

Identity, Entropy and Culture: A New Approach to Modeling the Demand for Cultural Goods*

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Abstract

Finding existing models of consumer behavior unable to deal satisfactorily with issues such as identity and culture, this paper, drawing from humanistic psychology (Rogers, Maslow), presents a model of utility based on multidimensional identities (physiological, esteem, cognitive), defined over Lancasterian characteristic space. Identities are assumed to be subject to the laws of physics, notably entropy, whereby identities depreciate over time. The result is a model of consumer behavior which is amenable to the study of identity and culture, and, more importantly, a framework for the study of cultural policy (e.g. cultural exception clauses in international trade agreements, cultural diversity).

Keywords: *Identity, Culture, Utility, Psychology.*

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