

MARKETING COLLOQUIA

Fall 2024 - Abstract

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Where: 741 JMHH

When: 12:00 PM to 1:20 PM

THE ASYMMETRY OF GENDER-FLUID TRENDS

Marketers and consumers are rapidly embracing gender-fluid products that fundamentally challenge the conventional associations of masculinity and femininity. In theory, manifestations of gender fluidity in the marketplace respond to shifting gender norms toward more inclusivity. Accordingly, consumers believe that the representation of traditionally male and female styles in these trends should be even. In contrast with these balanced views, this research demonstrates that gender-fluid trends to date skew toward traditionally male styles and that the corresponding adoption of gender-fluid products is driven relatively more by female consumers. Using a multimethod approach that combines trend analyses on more than 100,000 baby names, deep learning on a data set of more than 250,000 products, and a series of lab experiments, this research defines gender fluidity in marketing and differentiates it from related constructs (gender-bending, unisex, androgyny), shows a skewness in gender-fluid trends to date, and reveals the underlying role of male advantage awareness. Finally, a field study on social media explores the marketing implications and demonstrates that raising men's awareness of their advantage increases their engagement with gender-fluid products in the marketplace.