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Abstract of PhD thesis

The Role of Computer Mediated Environment and Simulations in Mediating Consumers' Personal and Domestic Life-worlds.

This thesis examines the impacts of consumption of simulations. Using ethnographic methods, it explores how Irish consumers are using simulated products in lieu of the real and tangible, and how consumption of these simulations impact on their lifeworlds. Drawing heavily upon Jean Baudrillard's conceptions of simulacra and hyperreality, it argues that consumers adapt to the differences between simulated and real worlds, by accepting the replacement of tangibles by simulations, and by aiming to situate their selves seamlessly between these two worlds. It further argues that within consumers' lives cyberspace manifests itself as a field of tensions and discourses of power, and that consumers feel that mastery of this ethereal domain empowers them. It finds that consumers use cyberspace as a place to create lived experience narratives, and that these narratives become an important component of their life-worlds.