

Nosenography: How smell constitutes meaning, identity and temporal experience in spatial assemblages

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Abstract

Nosenography is a theoretical and methodological commitment to uncover the presences and practices of smell, an often-ignored sensory feature of market and consumption spaces. Drawing on prior social science theorizations of smell as well as contemporary sensory marketing practices, we develop a framework to understand how smell features in spatial assemblages of bodies, locations and experiences. Extending theorizations of product smells and ambient smells, we show how this framework can guide knowledge of the sensing, practice and management of smell and space. We explain that smell is a dynamic and unruly force that (i) encodes spaces with meaning, (ii) identifies bodies with spaces, and (iii) punctuates the temporal experience of space as it changes. Nosenography reaffirms that spaces of consumption are multisensory and that this quality should be further acknowledged in figuring market spaces as dynamic and contested assemblages of heterogeneous constituents.

Keywords

Embodiment, ethnography, identity, NRT, research methods, smell, sensory marketing

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Introduction

This article encourages qualitative researchers to extend analyses of market and consumption spaces to include previously overlooked features and forces. Taking an assemblage perspective, we view market spaces as dynamic, open systems (Thrift, 2008) that are shaped by ‘a complex range of agency and actors’ (Warnaby and Medway, 2013: 348). Marketing research in this mould has revealed distributed networks of material and narrative features from which market spaces are constructed (Canniford and Shankar, 2013; Epp and Price, 2010; Figueiredo, 2015; Goulding et al., 2009). More recent research has begun to consider less easily theorized forces that occur in and construct space, such as ‘moods, atmospheres and reciprocal interactions between humans as well as between nonhuman pulses of life’ (McEachern et al., 2012: 873).

Despite the importance of these forces, however, there is a lack of vocabulary to describe sensual and affective aspects of space, and the *pulsing* rhythms that characterize how atmospheres, moods, emotions and other transient phenomena construct space (Hill et al., 2014; Valtonen et al., 2010). To help bridge this barrier to knowledge-making, we offer *nosenography*, a research framework intended to help researchers to trace the presence, practice and complex roles of a pervasive but often forgotten feature of market and consumption spaces, smell. We begin by outlining our assemblage approach and explain that perspectives on space in marketing theory are dominated by visual and narrative modes of knowledge creation and management. To redress this sensory asymmetry, we take inspiration from non-representational theory (NRT) and suggest that new conceptual horizons can be approached in terms of understanding space. We show how knowledge of smell is being recovered, first in the social sciences, then in spatial marketing and management techniques. Building on these bases, we offer a framework for understanding the roles of smell in spatial assemblages and reflect on three ethnographic vignettes that illustrate how smells (i) encode spaces with meaning, (ii) identify bodies with spaces and (iii) punctuate the experience and transformation of space.

Spatial assemblages

From an assemblage perspective, space is constructed from distributed entanglements of both material (e.g. objects, physical locations, technologies) and expressive components (e.g. language, signs, gestures, codes and laws). In this view, spaces and the actions that occur there can be seen to be constructed from a broader network of things than initial appearances might warrant. Tracing and describing these distributed configurations can reveal previously overlooked qualities of market and consumption spaces, since the focus of any analysis is shown to be contingent on a changeable network of multiple *things*. Recent consumer research, for example, illustrates how ‘family’ is as much a construction of shifting spatial relations of furniture, practices and rooms as it is of the *people* and practices that we commonly consider as constituting a family (Epp and Price, 2010; Price and Epp, 2015).

The distributed spatial quality of assemblages means that spaces are also nested in and connected to other networks, both at the macroscale of cultural systems and at the microscale of day-to-day interactions. As such, assemblage researchers may simultaneously cast their nets broadly to understand wider contexts in which a more localized spatial assemblage is embedded (Askegaard and Linnet, 2011), and focus down to witness the smaller networks from which any topic of inquiry is constructed (Hill et al., 2014). This nested, scalar view of assemblages as connected to both larger and smaller networks can emphasize how and why spaces change and

that particular rhythms may characterize these changes (Chatzidakis et al., 2012; McEachern et al., 2012).

Nevertheless, although assemblage approaches can reveal previously unconsidered and distributed constituents at play in the constitution of space, accounts of atmospheric and temporal features of market and consumption spaces lag behind descriptions of tangible physical features and narrative aspects of spatial formations. Part of the problem here is a paucity of words and concepts available to explore and represent phenomena that have previously travelled under our knowledge-making radars (Dewsbury, 2003). Furthermore, since the managerial world is 'performed' and understood through institutionalized categories such as *brands*, *visual identities*, *narratives* and so forth, it is all too tempting – not to mention less troublesome – to reinvestigate familiar ideas through these familiar ways of knowing, rather than inventing new frameworks that encompass elusive or ephemeral constituents (Bajde, 2013).

This is particularly the case in marketing and consumer research where a concern with narrative and visual features dominates investigations of space (Warnaby and Medway, 2013), thus diverting attention away from, 'different but equally important information and stimuli' (Henshaw et al., 2015: 2). In short, if we consider space as complex, rhythmic assemblages of multiple constituents as indicated above, then concepts that 'represent' only the visual and narrative constituents are not necessarily sufficient to understand space (Anderson and Harrison, 2010). For instance, Warnaby and Medway (2013) explain that visual/narrative branding knowledge can at times frame the meanings and interpretations of spaces as stable and singular, where in practice these meanings and interpretations are dynamic and contested. Nevertheless, such contestations and dynamism will continue to go unconsidered if the spatial constituents that can drive difference – such as smell (Carolan, 2008) – are overlooked. To counterbalance this bias towards visual and narrative representations, to offer new tools to examine space, and to reveal 'other' constituents in the contested assembling of space, we take inspiration from NRT.

NRT is a branch of cultural geography that falls within the assemblage rubric. Criticizing ideas that space can ever be adequately represented through common linguistic categories and expressions (Thrift, 2008), NRT adherents often seek and examine less familiar constituents of space in manners that reflect the transient, affective, moving, and intersubjective qualities of environments (Canniford, 2012). In so doing, NRT also tackles the lack of vocabulary available to conceptualize often complex, elusive or ephemeral features of space by subjecting these phenomena to research processes that deliberately create new theoretical frameworks and vocabularies (Dewsbury, 2003; Hill et al., 2014). This is important in relation to sensual experiences that tend to travel beneath our attentional radars (Pred, 2005), such as smell. To extend this way to explore space, we next consider why smell is a rarely discussed feature of space, and reflect on prior research that reveals the effects and functions of smell.

The smell of space

If odours are an elusive or overlooked feature of space, part of the reason for this is that our sense of smell has taken a backseat in social life over the course of centuries, at least in Western contexts (Classen, 1997; Low, 2006). Norbert Elias ([1939]2000) suggests that smell became a 'lower' sense through long processes that layered shame and disgust onto certain objects and associated odours. During early modernity, when social status depended increasingly on embodied etiquette, manners began to dictate particular smells as especially repulsive. One 16th-century text, for instance, warns:

It is not a refined habit, when coming across something disgusting in the sheet, as sometimes happens, to turn at once to one's companion and point it out to him. It is far less proper to hold out the stinking thing for the other to smell, as some are wont, who even urge the other to do so, lifting the foul smelling thing to his nostrils and saying, 'I should like to know how much that stinks', when it would be better to say, 'Because it stinks do not smell it'. (Della Casa, 1558, in Elias, [1939]2000: 111)

Moreover, this gradual construction of a hierarchy of the senses meant that smell became associated with corporeal involvement, vis-a-vis a more 'refined' and 'enlightened' world of visual senses and contemplative practices (see Classen et al., 1994; Largey and Watson, 2006; Low, 2012;). This was evident not only at a personal level, but also in terms of engagement with public space. Elias ([1939]2000: 112) quotes the Duchess of Orléans' description of Paris at the end of the 17th century:

The streets smell so badly that you cannot go out. The extreme heat is causing large quantities of meat and fish to rot in them, and this coupled to the multitude of people . . . produces a smell so detestable that it cannot be endured.

Here we see a demarcation of certain spaces as 'vulgar' because of how they smell (Corbin, 1986; Elias, [1939]2000). Today, the presences or absences of smell continue to signal boundaries of taste, class and identity at personal, group and spatial levels (Low, 2005; MacPhee, 1992; Nugent, 2009; Śliwa and Riach, 2012). As such, smells are organized through physical boundaries to limit their travel to set spaces (Foster-Hall, 2008). When these boundaries function, they are generally forgotten. Once breached, however, smells can reveal problems of identity and organisation. For example, Iraqi Citizens have experienced the destruction of social order through the reappearance of odours previously banished to sewers (Al-Mohammad, 2007). Equally, the movements of Mexican cooking smells through certain public spaces in the United States have effectively disclosed immigrants, and triggered subsequent visa investigations (Hadjiyanni, 2015).

In summary, although we have always been surrounded by smells, our sensitivity to smell has been dulled by changing social mores and the careful organization of odours. If smell seldom warrants our attention, however, how can we discover and consider the odorous constituents of spatial assemblages? To answer this question, we next consider practitioners who are exploring the potential for *smell marketing*, for it is its location as lingering on the periphery of everyday awareness that has led to marketers developing an interest in smell (Lindstrom, 2005; Schmitt, 1999). First, we first note the power of 'ambient smell' in market spaces before examining how smells are being identified and named as part of market creation activities. Secondly, we illustrate how marketing professionals and consumers are trained to respond to increasingly differentiated and marketable smells.

Sensory marketing: Colonizing space

If there is any doubt as to the power of smell, then we need only examine how *sensory marketing* techniques are developing the potentials of smell space (Hultén, 2011, 2012). Christopher Pratt, managing director of smell marketing company *Scent Air*, for instance, considers that while 'so much of marketing is based on the verbal and on the visual, marketers are missing a trick' (Bannerman, 2014: 11). Knowing that product smells can encourage purchases by attracting consumers into particular spaces (Henshaw et al., 2015; Lindstrom, 2005) and influence time spent evaluating products (e.g. Morrin and Ratneshwar, 2000; Spangenberg et al., 2005), marketers are

using *ambient smell* to condition meaningful and enduring attachments between consumers and spaces.

Indeed, *ScentAir's* (2015) promises of 'more belonging to your resident experience', and 'more excitement to your crowd experience' exemplify how managing the smell of retail and service spaces is being heralded as an alternative means to differentiate brands, products and locations in world where the visual field is already saturated with advertising (see Koeck and Warnaby, 2014). Offering to manage the smell of spaces as diverse as homes, offices and car parks, *ScentAir* have established contracts with multiple clients. For Bloomingdales, they created distinct environments for individual departments: 'In the infant department, "Baby Powder" was used to "speak to a mother's memory", whilst the "lingerie department" was suffused with lilac'. At Christmas time, 'a combination of Sugar Cookie, Chocolate and Evergreen . . . give a homely and holiday feeling' (*ScentAir*, 2015).

Existing marketing theory shows that recognized smells can work 'just above the sub-conscious level of awareness' to leverage the 'personal emotional responses already associated with that smell' (Anderson, 2014: 26). As a potent elicitor of memory and emotion (Engen, 1991), smell not only guides affective responses to space in the present, it can also take us back to previously encountered spaces (Corbin, 1986; Riach and Warren, 2015; Tuzin, 2006). In this way, smell can be used to offer 'atmospheric cues' (Yakhlef, 2015) intended to situate consumers in a space, even if this is historically or culturally elsewhere. This potential is exploited in exhibitions and museums such as Dresden's *Military History Museum* and London's *Imperial War Museum*, which have both exhibited approximations of the smell of a World War I battlefield.

Work investigating the smell of particular products and the ambient smell of particular environments is increasing apace (Davies et al., 2003). This work, often underpinned by *external stimulus – cognitive response* models (e.g. Gulas and Bloch, 1995; Mehrabian and Russell, 1974), has helped to explain the power of product smells and ambient smells in retail locations such as those considered above. Nevertheless, we suggest that knowledge of consumption and marketing spaces can benefit from a slightly different approach to research, because as Rodaway (1994: 76) reminds us, 'olfactory geographies change . . . and differ from place to place as cultures do'. If this is the case, then concepts of the dynamic *smell of space* require further development in the field of marketing (see Henshaw et al., 2015). Hence, further to Krishna et al.'s (2010) distinction between *product scent* (specific, singularized things) and *ambient scent* (smells of a particular environment that can encompass multiple product smells), we wish to develop an understanding of the open, intersecting, culturally specific (and often unruly) *smells of space*.

More specifically, the assemblage perspective outlined above emphasizes a possibility to consider the interaction of micro and macro-level smells in space, and the ways that smells are part of moving, contested constructions of space that often elude control or management. Three hundred years after the Duchess of Orléans' descriptions of smell of Paris the city, Paris remains an unruly assemblage of smells – *coffee, cheese, oil paints, flowers, perfume, grilled steak, gauloises, bread, drains, urine, rain, parquet floors, musty cellars, and wine* (McLean, 2014). Although arguably less pungent than the rotting meat of the 17th century, Paris' multiple product smells, ambient smells, and *other* smells form complex entanglements with market and consumption spaces. Moreover, combinations of these smells identify certain locations in the city, be these bars, metro stations, or whole arrondissements (McLean, 2014). In what follows, we develop three themes to analyse effects related to the complex smells of space. However, before we do this, we must first consider how assemblages of multiple smells and their entanglements with space can be

handled in practice and research. Indeed, if smell is something of a shrinking violet in sensory terms, researchers face challenges in detecting and writing about smell. Fortunately, as scent marketing gains ground, we find further clues regarding how to craft knowledge of the *smell of space*.

Explaining and training the nose

If as suggested above, modern subjects have experienced a retreat from engaging with odours, then it is unsurprising that smell has remained an elusive phenomenon for researchers and practitioners alike. As such, part of the work of marketing through smell is not just to ‘use’ it, but also to get people to think about and more closely attend to smell. Understanding this, marketers often deploy distinctive and well-recognized smells as noted in the sensory marketing section above. The *Bloomingdales* case exemplifies this simple, brute-force approach. Nevertheless, marketers are also working to *produce* more novel and nuanced capacities of smelling among consumers. In a recent *GQ Magazine* article, journalist Chandler Burr (2012) explains to readers that ‘Cities, like people, have their own smell, their own body odours and perfumes that take on personalities’. Dallas smells of, ‘Highways of strip malls and gas stations and . . . Insanely wide streets’. This might all sound like nonsense, yet the explaining of senses to consumers by classifying and naming is one way to take smell out of the non-representational, embodied realm and encourage people to pay better attention to their noses. As Foster-Hall (2008: 116) notes, ‘the intellect finds it hard to rationalize the information gathered from olfaction’. Thus, in inscribing the smell of locations, marketers are not simply making a description. They are fostering a *sensory mode of attention and reflection*, encouraging consumers to sense and think in a way that can conjure up new conversations, interests and desires.

Procedures of classifying and naming are only one aspect of this work, however. As much as consumers are educated to re-engage with and rationalize smell as a sensual experience, we may also witness marketers training us to be sensitive to certain smells in ways that can become commodified. In markets for beverages, toiletries and cosmetics, educational retail practices encourage people to ‘discriminate more and more subtle differences’ (Latour, 2004: 206) in odours. Retailers such as *Aesop* or *L’Occitane*, for instance, help consumers to engage with smell before purchase. Equally, beer- or wine-tasting events educate consumers in *how to smell* (and taste) via coded odour vocabularies, which once learned, structure sensory experiences of products in ways that echo the visual and narrative vocabularies more regularly witnessed in branding (Maciel and Wallendorf, 2017). In the course of these practices, the consumer’s sensorial body becomes ‘a progressive enterprise that produces at once a sensory medium and a sensitive world’ (Latour, 2004: 207).

We suggest that these procedures of explaining and training the nose promote the use and recognition of smell in determining experiences and feelings in certain locations. In turn, these odorous experiences become more salient in constituting the identities and meanings of market and consumption spaces. This bringing of smell out of the precognitive, extra-discursive realm, into a more linguistic and representational set of practices might be considered to be fixing the meanings and orders of spaces, and also the identities of people who inhabit those spaces (cf. Medway and Warnaby, 2014), a point we return to in the discussion. Equally, however, a fostering of both olfactory sensitivity in researchers, and the codes to talk about the smell of space is necessary to help build research programs that critically develop further knowledge of how smell features in and constructs space. Towards this goal, we now propose *nosenography*. Nosenography is a

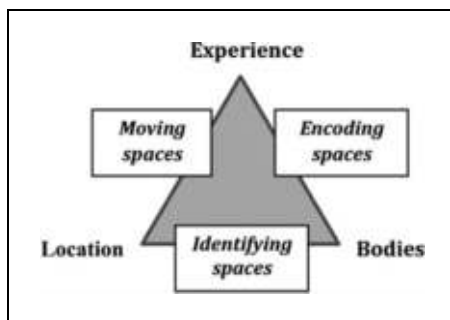


Figure 1. The roles of smell in spatial assemblages.

commitment to investigating and conceptualizing the smell of space that builds on the possibilities encountered so far.

Nosenography

We now offer a conceptual framework to guide how the smell of space might be further explored. Our emphases will be familiar to scholars versed in ethnographic methods. However, rather than following *things, metaphors, lives, plots* or *conflicts* (Marcus, 1995) in qualitative research, we invite researchers to *follow their noses*. More specifically, our research procedures have taken into consideration many of the themes highlighted by prior research (e.g. smells marking boundaries, the mixing of multiple smells, the emotive and memory-stimulating quality of smell and the power of smell to locate people in particular spaces – real or remembered). Furthermore, we have sought to attend to the language we use to consider smell, and our own research sensitivity to smell (*explaining and training our noses* more carefully). With these imperatives in mind, we present field notes that illustrate our attention to smell as part of sensory ethnography procedures (Pink, 2009; Valtonen et al., 2011). These enable us to explain the power of smell in space through three interrelated pathways (see Figure 1).

The first pathway – ‘encoding spaces’ – stresses how smells both indicate and construct embodied experiences of space. Here, we find clues that relate to the mutual composition of smell and sociospatial relations: smells make spaces *sense-able* and intelligible. Moreover, smells transmit *power*, revealing and constructing how people act in certain spaces. The second part of our framework, ‘identifying space’, explains how smell binds the identity of spaces and consumers. We suggest this can occur in ways that collapse temporal or geographic domains, such that a location is assembled into body and identity, and carried from one space to another, both physically and as memories. The third part of the framework – ‘moving spaces’ – reveals how smell is, among other things, part of the rhythmic choreography of dynamic spatial assemblages. In particular, this aspect of our work highlights the continually negotiated relations between consumer embodiment and connected movements within spatial assemblages that alter from one space to the next.

Smell encodes space

We begin with Riach’s longitudinal exploration of careers in a London-based hedge fund where smell reveals clues concerning the situated work of employees. From an assemblage perspective, the practice of trading is distributed across a wide range of features (see Roffe, 2015). The

following field notes suggest these constituents include smell, attention to which reveals changes in the meaning and practice of trading space, as well as attendant forms of power and resistance in how working bodies are made up and commodified in the market:

Finn told me how it's changed from the 'old days' of open floor trading pits. 'It's so quiet now, we wear suits and nice aftershave and have nice straight teeth – everything is computerised, not all men jostling together', he tells me. I say, 'it sounds a bit like a game of rugby', to which he responds, 'Yea you all had on these yellow jackets, and it did smell a little, I think they deliberately made it too small, to make you sweat a little bit'. I don't want to tell him that today there's still a bit of a sweaty smell in the boardroom immediately after his colleague Jim was in here. But you can't smell Jim now; it's all a bit sterile, except for the boys who do the after hours U.S. trading who usually have takeaways for dinner after everyone's gone. When I later mention this to one of the researchers, she agrees, 'nothing hangs about here for long', which makes the rest of the row of desks chuckle with irony, especially in light of the current poor performance of the company – 'look what happened to the previous company – winning awards one month and bust the next', she says.

Trading work is achieved through enactments that produce the spaces markets occupy and market activity itself (Jones, 2013). Traditionally, this space involved embodied interactions of traders within physical, sweaty 'call-out' trading pits. Changes in workspaces have occurred, however, in moves to electronic and telephone interactions executed in glass-walled offices that are deliberately deodorized with air-conditioning. This reassembling of trading work might suggest the absence of bodies. Nevertheless, attention to smell highlights the continued – albeit changed – embodied practices that occur in reformed trading spaces. The smell of aftershave replacing sweaty smells signals that the co-presence of bodies remains important in market enactments. Yet the construction of space is being replaced by more civilized (Elias, [1939]2000), though still masculinized, practices where traders manage their gendered bodies in new ways.

To be sure, Jim's failure to deodorize himself suggests how some traders might refuse to embody changing demands on subjectivity (see also Low, 2005). Nevertheless, attending to the way smell is handled in the wider organization might lead us to ask how long Jim will be tolerated, especially since our attention to smell highlights the precarious nature of employment in this industry. Many contemporary workspaces are designed not to be impacted by the people who work there (Riach and Warren, 2015), a point illustrated by the deodorized nature of the hedge-fund building. The absence of lingering smells perhaps expresses this anonymity within an organization in which traders can be quickly moved on, a space where *nothing hangs about for long*. In spite of this, smell reveals individuals as always located *somewhere* in any given space: food smells linger after traders' evening gatherings, perhaps forming a temporary olfactory resistance against the otherwise sterile atmosphere.

Smell identifies space

Next, we consider Canniford's fieldwork into community (re)building activities in rural England, highlighting how smells tie and release bodies within cultural spaces. Enactments of smell are not only limited to present moment or localized spatial assemblages. This vignette affirms how smells are part of the embodied memory of landscape that binds people to certain locations and regions. Reflecting on childhood journeys from a suburban home to rurally resident grandparents, Canniford's field notes describe:

... a malodorous transition. Especially during spring and summer months, when farmers spread the accumulated contents of cowshed floors over the fields, I recall air filled with the stench of manure. Harder to bear was Dad's reaction. He'd wind down his car window, breathe deeply and exclaim 'Now that's a healthy smell!' Arrival at grandparents' and elderly aunts' houses offered no relief. Saturdays stank of scalded milk, curdling away into clotted cream. Sundays brought rich wafts of pasty-pie and the bullying odour of a boiling ox tongue. From these, there was no escape because they worked their way into everybody's clothes and hair.

This example reveals that smells mark borders and border crossings (Carolan, 2008). Moreover, that some relish 'country smells', while others abhor them tells us something new about levels and intensities of linkages between people and locations such as regions, in this case the south-west of England. One such set of linkages are established by the smells of regional foods that attach themselves to bodies, fastening people into family and taste cultures. In this way, spaces abstract themselves onto bodies in ways that connect people as communities, even beyond specific geographical areas and mark identity even after leaving a location. This of course can breach boundaries and borders, an idea affirmed by the fact that odours are used to *detect* the crossing of people or materials through various borders (Hadjiyanni, 2015) in manners that can trigger sometimes problematic responses from those who seek to conserve categories of gender, race or class (Canniford and Bradshaw, 2016; Low, 2005; Rustin, 1991).

In one sense, these field notes about smell border on the representational – for example, certain named smells represent regionality – clotted cream, pasty-pie. Yet if we sniff more deeply, the olfactory identity of this location is not totalized into one product, ambience, tagline or image (cf. Warnaby and Medway, 2013). Rather an unruly, ungovernable mix of all kinds of food – not to mention manure – mingle in the air. Furthermore, this vignette hints at the idea of changing olfactory preferences as part of ageing. It should be noted that Canniford, now living in a city in Australia, nostalgically relishes the faintest waft of horses, cattle or silage on the breeze, a point that reminds us of the power of smell to stimulate memory (Engen, 1991). However, while these possibilities are most often discussed in relation to physiological patterning (see Shepherd, 2005), this case suggests a more complex interweaving that – as in the first vignette – constitutes the space of consumption, but also locates and identifies a person with a particular space whether they are there or not. In short, this simultaneous subjective assembling of spaces and bodies views subjects as partly formed by smells that they carry around with them, either literally or in memory.

Smell moves space

Hill's fieldwork in the context of English football consumption shows how spaces are constituted dynamically through odorous choreographies. In his field notes, smell is part of the movement of supporters from one spatial assemblage to another during a coach trip from homes in Liverpool, to a match in London:

An hour into the journey and I hear the sound of sarnies, made the night before, being unwrapped from tinfoil. The musty coach smell is replaced with the sulphurous stench of egg. Cured meats, ham, and turkey provide some respite... However, it is lukewarm bacon sandwiches, dripping in brown sauce, that emerge as the perfect roadblock to stop the smell of egg from returning. [...] By Stoke-on-Trent, sandwiches make way for cans. Consumed and discarded, the smell of warm, stale lager permeates the coach as golden dregs seep out of cans rolling along the coach floor. The air is heavy with wheat, barley and sweat; the coach resembles a pub during a lock-in. Increasingly intoxicated beer breath adds to the

weary stuffiness of the coach. After four hours of boozy, stifling and fetid motorway travel, the smell of petrol at the service station is a welcome reprieve for everyone.

Clearly, smell does not move the coach along the motorway, but in recognizing and recalling the smells that occur on the way, Hill's field notes unravel much about this consumption context, in particular, the foodstuffs that supporters bring, and how these material constituents embody and punctuate the ritual process of travelling to an away game. Importantly, attention to the creation of this aromatic landscape offers an improved sense of how this journey *towards* the match is experienced as a 'mode of movement' (Haldrup, 2010: 61) organized through intercorporeal relations within the physical space of the coach. Smell is a vital aspect of these relations, transforming and territorializing a space with the olfactory identity of Liverpool supporters and their pregame practices.

Moreover, the words associated with this feature of space – *musty, sulphurous, stale, heavy, stuffiness, stifling, fetid* – reveal much about the atmosphere of a space. Over a period of hours, the coach becomes disgusting, unbearable even, as one smell emerges before being masked by another. If it were not for attention to the smell of the coach, this mobile location might be considered an inert, meaningless space between home and the football stadium. Yet this would be a mistake, for rather like Goulding et al.'s (2009) notion of clubbers 'preparing for pleasure', this is a space of emergence where a progressive layering of smells enacts the intermingling of locally identified bodies (this time from the north-west of England) so central to football consumption.

Smells in this case and the previous examples also offer signs of temporality. Indeed, smells offer a variety of social cues and clues that locate the progress of consumptive events. We can track the progress of the supporter coach by attending to the changing smells of this weekend ritual for example. Equally, the financial spaces we have described smell of Chinese food after dark, and rural spaces are characterized by Saturday smells and summer smells. Summarily, by foregrounding these olfactory dynamics within research procedures, we begin to better understand and interpret the mutual becoming of consumption space and experience. Put more simply, odours are constructive of temporal experiences. *Smell helps us to tell the time.*

Discussion

Despite space being a multisensory phenomenon (Joy and Sherry, 2003), knowledge of the constituents of market and consumer spaces is dominated by narrative and visual representations (Henshaw et al., 2015). The foregrounding of 'other' senses, however, can generate new and critical insights into market and consumption spaces if we engage with the challenge of conceptualizing phenomena that often go unnoticed or unwritten. Already, marketing research recognizes the power of product smells and ambient smells. This article extends these foci by offering a conceptual guide to consider broader *spatial assemblages* of bodies, locations and experiences in which smell features in the enactment of further effects. In particular, we have stressed that smell (i) encodes spatial assemblages with meaning and power, (ii) identifies and directly links people with spaces and (iii) punctuates movements and change in these spaces.

The manner in which these potentials interact will vary with context. Nevertheless, at a general level, we witness an important linkage between odours that encode space and the kinds of identity and subjectivity required in those spaces. Departing from theorizations of consumer bodies and market spaces as ontologically separate, our examples of food smells being carried off on the body, and the requirement for traders to manage body odours, both reveal how smell affirms linkages

between the identity of spaces and the identity of bodies. Extending knowledge of identity and subjectivity emerging in space (Foucault, 1995), we suggest that future research could investigate cases of workers and consumers as constituted in porous, open spatial systems (Hill et al., 2014; Thrift, 2008) where smell forms both immediate and remembered attachments between bodies and locations as diverse as employment sites, regions, consumption communities, family, and food cultures, thus intersecting with existing conversations in consumer research (e.g. Dion et al., 2011; Moisiso et al., 2004).

Further to this, by extending the focus on product scents and ambient smells towards broader, unruly assemblages of smell, we affirm that the smell of space is often a *moving and contested* entanglement of smells. The football supporters' coach exemplifies a space where multiple smells mix, never settling. It is this (as yet) unmanaged status of space that offers another useful focus for future research into sensual marketing and the construction of market spaces more generally. Indeed, extending Spangenberg et al.'s (2005) suggestion that smells used in marketing should be pleasant and congruent with other environmental features, our field notes illustrate that what is congruent or pleasant can change over time and context. Despite the smells of the supporter coach, or 'country smells' being ostensibly unpleasant, these nevertheless powerfully situate consumers' experiences of space. It should be of no surprise therefore that seeking to manage such smells can meet with resistance, as groups fear losing a particular identity of space and thus their immediate and remembered attachments to those locations (see Foster-Hall, 2008).

This point highlights the shared, ongoing and contested construction of the smell of space in manners that reflect (contested) identities in terms of class, gender, regionality, and nationality. Though visual and narrative elements of marketing can totalize and singularize the identity of particular spaces (Medway and Warnaby, 2014), the unruly quality of the smell of space will provide marketers with challenges. Indeed, by highlighting the broader assemblages of multiple and contested smells, our article affirms Henshaw et al.'s (2015) suggestion that smell is a political phenomenon. Beyond the ethical issues associated with product and ambient scents (see Bradford and Desrochers, 2009), managing, manipulating, and selling the smell of specific locations represent a new way to territorialize and colonize space. As such, concerns over who owns smell, who controls smell in space, who determines what is pleasant, tasteful or congruent and who gets to create boundaries through smell are likely arise in the future in relation to public space (see Henshaw et al., 2015).

Further still, as educational practices teach consumers to engage with smell in codified ways, we are likely to witness new contestations to identity boundaries associated with taste. This is the case with *winelibrary.com* whose online chat rooms encourage commentary on wine in manners that subvert the classed, gendered and ethnic distinctions previously sustained by the distinguished ability to use and talk about odour as a wine consumer (cf. Bourdieu, 1984; Latour, 2004).

We suggest that further research into these important issues will require methodological innovation in terms of capturing smells. Although smell is at present difficult to capture, rationalize or discuss, we encourage researchers to follow the lead of smell marketers and existing experimental studies. Our challenge is to draw on this work to develop qualitative olfactory methods that sniff-out the tacit, embodied, nonrepresentational aspects of social life. Thereafter we may offer better linguistic concepts to explain and train our research noses in order to further interpret the power and politics of smell in market and consumption spaces.

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