Annabel].* She enjoyed "putting on those clothes, and . . . fantasising. . . . What could it hurt, anyway?" [Annabel]. She had already informed the saleswomen *that it would not suit because she was unable to wear an appropriate shoe style.* . . . *Yes, it looked absolutely gorgeous.* However, upon seeing the price tag, *she almost died of shock.* While she was expecting it to be expensive and unobtainable, 6,000 NZ dollars . . . *was way out of her league.* Annabel then realised, *that they should not be there, drinking this store's cappuccino and trying on this store's clothes.* . . . *She panicked a little, but thought she had a legitimate excuse.* When the saleswoman, however, offered Annabel a 'solid' solution, a *flat heavy lace up shoe . . . with an ankle sock,* and her partner *made strong remarks that she should purchase it,* Annabel felt 'trapped' and pressured in the exchange. She wasn't able to

> tactfully inform him [her partner] of the price, . . . and another salesperson had gone across the store to get him yet another [cappuccino]. . . . She felt uneasy about waiting for her partner to finish his third cup without buying something. [But] she knew that somehow they needed to tactfully leave the store without purchasing anything.

Susie, however, noted, "You could have gotten away by saying, 'But BG [Annabel's partner], this cost $6,000.' You could have just said one word and he would have been out of there." Priscilla, Helena (very excited), and Wendy noted that this was not an option for Annabel, in that she was protecting her social status in comparison to others, and her right to be in that store.

Pride comes into it [Priscilla]. You don't want to have to say I can't afford this [Helena]. Yeah, so you feel sort of inferior because you can't obtain that. . . . *[Those] really, really expensive . . . garments [Wendy]. Yeah I know, you get pleasure. I get pleasure out of looking at things that are beyond my means. I do it all the time as a student. But, no I think you do. When you are with the most beautiful things, you feel good. Don't you think? [Priscilla]
Annabel reflected on how she had received pleasure by being in this store, but also felt embarrassed.

Yeah, I do enjoy looking at things that perhaps I can't afford; or trying on things that perhaps I can't afford; or trying to get an idea of what, you know, I aspire for, and then go elsewhere and try to get that same image. . . . I wanted to avoid, I guess, in the long run telling her [the saleswomen] that we couldn't afford it. I wanted to be in there, but at the same time I knew that we shouldn't be in there. . . . I actually avoided saying, "No this isn't what I want," or "No, I can't afford this," because I think I was embarrassed. You know, I was embarrassed to be there.

Helena focused back on the issue that it was socially degrading for Annabel to verbally proclaim that the status role she was playing or aspiring to play for her high school reunion was not congruent with her real identity.

[Y]ou might think about it, but you don't say that [i.e., I can't afford it]. You don't want to appear poor, you know. You would rather do it the other way around, and go in with your jeans and say that they are mean to you or something. Then you just show them the money and say, "Okay, you don't want to sell me anything, but I am a professor . . . ." [Helena]

In Annabel's anxiety of waiting for her partner to finish his third cup of cappuccino so that they could gracefully exit, she tried on another outfit which the saleswoman had selected. In doing so, she hoped to send the message that the prior outfit was not exactly 'right' without having to announce that they could not afford it. Although she liked the dress, there were no intentions to purchase or have any involvement with it - [whether it was cheaper or not and what it looked like . . . [could] not be remembered].

Rather than become intimately involved with the saleswomen through small chit-chat as her partner had already done, and become further committed in the exchange by accepting yet another resource, Annabel earlier had politely declined an offered beverage. As Priscilla reflected,

[When you got somebody who is opening up their whole life to the salesperson (laughs), I mean, it becomes very intimate. . . . It had become very intimate, and you were caught in there. And once that happens, when someone is opening up and chatting away, I mean, you are getting to know each other, it is not quite so easy to be detached and then say, "Thank you for your help. I'll call back if I need it." I mean, you know. . . . That's to me the real source of embarrassment. It is what is happening to your partner and how they were chatting him up. And I think Annabel would have gotten away, out of there, probably not comfortably, but not as guilty and embarrassed.

As Annabel tried on the third outfit she heard her partner telling the salesperson that she was an expert in fashion retailing. . . . At this point she was feeling very embarrassed. When Helena questioned Annabel as to why she felt embarrassed, three factors emerged. First, Annabel's and her partner's appearances were incongruent with a fashion and business image, as well as
that of wealth. That is, having a 'tailored covered slim body.' This would perhaps have symbolised to the saleswomen that they were frauds, that they should not be there partaking. Annabel wrote and reflected,

[They both were casually dressed; Annabel in her baggy stoned washed rugged overalls and her partner in his jeans and runners. (They were in their grubs. I mean they were grubby like tourists are! Annabel was in these huge overalls. They were new, but they had been stoned washed, and stone washing starts to put wear on them. You know, they looked like they had been worn a number of times. And the saleswoman actually said to Annabel, "You are actually a lot smaller than what I thought you were.")

The saleswomen had trusted Annabel and her partner to be "genuine buyers" [Wendy], and therefore, served them accordingly. Annabel reflected, "we were in our jeans, we looked pretty grubby, and yet there was no kind of anticipation that we could not afford those prices. "They probably assumed that Annabel knew the price tag and that is why you were there, too" [Susie]. Annabel feared that people from outside the store, as well as inside (including herself), could easily see or reflect that she was a fraud.

The two outer walls of the casual/sports wear area were almost completely glass and mirror with striking visual displays. . . It allowed individuals to relax comfortably viewing both the inside and outside of the shop without being conspicuous or hidden away.

If the saleswomen did view Annabel and her partner to be frauds, they would have betrayed those saleswomen's trust. As such, this would have thrust a dark shadow of distrust on the uncontaminated off-white store environment. In doing so, Annabel and her partner would have reflected through the abnormally spacious aisles a degree of negativity which would have countered the projected and sought after image - status through individual, respectful service.

Second, Annabel had "never been good at blowing her own horn. . . . I always have felt a little embarrassed about saying who I am" [Annabel]. Helena delineated from the discussion that it was a social characteristic rather than a personal one. It is not usually the accepted social norm to brag about oneself to another, especially to a highly acclaimed individual or organisation. Helena asked the others and responded,

Do you blow your own horn? (No(s) from the background.) No, me neither. I would do exactly like Annabel. Totally embarrassed. . . I'm sure he (Annabel's partner) was proud of you too. Like he said, "My partner is an expert in this kind of fashion stuff." And you are just like, "Ohhhh, please don't (laughing)."

Third, if the saleswomen did not evaluate Annabel as a fraud, the knowledge that she was a fashion retailing expert "might have added to the expectation that she was going to buy, and that she would buy one of those very top labelled brands because it was important to her expertise - to the role she was playing" [Annabel]. "It might reinforce . . . that Annabel was in
fact going to buy. That she could buy" [Susie]. "Yes, that she knew what she was looking at. She knew quality. She was there for a purpose" [Priscilla].

Annabel emerged from the dressing room feeling more relaxed . . . since the dress did not fit properly. . . . [It took] some of the pressure off of her to buy. As Wendy noted, if something "doesn't fit, . . . I get power . . . some sort of power out of that. Like it is back on them. They have put me through this hassle [of trying it on]." The power being that she had given her time and effort, but was not receiving anything in return. With this given power, Annabel thought they could exit with some dignity. "Oh thank goodness, I've [Annabel] got a reason not to buy now" [Susie]. But the saleswomen instantly regained her power. As Annabel wrote,

the saleswomen automatically, but politely started to pin out the excess fabric to illustrate how it would fit perfectly with a few alterations. . . . She [also] proceeded to explain that the store could do the alterations that afternoon and the dress could be collected before Annabel had to catch the ferry that evening.

Annabel was startled. The offered services and the saleswoman's expertise were totally unexpected. She was prepared with a pin cushion wrapped around her wrist and it was obvious to Annabel that she knew exactly what she was doing. Annabel and Priscilla reflected, respectively,

They were definitely very skilled. . . . [T]hey were actually going that step further in that exchange. They were selling, and you know, I was indulging them in it. They were actually doing their jobs very well . . . They were giving something (service [Wendy]) to me, and I was participating in this exchange. [Annabel]

And probably the more helpful [the saleswomen were], the more guilty you were feeling. Would that be right (laughing)? And the expertise they were giving must have linked in with your knowledge of what was happening too. [Priscilla]

Annabel again felt trapped and pressured to reciprocate. Her shock and her partner's suggestions to the saleswoman that Annabel would definitely purchase one of the two outfits intensified her feelings of entrapment with no way out. As Priscilla noted laughing, "What a nightmare"; thereby, symbolising the intensity of these ongoing events in which there appeared to be no escape from the fear of being caught. In Annabel's case, it was the fear of being caught imposing as someone she was not. As in the 'awakening' stage of a bad dream/nightmare (i.e, the escape), Annabel anxiously takes control and saves herself and her partner. The escape does not, however, occur without first revisiting the fear which fuelled it. As Annabel wrote,

Annabel was anxious to leave as quickly as possible. . . . Annabel politely explained by telling a little white lie that she wanted to look some more. . . . Her partner, [however,] was somewhat persistent that perhaps she should just purchase one of the two outfits. After all she did not have much time. . . . He was completely unaware of the price.
The little white lie [researcher's emphasis], symbolised that Annabel felt justified in telling this lie to protect the saleswomen, as well as herself and her partner from a very embarrassing situation. However, by being a lie, it broke a moral justice norm. As such, it intensified Annabel's feelings of guilt of not being able to reciprocate in this exchange.