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GENDER AND AGE—OUR SUPERGLUED IDENTITY MARKERS

Gender and Age—the two markers of our identity, stuck to us as if “superglued.”

Is there any moment in our waking life when we are not conscious of them? We are conscious of them in buying our clothes, in partaking of our foods, in choosing our recreation. We visit only those stores that sell the merchandise that suits our particular gender and age, buy music CDs that echo our generation's psyche, and flock to places—public as well as commercial—where people similar to our age and of interest to our gender congregate.

Age, our second unalterable characteristic, marks the progression of our lives. It affects what we consume, both when we are celebrating it and when we are defying it.

Celebration and defiance consumptions offer distinct opportunities to marketers. To harness these, keep a close watch on the psychology of the generations. Seniors, Boomers, Gen Xers, Millennials, teens—they all represent unique and individually alluring islands of opportunity. Commune with them, grasp their mojo, and then fashion your offerings for each age group separately.

And, for the population as a whole, keep a watch on the changing numbers. The fortunes of whole industries can swing as more of the today's Boomers reach their golden years and the Millennials become tomorrow's 40-somethings. Marketers: shifting Population Pyramids are an opportunity deserving of our constant watch!

