August 2019

#TrippinWithTarte: The Immaterial Labour of Selling Calculated Authenticity and Glamour on Instagram

Brenna O'Gorman
ogormanb@uwindsor.ca

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/major-papers

Part of the Other Film and Media Studies Commons

#TrippinWithTarte:
The Immaterial Labour of
Selling Calculated Authenticity and Glamour
on Instagram

By

Brenna O'Gorman

A Major Research Paper
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
through the Department of Communication, Media and Film
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Arts
at the University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

2019

#TrippinWithTarte:
The Immaterial Labour of
Selling Calculated Authenticity and Glamour
on Instagram

by

Brenna O'Gorman

APPROVED BY:

S. Bryant
Department of Communication, Media, and Film

K. Asquith, Advisor
Department of Communication, Media, and Film

July 23, 2019

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I hereby certify that I am the sole author of this thesis and that no part of this thesis has been published or submitted for publication.

I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, my major research paper does not infringe upon anyone's copyright nor violate any proprietary rights and that any ideas, techniques, quotations, or any other material from the work of other people included in my thesis, published or otherwise, are fully acknowledged in accordance with the standard referencing practices. Furthermore, to the extent that I have included copyrighted material that surpasses the bounds of fair dealing within the meaning of the Canada Copyright Act, I certify that I have obtained a written permission from the copyright owner(s) to include such material(s) in my thesis and have included copies of such copyright clearances to my appendix.

I declare that this is a true copy of my major research paper, including any final revisions, as approved by my thesis committee and the Graduate Studies office, and that this thesis has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other University or Institution.

ABSTRACT

Since 2016, beauty brand Tarte Cosmetics has been utilizing social media influencers to advertise their new product launches by bringing them on sponsored brand trips, also known as #TrippinWithTarte. This growing phenomenon within the beauty industry involves brands paying for airfare, lodging and other expenses of influencers in exchange for promotion of the brand and their products while on the trip. Trippin' with Tarte destinations are often luxury beach locations like Bora Bora, Costa Rica, and Hawaii. While this certainly looks glamorous to the consumer, these trips should not be mistaken for a vacation. While participating in various excursions, influencers are required to post on Instagram regularly, as this is the reason the brands have invited them, and how they make their living.

This paper examines the use of "calculated authenticity" (Pooley, 2010, p. 79) by influencers working for Tarte to create an authentic seeming, yet glamourous, persona to their audience of consumers. It will also critically analyze the hidden and precarious labour behind the work of influencers that is often not discussed. A variety of themes are found in various #TrippinWithTarte Instagram posts by multiple beauty influencers to support these points and the intended research questions. Sponsored brand trips are a relatively new advertising tactic that has been taking over social media, as a result, this paper aims to shed light on this particular topic area that is growing into a phenomenon in the influencer marketing industry.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Branding in the twenty-first century has shifted and stands in sharp contrast to the days of the industrial revolution and mass production. In a political, economic, and cultural era of neoliberalism, brands want consumers to feel a connection with their brand and build an authentic community with those who support them—financially of course. With the introduction of digital platforms like Instagram, social media has provided the tools for brands to interact with a global audience of consumers and build a seemingly authentic relationship.

With social media as a platform, the influencer marketing industry has aided brands in their quest for authenticity. Utilizing real people gives a face to a company and someone to whom audiences can relate. Beauty influencers, specifically, tend to portray a more glamourous and picturesque image to their audience, which they may admire or even strive to emulate. Not to mention, a brand and influencer partnership could mean access a niche audience that aligns with the brand and their products more precisely.

This Major Research Paper will critically examine the ways marketers are using influencers as self-branded marketing tools on Instagram, and also how Instagram influencers rely on brands in order to maintain employment in the world of precarious and immaterial labour of the creative fields. Not only is this topic relevant to the direction in which the industry of marketing is moving, but it is also significant in that there are bigger societal structures engulfing the seemingly glamourous nature of industry of influencer marketing.

I focus on one brand in particular, beauty company Tarte Cosmetics and the sponsored 'brand trips' on which they take various beauty influencers, otherwise known as #TrippinWithTarte. Sponsored brand trips refer to big beauty brands paying for airfare, lodging, and any other expenses to take influencers to often tropical and exotic locations with the objective to launch and promote new and existing products. As alluded, these are not your average work trips, as destinations are often luxury vacation spots such as Bora Bora, Hawaii, and Costa Rica. Since 2016, Tarte's trips are often filled with scheduled events, and while soaking up the sun, influencers are required to post regularly to Instagram and sometimes other platforms, promoting new products and Tarte as a brand in general to their thousands, even millions of followers. Tarte Cosmetics already depicts a fun and beachy aesthetic in their brand and products, so having a beautiful beach associated with the brand certainly drives the consumer to want to participate in that glamourous lifestyle by supporting the brand and purchasing Tarte products. While this is not how the average Tarte customer lives on an everyday basis, we are infatuated by the self-presentation of our favourite influencer, who we have grown to trust and admire.

This perceived trustworthiness is a strategic function of brand management techniques which exploit the authenticity of digital influencers to build an authentic aura around a brand, solidifying brand loyalty and eventual profits from consumers. However, none of this is possible without the immaterial, often hidden labour of both consumers and influencers who are building the brand up just as fast as brands are accepting our money.

My two-part research question is as follows:

How are Instagram beauty influencers promoting products, brands and a glamourous lifestyle to consumers through sponsored brand trips? How can these brand trips be understood as a form of hidden and precarious labour rather than just a luxury vacation for these influencers?

Ultimately, I argue that two power relations have formed: 1) the power that influencers have over their audiences when it comes to promoting these brands and products through a glamourous, yet, authentic seeming lifestyle, and 2) the power that these brands have over influencers in providing them with a livelihood and income, as well the exposure on which their unique careers depend. Both the dynamics between the brand and the influencer and the influencer and the consumer are powerful in that they both rely on each other in order to be financially successful. While this might not be visible to the average Instagram user, this dynamic certainly exists in #TrippinWithTarte.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The following literature review provides a theoretical framework for my arguments and will be categorized into four themes. The first is 'the phenomenon of the influencer,' which examines the emergence of word-of-mouth marketing, the need for influencer marketing in a time when consumers' attention is hard to grasp, and how influencers have the potential to reach celebrity status. Second, this review will cover the theme of 'authenticity in self-branding,' which explores the ideas of authenticity and persona when it comes to influencers' self-presentation and promotion, as well as the authentic relationship brands try to build with consumers through the employment of

influencers. Third, the theme of 'the hidden and precarious labour of influencers' will analyze the particular kind of labour influencers participate in and why it may not be as fun and glamourous as it looks, and is often unpredictable, unstable, and even risky. Finally, this review will discuss the theme of 'brands, influencers, and consumers creating an experience through brand management,' which will explore how meaning and value can be created for a brand by consumers, and in turn, influencers, and how influencers are the modern-day brand managers not only for brands, but for themselves as well.

The Phenomenon of the Influencer

Social media influencers, particularly beauty influencers, have become abundant in our digital media, and for good reason. Not only are they living seemingly exciting lives, towards which we gravitate, but they are desirable partners for brands due to their authentic nature and audience engagement. Ad Age reports that it is estimated that marketers spent more than one billion dollars just on influencers in 2018, and that is up 39% from 2017 (Neff, 2019). It is clear that brands are catching on to the influencer effect and wanting to utilize it within their own marketing. Influencers are unique in that they accumulate relationships with their audiences who, in turn, trust and admire them. This is because influencers are relatable to consumers, as audiences view them as peers as opposed to someone trying to sell them a product or service, although in the end, that is the work that influencers do.

Nonetheless, this method of peer marketing has been around long before digital media gave influencers a platform on which to thrive. Serazio (2013), discusses how the

kind of word-of-mouth marketing that modern-day influencers participate in actually started decades ago when women would get together for social events, while also selling Avon or Tupperware products. This method of marketing became quite popular, especially in contrast to the traditional "one-size-fits-all, aggressive, untrustworthy commercial appeals emanating through traditional media channels" at the time (Serazio, 2013, p. 99). Word-of-mouth marketing was a "strategic conversion of social capital into economic capital" (Serazio, 2013, p. 99), especially in a time when social events had been a cherished space for many women. In addition to being a more authentic and less in your face way to sell products, there was an added human element that lent "credibility and trustworthiness" to product recommendations (Serazio, 2013, p. 100).

This friend-like quality of word-of-mouth marketing has now transitioned into the online world of beauty influencers, who are using their authentic personalities to attract an audience of consumers and develop a relationship with their followers. Forbes (2016) analyzes influencers in the beauty community on YouTube, also called 'beauty gurus.' In Forbes' research, she considers how social media influencers have become so popular due to their "ability to connect with their consumer peers" (p. 78). This is due to the platforms they work on, mainly Instagram, YouTube and Facebook, being more participatory, and therefore more of an "organic" connection with the audience. Because of the nature of influencer's ability to come off as "relatable" (Forbes, 2016, p. 79), or as Bruhn, Fritz, and Schoenmueller (2017) suggest, someone with whom the audience can identify, many brands are often interested in working with influencers to help promote and create buzz around their products. As Forbes notes, "their contribution to word-of-mouth through posts, pictures, and messages on their social networking profiles is an

advantage for marketers looking to get in on the digital dialogue surrounding their brand." In the digital sphere, brands need to get on board with online marketing, especially through influencers who "give off a sense of trust" (Forbes, 2016, p. 79) to consumers. However, for brands, choosing which influencers with whom to partner, according to Forbes, depends on a multitude of criteria including "their popularity and industries they belong to," and that "the number of followers, friends, or fans on an influencer's profile can determine how influential they will be" (p. 79). Ultimately, a brand wants to align itself with successful influencers in order to make the most impact "in hopes that consumers will follow influencers' behavior as "monkeys see monkeys do" (Forbes, 2016, p. 80). That is the whole point of being an influencer after all. Even though Cunningham and Craig (2017) state that influencers cherish the bonds and relationships they share with their following (p. 74), at the end of the day, influencers need to actually influence their audiences' perceptions, as the title suggests.

In line with this, brands are keen to use influencers in their campaigns due to the strategy Serazio (2013) puts forward called "the cool sell" (p. 4). Serazio examines, like Forbes (2016), that in the world of advertising commercial clutter, especially in digital spaces, marketers need to find ways to grasp the attention of audiences in less overt ways. This is the aim of the cool sell strategy, it is meant to be "advertising not meant to seem like advertising" (Serazio, 2013, p. 3). In this way, the marketing message is not meant to be immediately recognizable, and "pull" the consumer in rather than "push" the message onto them. Even though this strategy is orchestrated, Serazio theorizes that it should feel like the consumer is discovering the advertising message serendipitously. This is an effective marketing strategy because consumers do not feel like they are being sold to,

and instead feel as though they are finding authentic content. In fact, the cool sell tactic is so effective that consumers even feel that they are making purchasing decisions on their own without any obvious guidance. Serazio uses Michel Foucault's ideas of governance and agency and states that there is a marketing power in the cool sell in that the "consumer subject is strategically engaged to act without the sense of being acted upon in any way" (p. 155). Consumers are meant to not see the "invisible" (p. 155) tactics that "pull the strings behind the scenes" (p. 155), and that it is their own agency that influences certain behaviors. Indeed, Foucault (1982) describes this leading of people as exercising "conduct" (p. 789), and states that the use of this power helps to guide to intended and desired outcomes. For influencers, this outcome is to govern other consumers, using this invisible conduct. When Serazio states that consumers are engaged to act without the sense of being acted upon (p.155), in the case of influencer marketing, the goal is to influence one's behavior without having to resort to the top-down style of traditional advertising. When a promotion or advertisement is less immediately recognizable, it tends to be more effective and therefore, powerful.

Contributing to the hidden governance of the cool sell, when influencers participate in brand deals or sponsorships, they may even engage in improper disclosure or no disclosure at all. When it comes to influencer advertising, disclosure is important to notify an audience that an influencer is working with a particular brand or being compensated for an endorsement. Even if that compensation includes a free trip, like the influencers who work for Tarte. According to Ad Standards Canada's *Influencer Marketing Disclosure Guidelines* (2018), being taken on a brand trip should be disclosed to one's followers because "knowing that influencers received access to a private event,

or free experience – sometimes including travel and accommodations – could affect how much weight readers give to influencer's thoughts about the product" (p. 22). Likewise, the Federal Trade Commission's *Endorsement Guidelines: What People are Asking* (2017) document mirrors this sentiment by stating that "knowing that you received free travel and accommodations could affect how much weight your readers give to your thoughts about products, so you should disclose that you have a financial relationship with the company." When it comes to the Tarte brand trips, many influencers rely on using the #TrippinWithTarte hashtag in order to disclose their partnership. However, Ad Standards Canada also cautions how "fabricated disclosure hashtags from brands may not be clear enough about the nature of the material connection," (p. 19) so this may be too ambiguous for consumers to fully understand. However, this ambiguity when it comes to disclosure is what maintains this illusion of an "organic" (Forbes, 2016, p. 79) endorsement, without the direct knowledge of compensation. This authenticity is important for influencers to uphold, and explicit disclosure can disrupt that image.

Many influencers work on Instagram and rely on pictures to do all the talking, making disclosure problematic on a platform that is image-dominated. Abidin's (2016a) research examines social media influencers in Singapore who participate in what is referred to as 'advertorials.' Advertorials, which is the combination of 'advertisement' and 'editorial,' "in the influencer industry are highly personalized, opinion-laden promotions of products/services that influencers appear to personally experience and endorse for a fee" (Abidin, 2016a, p. 3). This is the work that influencers do on a daily basis for brands, and as Abidin has researched, an advertorial can be even a simple product placement selfie uploaded by an influencer onto Instagram. While the idea of a

posting a selfie as an important aspect of someone's job, when it comes to the world of advertorials, Abidin (2016a) says that taking the right selfie can translate into likeability of an influencer, and ultimately more likes and exposure for the product(s) featured (p. 4).

This recalls Erving Goffman's (1959) *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* and his theory of 'idealization,' in which people perform in a way in which "incorporate and exemplify the officially accredited values of society" (p. 53), people desire to be perceived as likeable, and what they think others want them to be. This is especially true for online influencers whose job depends on consumers liking what they post. Abidin (2016a) explains how the phenomenon of the selfie is not just some frivolous thing to these influencers, but in sponsored or promoted Instagram posts, it is their main source of income. Because influencers depend on their selfies being well received, they take a 'cool sell' approach and try to make the addition of product placement natural. Abidin (2016a) states that, "advertorials are thought to be more effective than dispassionate, clinical advertisements since they take the form of a personal narrative and incorporate Influencers' perspectives of having experienced the product or service first-hand" (p. 7). So, consistent with how Serazio (2013) theorizes contemporary advertising as having an invisible 'governance,' when advertising does not seem like advertising, it resonates with consumers so much more.

As well, an important trait of an influencer is likeability and connection with an audience, this can translate to influencers reaching a heightened status online into near celebrity territory. Marwick (2015) starts out by saying that our ideas of the celebrity have changed as digital media has become more prevalent in our society, as Forbes and

Serazio also mention. With this new shift in media over the past couple of decades, social media has created what has been termed the 'micro-celebrity,' a self-presentation technique in which people view themselves as a public persona to be consumed by others, use strategic intimacy to appeal to followers, and regard their audience as fans (Marwick, 2015, p. 1-2). So, as Marwick explains, influencers can be part of the category of micro-celebrity, but a micro-celebrity differs from traditional celebrities in the way they view themselves and their followers. What is specific about the micro-celebrity is that, unlike Forbes' (2016) view of influencers as relatable and organic, to Marwick (2015), "micro-celebrity is a set of practices and a way of thinking about the self, influenced by the infiltration of celebrity and branding rhetoric into day-to-day life, rather than a personal quality" (p. 7). A micro-celebrity embodies the practices of self-promotion and persona, but with the addition of the interactive nature of the internet, it becomes more authentic (Marwick, 2013, p. 114).

Marwick (2015) states that one of the main reasons for the introduction of micro-celebrity is due to the attention economy (p. 7). According to Goldhaber (1997), attention is a scarce resource, and something for which various institutions compete. As Serazio (2013) mentions, under the governance of the 'cool sell' advertisers try to combat this lack of audience attention by using more indirect advertising techniques. Influencers and micro-celebrities create a sort of status around themselves, as well as non-stop content, to win over the attention of many of their 'fans' (Marwick, 2015, p. 14). In Marwick's (2013) book, she calls this 'aspirational construction' in which, "aspirational producers portray themselves in a high-status light, whether as a beautiful fashionista, a celebrity with thousands of fans, or a cutting-edge comedian" (p. 122). This is similar to

Goffman's (1959) idea of 'idealization' (p. 53), and how influencers are portraying themselves to be something that everybody loves, a celebrity. This is most likely why it seems that so many influencers are portraying their lives on Instagram as glamourous and luxurious. Influencers embody the characteristics of traditional celebrities in order to separate themselves from the pack, create a high status around themselves, and grasp the attention of an audience. However, Marwick (2013) further states that the aspirational micro-celebrity nature of many influencers can be antithetical to their trademark authenticity that their digital platform provides them (p. 123). It seems that when it comes to pinning down the characteristics and motivations of an influencer, it is not so simple.

Authenticity in Self-Branding

Indeed, it is impossible to talk about self-branding of online influencers without discussing the concept of authenticity. In order to create a relationship, shared meaning, and in turn profits, brands want to come off as authentic as possible. When it comes to truly reaching consumers, perceived brand authenticity is of the upmost importance. When a brand is seen as authentic, they are viewed as trustworthy and reliable, and therefore, a brand we should support. This concept certainly translates when it is the self that one is branding, particularly in the industry of influencer marketing. As previously stated, brands want to work with influencers due to their pre-existing 'real-person' nature and accumulated following. However, there is debate on whether it is even possible to be authentic when promotion and a paycheck is involved. What is authenticity when it comes to branding, and in turn, the self-branding of influencers?

Banet-Weiser (2012a) argues that authenticity is not as simple as brands just putting on an authentic face in order to seem real and human, but instead that "building a brand is building an affective, authentic relationship with a consumer, one based-just like a relationship between two people-on the accumulation of memories, emotions, personal narratives, and expectations" (p. 8). While profit may still be the bottom line, brands want to build real, authentic relationships with their consumers in order to gain their loyalty for the long run, and make sure that they are making that brand a priority in their life. To say that a commercial brand is automatically inauthentic, and that something non-commercial is automatically authentic, is a binary that Banet-Weiser resists (2012a, p. 10). Authenticity and branding go hand in hand, and in fact, Banet-Weiser says that even authenticity itself is now a brand.

Tarte as a brand wants to build an authentic relationship with their consumers, and the best way to do that is to utilize an already existing relationship influencers already have with their audiences. When Banet-Weiser says that authenticity itself is now a brand, I believe influencers to be that brand. They are seen as truly authentic because they treat consumers as their friends, and brand themselves in a real way. In addition, Banet-Weiser (2012a) explains how branding, specifically self-branding, in the twenty-first century is less about mass marketing, and instead focuses on niche markets (p. 29). She elaborates that in these niche markets it is easier to build authenticity with consumers due to "the increasingly elaborate relationships between producers and consumers through the principle of 'engagement' (p. 38). Influencers, specifically the beauty influencers who work with Tarte, utilize their niche makeup loving audience and are able to engage with consumers, building a more authentic relationship with them. Tarte knows

influencers have a lot of engagement with their audiences and potential consumers, so in the hopes of gaining that engagement as well, they appropriate the relationship influencers have with their audiences. It is much harder for a massive brand to reach that level of engagement than an influencer with a relationship already established.

Given the fact that influencers are real people who have the ability to form real relationships with their audiences, does this mean these relationships are always authentic? Pooley (2010) offers some interesting insight on the topic of 'calculated authenticity.' He states that calculated authenticity is being "instrumental about authenticity" (p. 79), where being one's 'authentic' self becomes important when marketing and promotion are concerned. Brands like Tarte pick and choose when authenticity serves them and when it does not, based on if it will help them connect with consumers. This translates into the world of self-branding where it is an influencer's job to exhibit an authentic persona, even if that authenticity is deliberate. Because of this, calculated authenticity cannot be considered real authenticity. However, consumers tend not to know the difference, so it is often a successful marketing strategy. While calculated authenticity can be immensely helpful for successful self-branding, it comes out of what Pooley calls an "authenticity bind" (p. 82), in which there is a dilemma between wanting to find one's true self and wanting to promote one's self in a favourable way. It is likely that many online influencers experience this authenticity bind in that they practice calculated authenticity as part of their brand but are most likely left with a longing to be just a person, beyond the brand.

With this in mind, is authenticity to brands and influencers not important? Perhaps not, in fact, coming off as authentic to an audience is actually important for

many brands, so much so that the authentic self and the promotional self may become one. This idea appears in Banet-Weiser's (2012a) work as well, as she states that "within contemporary brand culture, the separation between the authentic self and the commodity self not only is more blurred, but this blurring is more expected and tolerated" (p. 13). However, Banet-Weiser's claim is dissimilar to Pooley's in that there is no distinction between the authentic self and the promotional self, but instead, the two have blurred together to become indistinguishable. Like Pooley (2010), Banet-Weiser (2012a) suggests that when it comes to self-branding, there is a purpose to being perceived as authentic. To reiterate, she says that people are drawn to authenticity when it comes to branding because it "is perceived as *not* commercial" (p. 10), and that the commercial world can be, in her words, "dehumanizing" (p. 11). It is true that the use of calculated authenticity amongst those who work in self-branding is meant to give a human face to the world of marketing and advertising, so much so, that authenticity becomes the brand (Banet-Weiser, 2012a, p. 14), as specified. By authenticity being the new brand, marketers are looking at influencers to be the bridge between brands and consumers.

Bruhn, Fritz, and Schoenmueller (2017) discuss that consumers not only strongly desire authenticity in their brands but demand it as well. This is in line with Banet-Weiser (2012a) when she examines how the consumer is tired of the blatant brand commercialization, however, she suggests that this behavior is tolerated amongst consumers, while Bruhn, Fritz, and Schoenmueller suggest that it is not. They mention that an important aspect of brand authenticity and connection to the consumer is "the consumers' self-identification with the brand and employees/individuals representing the brand" (p. 328), and that they are drawn to brands when they seem authentic and real

because it makes consumers feel comfortable and "something to rely on that offers them continuity" (p. 325). We automatically feel more comfortable and connected to a brand when we associate with a brand's values and interests and is why the self-branding of influencers is successful. When it is a person being branded, rather than a commercial company, it is a much more effective way to reel a consumer in and maintain their attention and trust. Bruhn, Fritz & Schoenmueller (2017) reference Aeker at al. (2004) who say that brand authenticity involves "reliability, sincerity, naturalness and steadiness" (p. 334), and that these qualities influence the "perceived quality of customer-brand relationships" (p. 334). As well, they reiterate Beverland and Farelly (2010) who say that these qualities in authentic brands strengthen one's connection to themselves and reinforce self-identity (p. 334). So not only does a personal connection with a brand secure authenticity with the consumer, but it also helps to strengthen the consumer's own identity, which only furthers a brand's perceived authenticity.

When influencers and brands execute calculated authenticity in their work in order to build that relationship with their audience, it could be understood as a performance. When it comes to theories of self-presentation and performance, Goffman's work is once again foundational. Goffman (1959) states that we, in life, are all performers and that we can either believe in the act that we present to others, or that we might not be convinced by the performance that we give (p. 47). This is itself is another sort of authenticity bind, however, Goffman implies that what matters is that the audience believes the performance that we portray in our everyday life. He brings two important concepts to light. One being reality and contrivance, in which he makes the distinction between "real and contrived performers" (p. 56), which is that while performers have the

ability to be real, our "appearances could still be managed" and therefore, not necessarily sincere (p. 58). Even though to Goffman we are all performers in life, some performances are real, and some are put on for show. This could be due to his previously mentioned concept of idealization. When it comes to self-branding, it is ideal to present oneself in a way that will be accepted by society, even if that means giving a contrived performance.

The idea of performativity may seem contradictory to theorists like Bruhn, Fritz & Schoenmueller (2017) and Banet-Weiser (2012a) who suggest that being seen as a real human, unscripted, is the key to perceived authenticity. Similarly, Serazio (2013) also conveys the idea of "improv" and the authenticity in being less deliberate and more flexible with a performance (p. 116). However, as Banet-Weiser (2012a) mentions, being human is an important value to society when it comes to marketing, so influencers make sure to come off as authentically human as possible, even if that means acting a particular way that may be an exaggeration to their true selves. The lines between authenticity and commodity are truly blurred do to this performativity, to a point where perhaps even the influencers do not know who their true self is any more. Not only this, but it can be exhausting for influencers to constantly have to seem real to their audiences, yet also societally pleasing, especially when they are relying on brands to make a living wage and support themselves.

Speaking of performativity, influencer marketing falls under Serazio's (2013) cool sell strategy, which often relies on performativity, as considered, in a calculated way. In the same way, Forbes (2016) mentions, influencers are meant to come off as organic, and as Banet-Weiser (2012a) states, what is perceived as authentic, is "perceived as not commercial" (p. 10). Since influencers are largely perceived by consumers as

authentic, and because the marker of Serazio's 'cool sell' is that you do not know you are being sold to, these influencers provide an ideal way to market products for brands due to the lack of recognized commercialization, according to Banet-Weiser. With influencers putting on authentic personas, you feel like you are watching or viewing a friend and someone you can relate to, rather than a human advertisement. This is due to the fact that, unlike traditional advertising, influencers often times use improvisation, as opposed to scripted messages (Serazio, 2013, p. 116). This gives their sales message a "much more spontaneous, organic, and 'authentic'" (p. 116) feel, which will ultimately be more successful in the long run. The idea of improvisation certainly suggests ties to Goffman's ideas of performativity, although he would most likely propose influencers curate their personas with a bit of scripting, unlike Bruhn, Fritz & Schoenmueller (2017), and Banet-Weiser (2012a), who align with Serazio's ideas of improvisation as authenticity.

As well, "self-branding does not merely involve self-presentation but is a layered process of judging, assessment, and valuation taking place in a media economy of visibility" (Banet-Weiser, 2012a, p. 87). With a large following scrutinizing their every move, influencers tend to be judged for just about everything, especially engaging in sponsored content, as this can discredit the authentic image that draws in an audience. This makes the idea of improvisation more of a risk, as influencers tend to adjust how their presentation to appear favourable.

On the topic of presentation, specifically self-presentation, Hearn (2017) introduces the concept of "affective capitalism" (p. 63), which is "run on the fuel of individual feeling and self-expression taking place online; self-presentation is now a crucial part of the economic infrastructure" (p. 63). With the introduction of social media

influencers, the idea of selling one's self has become huge in the market. When one is self-branding, they are not only selling themselves, but their "desires, emotions, and forms of expressivity" (Hearn, 2017, p. 63). What could possibly be more authentic to an audience than a real person, which is exactly what online influencers are, at least to the naked eye. To consumers, they are real people, with real feelings, and real emotions, so people start relating to influencers and become less skeptical of any selling techniques. This is especially true in the 'sharing economy' we are a part of in this digital environment. Everything is shared to our followers, and if you are an influencer, your whole life is shared to your audience, or at least what Goffman (1959) proposes: what you choose to present. Hearn's other work (2008) conveys that "indeed, the production of self must always involve some form of labour in order to create a public persona that might be of practical or relational use" (p. 213), and therefore the work that goes into being an influencer and sharing your life with your followers is in order to build a reputation or persona, or using Goffman's (1959) theater analogies, a character to which consumers can look up.

Hearn (2008) does mention however, that "the lines between private identity and public persona, corporate sponsor and individual producer, user and consumer are hopelessly blurred" (p. 212). In a similar fashion to Banet-Weiser (2012a), when she states that the authentic and commodity selves are blurred, it seems that when one begins to brand themselves, as many influencers do, the self can be lost amongst the persona they portray to their followers, also similar to Pooley's (2010) 'authenticity bind.' This could be due to the fact that YouTubers and influencers, or as Banet-Weiser calls them 'lifecasters' (2012a, p. 58), tend to share every aspect of their lives, or what they want

you to see anyway. They are constantly sharing their lives with their audience in order to build a sense of trust and create a more intimate relationship. For the self-branded worker, "self-expression is a business" (Banet-Weiser, 2012a, p. 74) and being constantly visible helps them build their brand. We are inclined to trust these influencers which we have built relationships, and due to the emotions and feelings put forth through Hearn's 'affective capitalism,' we are inclined to believe them. Banet-Weiser (2012a) goes on to say that "we want to believe-indeed, I argue that we need to believe-that there are spaces outside of mere consumer culture, something above the reductiveness of profit margins, the crassness of capital exchange" (Banet-Weiser, 2012a, p. 5). We as consumers want to believe that not only our brands, but influencers we follow as well genuinely want us to know the best advice, products, or whatever they're promoting, money, free product, or trips aside.

In this way, Cunningham and Craig (2017) say that platforms like YouTube, "differ sharply from established film and television, and are constituted from intrinsically interactive audience-centricity and appeals to authenticity and community in a commercializing space – 'social media entertainment'" (p. 72). For creators and influencers, social media websites like YouTube and Instagram help foster more audience connection and authentic relationships between influencers and audience. As well, these platforms feel less "dehumanizing" as Banet Weiser (2012a) states, while still being commercialized. Cunningham & Craig (2017) also agree with Banet-Weiser (2012a) that the equating commercial with inauthenticity, and the non-commercial with authenticity, as 'too simple" (p. 73), and that when it comes to those who work in social media entertainment, "authenticity is not established in a monadic relationship, but a dialogic

relationship with the fan base of the creator" (Cunningham & Craig, 2017, p. 74), using "relational" and "affective" labour (p. 74). Consequently, in opposition to the theories of Pooley (2010) or Hearn (2008), the relationship influencers and consumers create can be truly authentic and important to the creator. This agrees with Banet-Weiser's (2012a) statement that we do not want to believe that influencers are just in it for the money, but that they actually enjoy the work they do beyond the monetization. However, Cunningham & Craig make the claim that the creator and brand relationship is actually secondary to the creator and follower relationship, and that it is the brands that are more interested in commodification than the creators, who are more concerned with building an authentic relationship with followers.

Since influencers engage in self-branding in order to market themselves, and therefore, be able to work for brands, authenticity, or at least perceived authenticity with their audience, is vital. Whether this means presenting one's self in a desirable way to an audience, inhabiting a persona that audiences can connect with, or sharing one's whole life with their followers, the ability to portray authenticity is ultimately what sets influencers apart in the advertising industry. So, in the end, influencers not only represent but provide authenticity for a brand like Tarte, all in the hopes that this calculated authenticity will resonate with consumers and guide them towards the brand.

The Hidden and Precarious Labour of Influencers

While many might dismiss the work that influencers do as not culturally significant, or as something that is just all fun and games, there is a lot of hard work that goes into every aspect of being an influencer. Moreover, the type of work influencers do

is often hidden, immaterial, and precarious, meaning it is often underappreciated and uncertain. We know that influencers on any platform are in the business of working for brands, but more importantly they are working for themselves, or should I say, creating themselves as work. However, every selfie, video, and comment are examples of influencers working hard to represent themselves as a brand, and the brands that they work with, in the best possible light that they can.

Foremost, a shift to a world of immaterial labour and self-branding as one's career is made possible by the neoliberal environment in which we currently live. Neoliberalism is premised on a free market, free trade, deregulation and privatization of services, and individualism amongst citizens. Mainly, it is about liberation from as much government control as possible, and a shift toward individual responsibility. Hearn (2012) states that neoliberalism "proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong property rights, free markets and free trade" (p. 25-26). People are able to work for themselves and participate in self-branding thanks to this strong sense of individual freedom that neoliberalism provides. For influencers, Hearn (2012) argues that this neoliberal environment provides a place for them to thrive as "individual entrepreneurs" (p. 11) and create "a shift from a working self to the self as work" (p. 27). This is in direct contrast to the post-war days of Fordist production and assembly lines, where according to Slater (1997), 'organized labour' (p. 12) was king, and workers were to follow orders from higher ups as well as participate in standardized and controlled practices in order to create mass quantities of goods (p. 13). This era very much embodied Hearn's ideas of the working self as opposed to the self as work.

Due to this recent neoliberal shift, when it comes to the emergence of working on social media the idea of what constitutes as labour has also changed. Much of what influencers and other creators produce is what is considered 'immaterial labour,' in that it does not produce any sort of physical product. This is, again, in stark contrast to the abundance of factory assembly lines which used to rule the labour force, in which workers would spend their energy producing material items such as cars. Hardt (1999) describes immaterial labour as "labor that produces an immaterial good, such as a service, knowledge, or communication" (p. 94). The product the immaterial labourers produce is invisible yet something that is valuable and influential to our society. This is becoming the type of labour seen in creative industries such as digital technologies. Dyer-Witherford (2001) suggests that it was not always a respected form of labour, but that capital still depends on immaterial labourers as "global value subjects" who create surplus value for the economy (p. 164). I think that the early perception of immaterial labour is changing now, with many people in the creative industry becoming 'prosumers,' in which they are engaging in both consumption and production of immaterial content, especially online. However, this early perception of immaterial labour could be a reason why influencers are creating affiliations and sponsorships with big brands, such as Tarte, as a possible way to legitimize their labour.

The concept of invisible and unappreciated labour is not new to the work of influencers and creatives, however. Dyer-Witherford (1999) considers Mariarosa Dalla Costa and Selma James' autonomist Marxist analysis on the unacknowledged and unwaged work of women. They argue that "within the social factory, the reproduction of labor power occupied a crucial but unacknowledged role" (p. 67). By reproductive

labour, they mean all of the work that goes into making sure the traditional male breadwinner is ready to put in his labour for the day. This includes tasks like "child-bearing, child-raising, cooking, shopping, education, cleaning, caring for the sick, emotional substance," all the undertakings typically thought of as "housework" (Dyer-Witherford, 1999, p. 67). Not only was the vital labour of hidden, but also unwaged. While the work of influencers and creatives is not always unwaged, it is often hidden, even though, an important form of work.

It is also important to note, that like Costa and James mention, this hidden reproductive labour was overwhelmingly performed by women, which is also not unlike much of influencer marketing. As communicated, modern-day influencer marketing was revolutionized by groups of women in the days of word-of-mouth sales of Tupperware and Avon (Serazio, 2013, p. 98). It is a perceived trust (p. 100) that possessed that made word-of mouth marketing so successful and paved the way for influencers now. While there are many male influencers in the beauty community, the majority are still women. This could be due to the idea that women provide more assurance to consumers, or just the nature of the beauty industry, and how it is so targeted towards the beauty of women and reaching that ultimate standard of glamour. As well, it could be that historically, the cosmetic industry gave women a place in the market. Banet-Weiser (2012b) brings up Kathy Peiss' work on cosmetic marketing, and how for much of history this type of advertising was a way to "establish cultural legitimacy" (p. 47) for women, and a place for them in the market that was exclusively theirs. I believe this to still be the case for the beauty industry today, as the beauty industry seems to be a safe space for many creative women. So, I do not think that it is a coincidence that much of the labour of influencers is

hidden, and that the bulk of influencers happen to be women, especially with such history. The hidden and undervalued work that women have been doing has helped society's powerful for decades, and the self-branding that the mainly female influencers are doing for Tarte is no exception.

As outlined, self-branding is a form of immaterial labour, and for influencers the most important form. Through this, the self is working to produce something that is not tangible, and instead creates an invisible sort of commodity, such as knowledge of communication like Hardt (1999) mentions. For Hearn (2012), immaterial labour is described as relational to self-branding because "it demands that the worker put his or her own life experience, communicative competency, and sense of self into the job" (p. 26). It is, therefore, only natural that when you are putting so much of yourself into immaterial work that eventually oneself could become the commodity. However, for influencers it is not that simple, as there is a lot of time, energy and hard work that goes into the creation and maintenance of branding oneself. Banet-Weiser (2012a) states that there is a considerable difference between self-branding and self-commodification. She considers a Marxist approach and mentions that, traditionally, commodification is strictly about capital and the human labour involved in creating commodities is largely hidden from consumers. Whereas is in branding, specifically self-branding, the labour of the individual is an important element, and one that is made apparent to the audience. In this approach, commodification traditionally focuses on a product being produced, like a cell phone, where human labour behind the production is easily hid; but in self-branding when the product being produced is a person, the human labour behind it is impossible to hide.

While I do agree with Banet-Weiser, there is an important distinction between commodification of oneself and branding of oneself, I do not necessarily think that all self-branded individuals expose the labour that goes into their work. Particularly, the influencers working with Tarte present themselves as effortless, happy, natural, and relaxed in their Instagram posts during these sponsored brand trips. However, there is a lot of hidden labour that goes into making sure their posts are just right. We as consumers do not see the hair and make-up, editing, photoshopping, photo capturing, lighting, scheduling, and more that goes into making sure influencers are representing themselves and Tarte as a brand accurately and positively. What may seem like an 'authentic' vacation photo had much thought and hard work put into it. So, in at least the case of Instagram influencers, when it comes to their self-branding, the immaterial labour that they engage in is often hidden from us as consumers in order to create a more 'authentic' yet aesthetically pleasing image.

While the perception of influencers as authentic people is just another part of the job that people do not see, it can be potentially problematic when the everyday consumer wants to emulate influencers without realizing the work that goes on behind the scenes. Banet-Weiser argues that self-branding is now seen as "a goal to strive for" (2012a, p. 54), however, when the amount of actual labour in self-branding is hidden, like in the case of Instagram influencers, a follower may see the job as easy, or even discredit the work that influencers do, as considered by Dyer-Witherford (2001). Not to mention, influencers have to constantly keep up the appearance of their self-brand, which is another added layer of work. So, while hidden, immaterial labour may be a necessary and legitimate form of labour in the online sphere of social media, it does not mean that is

necessarily less difficult than material forms of labour.

One of the most challenging parts of being a self-branded immaterial labourer is the element of precarity. In Hardt and Negri's (2009) *Commonwealth*, they introduce the concept of precarious labour, an inconsistent and uncertain form of labour which they deem "a special kind of poverty, a temporal poverty" (p. 147). Now, while I may not agree that precarious labour is necessarily a form of poverty, it can definitely be taxing on the working, especially when work, as Hardt and Negri explain, is often temporary. Slightly less ominous than Hardt and Negri, Duffy and Wissinger (2017) discuss this sort of precarious labour that creative workers and influencers go through on a daily basis. They maintain that the environment in which influencers work is marked by instability, high standards, entrepreneurial expectations, risk, and discrimination (2017, p. 4653). DePeuter (2011) suggests that people working in the creative field, such as Instagrammers, vloggers, bloggers, etc. fit into a sub category of precarious labour called the "nonstandard cognitive worker," in which the worker "might have a prestigious occupation but labors under classic precarious conditions" (p. 420). These labourers might participate in exciting and glamourous work, as many influencers do, yet still go from contract to contract. These theorists are not claiming, as Hardt and Negri do, that these influencers are in mental poverty with their jobs, but rather that work is unpredictable, which for anyone seeking employment, can be difficult and stressful.

While being an influencer could possibly be a fun and exciting line of work, it can also be quite taxing to break into. Hearn (2012) also considers how work that comes along with being a self-branded influencer can often be "precarious and unstable" (p. 26), and that job security is uncertain, and there is a potential lack of comfortability and

benefits that traditional jobs have. Banet-Weiser (2012a) mentions that this is the case for many street artists, as they rely solely on their own creativity and get little support from the government (p. 117). This is absolutely the case with any sort of self-branded individual, including Instagram influencers. She explains that "the romantic ideal of 'living on the edge' becomes less appealing when trying to pay the bills" (p. 119).

Astra Taylor also assesses the precarity of what she calls "cultural work" (2014, p. 41). She suggests that, much like Banet-Weiser claims, the work that many artists, and self-branded individuals participate in is not necessarily supported in a "market-based society" (p. 50). Despite this newfound neoliberal freedom, she claims that creative labour should not be something necessarily romanticized, in the same sentiment as Banet-Weiser. As well, like Dyer-Witherford (2001), Taylor states that immaterial or cultural work may not be seen as legitimate labour in the eyes of many. The reason for this could be the strict departure from manual labour, with self-branded work often involving "adaptability, mobility, and risk," as well as "temporary contracts and freelance instability" (Taylor, 2014, p. 56). Taylor holds a similar sentiment as Hardt and Negri (2009), Duffy and Wissinger (2017), and Banet-Weiser (2012b), that in this era of immaterial, or cultural work, there is a double-edged sword of flexibility and exciting change of environments, but also the constant need be finding work for yourself. However, Taylor adds that because of this, it is easier for society take advantage of these types of workers by creating and environment of "low wages and job insecurity" (p. 59). In this market-based society, Taylor mentions that work that is not always "immediately or immensely profitable" is often discounted, even though it is valuable and necessary (p. 59). In addition, Taylor uses thoughts from musician Marc Ribot when discussing how

many artists do not earn typical steady wages and are constantly moving from different gigs and projects to make a living, often in different places. According to Ribot, because of this "they don't recognize the standard breakdowns of boss and worker" and "hence they are not able to organize and advocate for their rights" (Taylor, 2014, p. 61). Although Taylor states that Ribot is specifically discussing artists here, I believe this type of instability and gig work also reflects that of modern-day social media influencers.

Not only is work for immaterial labourers uncertain and unstable, but also multi-faceted and complex. Although the beauty influencer industry in particular might seem glamourous, it is also marked by precarity, insecurity, and impossible standards, much like any other type of immaterial labour. Under this precarious and immaterial labour umbrella these influencers work in, Duffy & Wissinger (2017) note several forms of labour they participate in including "emotional labor, self-branding labor, and an always-on mode of entrepreneurial labor, all of which function as prerequisites for attaining these coveted proto-careers" (p. 4653-4654), and in addition to this, particularly influencers in the beauty community participate in what they call "glamour labour" (p. 4654). Glamour labour is essentially the demand to always look your best and keep up your appearance in order to still remain a celebrated employee in the beauty industry (p. 4654). This type of labour is especially prominent in the cosmetics industry due to the glamourous, luxurious, and largely feminine nature of the work. For women in the beauty influencer industry, and in general, there are impossibly high societal standards of beauty that there is pressure to achieve. There seems to be one type of body, hair and makeup style, and even skin tone that is considered ideal, and the influencers that work for Tarte largely fit into this. Particularly, women's bodies have been equated with their worth, and the workplace

is no different. Belisle (2018) examines how during the 1930s Canada's largest department store, Eaton's, used to exploit female employee's bodies through beauty contests and fashion shows in order to sell products (p. 46). Women were judged on their appearance not only by the public but also by their employers (p. 46). Belisle (2018) states that employers "promulgated the notion that women's success depended on attire and appearance" (p. 46), which is not a standard male employees were held to. There seems to be a similar expectations in the beauty community that women's beauty and women's bodies are held at a much higher standard, and that their ability to sell and maintain employment is completely dependent on it.

In addition, influencer's "reliance on sponsorships and appearance fees makes work intermittent and unpredictable; and they depend on the whims of a mercurial fan base as they vie to stay visible and relevant" (Duffy & Wissinger, 2017, p. 4655-4656). Because these workers rely so heavily on brands and audiences in order to make a living, this is why the labour of creating a solid public persona, as Hearn (2008) suggests, is so important to maintaining a strong career as an influencer. Especially if that persona is a one that is seemingly effortless.

Speaking of staying "visible and relevant," Abidin (2016b), puts forth the concept of 'visibility labour,' which is the work that is done to create a self-presentation in order to be noticed and taken interest in by prospective employers, press or audiences. In the context of Instagram influencers, visibility labour is the work put in to looking favorable to those who are potentially employing you, aka, brands. Influencers want to make themselves look good so brands will want to work with them in the future, so this type of labour is all about self-presentation. This is an important element of the work that

influencers do, because without proper visibility from important employers, work gets more and more precarious.

This concept of visibility labour is very similar to Corrigan and Kuehn's (2013) concept of 'hope labour,' defined as "un- or under-compensated work carried out in the present, often for experience or exposure, in the hope that future employment opportunities may follow" (p. 10). While Instagram influencers may or may not be un- or under compensated, this concept is still in line with Abidin's (2016b) concept of visibility labour in that workers want to grab the attention of brands in order to secure future employment, especially in the precarious work environment that is the creative field. This could be the case for many smaller Instagrammers who, when given an opportunity to go on a sponsored brand trip, may gain exposure and therefore, be given more opportunities to work with the brand, or other brands in the future. However, recognizing the case of the concept of hope labour, according to Corrigan and Kuehn, it is more about chasing a dream that they may never become a reality. The authors say that "when we hope, it is for outcomes that have a high degree of uncertainty" (p. 17), and that hope labour comes with it an amount of risk that workers feel is justified due to personal fulfillment (p. 19). In the hopes to become visible and recognized for their work, however, Corrigan & Kuehn argue that "hope labour thus contributes, in part, to the precarity of contemporary work" (p. 20). Employers will take advantage of worker's hopes of future employment, and like Taylor (2014) stated, potentially leave labourers with unfair wages and job insecurity.

Neoliberalism has lent itself to the work of the individual self-brand, but also leaves influencers out in the dust. With no government assistance and a precarious

schedule of jobs, it can be quite a risky profession in which to embark. By the same

token, the labour these influencers put into their self-brand to mask the instability can be

more intensive than the average consumer might realize.

Brands and Consumers Creating an Experience through Brand Management

With all the hard-work that influencers engage in, they are doing it to represent

themselves and the brands they work exactly how intended. Brands are careful about their

image because they know how powerful they are in our culture. Arvidsson (2006)

theorizes how brands embody the logic that factories possessed in the past (preface).

Previously a more material form of labour was prioritized, and the value of products

made in a factory was based on how much it was worth as a commodity. However,

around the 1980s, brands started emerging in a way that created a value that wasn't

necessarily capital. Arvidsson states that "brands now became something of an

omnipresent tool by means of which identity, social relations and shared experiences

could be constructed" (p. 3). So, the value stemming from brands was immaterial in

nature, and resulted in a shared community between consumer and brand, in which

brands became important parts of our everyday lives.

Importantly, the value of brands is created by consumers through immaterial

labour resulting in surplus value (Arvidsson, 2006, p. 7). A brand is nothing without

consumers making them a part of every part of their lives, including their own identity.

Through consumption, we as the public are constantly working to build up these brands

and take them to an iconic status (Arvidsson 2006, p. 7). Consumers' labour of

consumption actually becomes production of surplus value for these brands, or a

productive consumption, which is essential for their capital gain. Not only is value created for these brands by consumers, but specifically, consumers create "ethical surplus" (Arvidsson, 2006, p. 10) value. Arvidsson argues that "ethical surplus consists in a social relation, a shared meaning, or a sense of belonging that was not there before" (p. 10), it is essentially a special feeling that is created as aura around the brand, not unlike Hearn's (2017) "affective capitalism" (p. 63), in which a person is selling their feelings, emotions, and desires to their audience (p. 63), which helps foster this shared meaning and belonging.

This ethical surplus is so important for the survival of a brand that brand managers strategically ensure that this ethical surplus is being created. Arvidsson (2006) describes brand management as "a variety of techniques that all aim at controlling, pre-structuring and monitoring what people do with brands, so that what these practices do adds to its value. It's about ensuring that the means of consumption effectively becomes the means of production; that ethical surplus that consumers produce also becomes a source of surplus value" (p. 82). Brand management makes sure that consumers produce that ethical surplus value through consumption, and that in turn creates profits for the brand. They also work to make sure consumers "generate the right kind of attention" for the brand in a way that isn't immediately obvious to consumers (p. 7-8). It is important for this brand management to be discrete so that the value a brand generates feels authentic to consumers, and not forced.

If this sounds familiar, it is because this is exactly the work that influencers do for brands on a daily basis. I would argue that influencers are the brand managers of the current era, in so much that their management is twofold: they are managing the

relationship between the consumer and the brand, and they are managing themselves in relation to consumers as well. Not only do they have to make sure that consumers are creating this ethical surplus value for the brand, but they also have to create it themselves for their own brand while making sure they are representing the brand effectively. In a way, these influencers are also consumers, as they are meant to be portrayed as the average person to their audience. They work together with brands in what Banet-Weiser (2012a) calls "consumer co-production" (p. 72) to create a shared meaning and special feeling that attaches to the brand, and one that the general audience will want to distribute. For the sake of my argument, we will equate and influencer with a consumer as generating the same value. Although influencers may not be consuming products with their own money, and perhaps are given them for free, they are still using and promoting them. Influencers accompanying Tarte on the #TrippinWithTarte brands trip are working hard behind the scenes to build the value of Tarte as a natural, fun, and trendy brand that every consumer can use when you are out on the go. They do this by displaying their products by beautiful beaches and pool sides, building this kind of shared meaning of Tarte as a beachy brand, while still being glamourous and put together.

Because it is important for brands and consumers to work together to create this ethical surplus and shared meaning around the brand, brands can quickly exploit this "information capital" (Arvidsson, 2006, p. 9) that consumers, or influencers, are creating. We already know that consumption and promotion is producing a value for brands, but as well, "for capital, brands are a means of appropriation" (Arvidsson, 2006, p. 94), and the immaterial labour that consumers and producers engage in is being appropriated by brands for capital gain. There seems to be a blurring of work and leisure when it comes to

the work that consumers do, and especially the work that is done by the influencers on Tarte's brand trip. However, make no mistake, it is still work that they, and we as consumers, are engaging in without being compensated accordingly. Our efforts create massive amounts of profits for these brands, while the consumer only gets a shared feeling, community and experience out of it. The sheer amount of money made due to the labour put in and the return on investment does not seem balanced. This is even the case with influencers, Tarte uses these trips as a way to cover up the fact that they are not providing monetary compensation for most of these (predominantly young women) influencers to work tirelessly for them during the whole brand trip. Influencers are constantly uploading to multiple platforms, and often multiple times a day. They are managing their look and their brand, and in the end, probably do not even realize they are being exploited while looking at a beautiful sunset. However, what influencers and consumers should be compensated for is doing the work for brands and creating "intellectual capital" (Arvidsson, 2006, p. 134), however to Arvidsson this immaterial capital is arbitrary and is hard to measure the true value of (p. 134).

Bottom line, brands need consumers, and more recently, influencers to build their brand, create a shared meaning and community, and make them money. The least they could do is share the wealth.

In Summary

The work of these many theorists is no doubt fundamental to my research project, and instrumental in informing research on my chosen topic area. It is especially impressive how many of these theorists use each other's work to build on to their own

and are inspiring each other to further this research topic of influencer marketing in the world of academia.

Amongst these accomplished theorists, I believe my work fits in because I too want to understand the complex world of influencer marketing more thoroughly, especially since it is so economically pervasive in our social media driven society. Influencers are the new print advertisement in the market, and with a human as an ad, all sorts of complicated issues can arise, such as labour issues, and ideas of authenticity or persona. Particularly for Instagram influencers working on the #TrippinWithTarte brand trip, they often do not show all hard work that goes into marketing for these brands and creating a feeling that consumers will resonate with. They do this all while trying to maintain their authenticity they have worked hard to build with their audience, which is no easy feat. Because of this, I believe it is important to situate myself amongst other theorists who also feel as strongly as I do that this is an important topic that deserves and requires attention.

I believe that while my research will be informed heavily by the academic works listed in this review, there are parts of my work that will uniquely contribute to the literature, in order keep up with the ever-growing industry of influencer marketing. Specifically, the case study I will be using, #TrippinWithTarte, is a sponsored influencer brand trip, something that is not mentioned in any published works but is unique because it involves exchanging experiences, not payment, for promotion. Sponsored brand trips are a relatively new advertising tactic that has been taking over social media, and because of this, there is little to no academic research being done on the subject.

As a result, with my research I not only hope to fulfill my personal interests but shed light on this particular topic area that is growing into a phenomenon in the influencer marketing industry. While I feel like sponsored brand trips can be considered an "advertorial" (Abidin, 2016a, p. 3), the added element of a luxury vacation inserts more glamour, exclusivity, and celebrity status to the life of an influencer. I also plan to use elements of various different types of precarious labour, informed by the above theorists, to fully encapsulate how facets of labour interacts with the profession of the Instagram influencer. With a breadth of knowledge on the topic at hand, my research will encompass all of the important work stated throughout this literature review, and hopefully go beyond it to fill in any gaps that have not yet been established in academia.

ANALYSIS OF CASE STUDY

Tarte's sponsored brand trip, #TrippinWithTarte, is as much an event for influencers as it is an advertisement of Tarte and their products for their followers. The use of social media, specifically Instagram, by a selection of beauty influencers in order to promote a glamourous image of themselves and the brand is essential, and indeed required, for the trip's success as a marketing device.

Over the course of two years, I have collected over 100 Instagram screen shots from a variety of influencers who were invited on Tarte's sponsored brand trips between 2016 and 2018. These posts were found either through influencers I was already following or searching through the #Trippinwithtarte hashtag. These screenshots are what I have chosen to use as my primary resource as Instagram is the most common media

platform that those working with Tarte will use to promote themselves, the brand, and the trip as a whole.

Upon examination of the Instagram pictures posted by influencers on the Trippin' with Tarte trips, I noticed that many reoccurring themes appear. There are several posts I have collected that encapsulate each of the proposed themes, however, the examples are those I feel best represent and illustrate that particular topic. Many of the following trends that will be discussed overlap among the posts and, themes throughout highlight the authentic nature of influencers, as well as the exciting lives they portray. In addition to what is continually seen throughout these posts, there are also many aspects that are not shown in creating the ideal destination image.

Seemingly Candid Beach/Resort Shots

A large majority of the Instagram posts put out by influencers on Tarte's sponsored trips have a candid nature to them, almost as if they are just living in the moment and did not happen to notice a camera pointing right at them. This is evident in influencer's posing, body language, and facial expressions accompanied by a beach or resort background that gives the image a spontaneous look. However, due to the nature of beauty influencers and the work that they do, it is apparent that there is work behind creating the most natural looking image possible. The reason that many influencers make sure their Trippin' With Tarte posts come off as candid is because posed pictures can look too much like a forced promotion of the brand. Influencer's 'authentic' looking shots embody Serazio's "cool sell" (2013, p. 3) in that is not meant to look like

advertising (p. 3), but instead a picture encapsulating the beautiful beaches and resorts, with a subtle nod to Tarte and the brand trip.

An example of a seemingly candid looking beach shot posted during the 2016 Bora Bora Tarte brand trip is by beauty influencer Samantha Ravendahl, who is currently at 2.1 million Instagram followers. In her post from October 16th, 2016 (Figure A), you can see Samantha in the beautiful crystal Bora Bora waters, her back facing away from the camera and looking over her shoulder. She is holding a buoy, strategically placed on her backside, with the words '#TrippinWithTarte' and 'Bora Bora 2016' printed on it and facing the view of the camera. The posing in this photo, and even the open-mouth facial expression on Samantha's face, give the impression of an image that was taking in the moment. This photo has certainly been preplanned, yet, made to look candid. The location for the shot has a perfect view of the island, and there is even boats visible behind Samantha. In the foreground, the back of her body is facing away from the camera, yet her face is still slightly visible, yet not looking directly at the lens. As well, the #TrippinWithTarte buoy is placed deliberately so that the wording is visible to the viewer yet is still slightly off skew and not too staged looking.

This is very much a performance on the part of influencers like Samantha, as Goffman (1959) conveys. This deliberate authenticity is much more of a "contrived performance" (p. 56) in that influencers are presenting as themselves, but their appearances are being managed and adjusted (p. 58). In this case, Samantha is managing her appearance to look aesthetically attractive to her followers, but also not overly posed to the point where it no longer appears as a "cool sell." The candid nature of these photos "pulls" (Serazio, 2013, p. 3) the viewer in, rather than "pushing" (p. 3) a message onto

them. Further, since a more authentic looking candid beach photo blends in with many probably already existing on consumer's feeds, it is pull media in that it is less interruptive than a traditional advertisement (p. 3) and should feel like the consumer is coming upon it serendipitously (p. 2).

Another case of a seemingly natural and candid Instagram image is from influencer and make-up artist Patrick Starr, who currently has 4.7 million followers on Instagram. In his post on October 21, 2016 (Figure B) from the same Bora Bora trip with Tarte, you can see him standing along the beach with the island in the background. In the picture, he seems to be in mid pose, holding a piece of his clothing that is blowing in the wind. He is facing the camera, however, similarly to Samantha Ravendahl's post (Figure A) he has his mouth slightly open and is not smiling. Patrick's body language and facial expression indicates that although this image is most likely planned and posed, it is meant to look natural and in the moment. Patrick even alludes to this in the caption where he writes "I was holding this pose for 10 minutes…" This just further proves how a seemingly candid Instagram image can come off as more authentic to an audience, as well as a rare peak into small portion of the labour behind self-branding. Banet-Weiser (2012a) echoes this when she says that what is perceived as authentic is "perceived as not commercial" (p. 10), and when influencers adopt a more authentic and candid look to their pictures, it deflects form the commercial nature of the post.

Forbes (2016) mentions that for influencers, the goal is to come off as organic as possible to their audience (p. 79), so often the images they post will be them living their everyday life, or what looks like their everyday life. This is the case for health and wellness influencer Melissa Aaronsson, who has 19.4 thousand followers on Instagram.

During the 2018 Tarte trip to Costa Rica, she posted an image (Figure C) to Instagram of her at the resort the influencers were staying at, sitting on a lounger and eating some fruit. It is important to note, that although eating is an everyday activity, this photo is staged in a way that is flattering to Melissa. She is not facing the camera, but it is clear that her hair is done, and outfit has been selected for the picture. As well, the positioning of the image shows not only Melissa eating some fruit, but also the gorgeous view of Costa Rica in the background. This picture was taken to look like someone just caught Melissa eating at the resort, but in the words of Goffman (1959), is very much a performance and not complete reality.

Influencers want to show their audiences their everyday lives, but in a way that has been "managed" (Goffman, 1959, p. 58). The candid style of influencer posts emulates Pooley's (2010) idea of "calculated authenticity" (p. 79), in that they want to portray an authentic looking image but want to be "instrumental about authenticity" (p. 79). In the posts mentioned, influencers do not want to look staged, and therefore like they are selling-out to their audiences so posts are presented in a way where the content is more relatable to the audience, and therefore serves to maintain the connection influencers have with their followers, while fulfilling their obligation to promote for Tarte. However, as Pooley (2010) acknowledges, calculated authenticity can lead to an 'authenticity bind,' in which influencers want to show their real self, but also want to depict themselves as presentable (p. 82).

This bind is certainty true in all the posts mentioned, as well as an Instagram post by lifestyle influencer Sierra Furtado, who currently has 1.7 million Instagram followers. She posted an image onto Instagram (Figure D) on January 20th, 2018 during Tarte's trip

to Hawaii, in which she is sitting by a pool, on a beach towel with the words 'Wish you were here' printed on it. Beside the towel is a sun hat, sandals and a bottle of Tarte sunscreen that all seem to be strategically placed. What strikes as interesting about this post is just how apparent the staging is, but also how Sierra attempts to make the photo look candid. Not unlike many of the posts mentioned, her face and body are turned away from the camera and it looks like her hair is in motion during the shot. The pose itself presents as unplanned, but the staging of the props makes it clear that this photo has been planned in advance. The towel, hat, sandals and sunscreen are just too perfectly arranged, as well as her body is positioned in a way where the 'Wish you were here' slogan is completely visible. I believe this staged, yet still seemingly spontaneous looking picture that Sierra and other influencers have adopted is Pooley's (2010) authenticity bind personified. Influencer's jobs are to remain 'real' to their audiences, however, their job is also to represent the brands they work for like Tarte, in a favourable fashion, which requires some planning.

Influencers are sharing what looks like their real lives, and on Trippin' With Tarte, a real vacation. However, due to calculated authenticity and the authenticity bind, as Banet-Weiser (2012a) proposes their authentic and commodity-self blurs (p. 13), and this is evident in their posts. There seems to be not only a conflict in presenting themselves as both real and managed, but that it is actually one in the same. Influencer's real selves are their managed, edited, and preplanned selves, and even their 'candid' looking photos involve a lot of work to make it look that natural.

Relatable and Humorous Captions

In addition to the calculated authenticity represented in many influencer's Instagram pictures for Trippin' With Tarte, to further enhance the perceived genuine qualities that influencers have built, many will include relatable, clever and humorous captions in their Instagram posts. This adds a layer of authenticity to the post, which further deflects from the commercial nature of their work with Tarte (Banet-Weiser, 2012a, p. 10). To illustrate, going back to Patrick Starr's post from October 21, 2016 (Figure B), in addition to his 'candid' looking photo, his caption reads as such: "I was holding this pose for 10 minutes…and I still came back single AF. I even shaved my knees." The use of humor in this caption is Patrick's way of connecting with his audience and portraying himself as relatable, which is exactly what Forbes (2016) mentions makes influencers so unique in the marketing industry (p. 79). Being thought of as relatable is indeed an important aspect to being considered authentic. Bruhn, Fritz, Schoenmueller (2017) discuss that "the consumers' self-identification with the brand and employees/individuals representing the brand" (p. 328) is vital for connecting and responding to company branding. Since many influencers employed with Tarte, are using relatable captions in their Instagram posts, consumers can self-identify and relate to their content, and in turn, the brand as well.

Partick Starr posted another photo to Instagram during the 2016 Tarte brand trip to Bora Bora with a similar relatable and humorous caption. The photo from October 22nd, 2016 (Figure E) is of Patrick looking glamourous on a resort bridge in a green flowy outfit. That caption reads: "When you try to look like Jasmine but you end up like the damn Genie…" The humor and reference to Aladdin are, again, a way to relate and identify with the consumer. However, this particular post is also an example of Pooley's

(2010) calculated authenticity (p. 79) in that the picture itself is very glamourous, posed, professionally shot and edited, yet the caption is funny and relatable to the audience in a way that the image is not. Patrick and many other influencers are choosing where to exhibit relatability in order to draw the consumer in.

Another great example of this dichotomy of professional looking photos and relatable captions is from Sierra Furtado. In her post from January 21st, 2018 (Figure F), she is pictured on the beach in Hawaii, in what looks like mid spin. The photo looks to be, like Patrick's, planned, edited, and professionally taken, however the caption reads: "Wishing I was still dancing around this beach…instead I'm laying on the couch looking like a fetus watching the bachelor…" This not only shows the reality of the use of calculated authenticity by Tarte's influencers, but Sierra also alludes to the fact that this photo is not what her everyday life looks like. Although, the life of a lifestyle influencer is certainly not average, so this admission of being relatable to her audience could also be an act of calculated authenticity.

Further, when it comes to strategically relatable captions on #TrippinWithTarte posts, not all influencers use humor to relate to their audiences. Fitness and lifestyle influencer, Whitney Simmons, who has 2.6 million Instagram followers, took a more gracious approach in her post during Tarte's 2018 trip to Costa Rica. In her post on June 6th, 2018 (Figure G), she is pictured smiling and laying on a beach lounger in the resort with her caption as follows: "PRETTY FREAKING OVER THE MOON AND FULL OF GRATITUDE to be #trippinwithtarte in Costa Rica. I used to dream of moments like this and never thought they'd happen for me. So thank YOU for supporting me and making a few dreams of mine come true…" Whitney recognizes that being an influencer

and getting the opportunity to go on brand trips is an unique privilege that her and not many others share. To maintain and authentic relationship with her audience she participates in Hearn's (2017) idea of "affective capitalism" (p. 63), in that she is expressing emotions, in this case joy and gratitude, in order to connect with the viewer. Banet-Weiser (2012a) parallels Hearn (2017) by stating that "building a brand is building an affective, authentic relationship with a consumer, one based-just like a relationship between two people-on the accumulation of memories, emotions, personal narratives, and expectations" (p. 8). Whitney is not only building her brand, but also Tarte's by sharing her own personal narrative and emotions, which is more likely to garner positive reactions from her audience, even when the post is clearly sponsored.

With the idea that these are all sponsored posts in mind, what they have in common in their captions is using the #TrippinWithTarte as disclosure for the sponsorship. Using the hashtag as disclosure is a clever way to maintain the authenticity that influencers work so hard to build, but also promote the brand at the same time. Utilizing disclosures such as #ad or #sponsored could disrupt the relatability and calculated authenticity presented in influencer Instagram captions. However, according to both Ad Standards Canada (2018) as well as the Federal Trade Commission (2017), Tarte's brand trips are considered financial compensation and should be properly disclosed as such. Yet, the likely rationale for not doing so for so many of Tarte's influencers is to maintain that authentic, friend-like quality that their audience appreciates, without commercial interruption.

Product Shots/Discount Codes

Influencers know the many ways to promote themselves and the brands they work with using a subtle technique, like the candid shots and relatable captions previously mentioned. Influencers in themselves are an embodiment of Serazio's (2013) "cool sell" (p. 3) covert style of advertising. However, ultimately brands are influencer's employers, and they work to advertise the brands products to their followers. Although it is not the majority of Trippin' With Tarte Instagram posts, many influencers working for Tarte have showcased and promoted their products while on the trip.

When products are displayed in influencer's posts for Tarte, it is often in the same staged and produced manner as their "candid" beach shots. For example, Samantha Ravndahl posted an image on October 17th, 2016 (Figure H) while on tarte's trip to Bora Bora. In the post, Tarte's upcoming product launches are displayed on a table, arranged in an organized fashion to show them off accurately. Around the cosmetic products is a green background, mimicking seawater, pink sand and hibiscus flowers. It has been staged to complement Tarte's beach aesthetic to their brand. In a similar fashion, Patrick Starr posted an Instagram picture on October 18th, 2016 (Figure I) of the same palette, but in his post the palette is open in his hand and you can see the beautiful Bora Bora resort in the background, as well as Patrick's face in the mirror. What these two posts have in common is that they are both using the product as the focus. However, Samantha's is more produced and looks a bit more like an interruptive advertisement (Serazio, 2013, p.3), whereas Patrick's face in his post evokes some humour and utilizes more of a cool sell (p. 3) tactic and authentic portrayal due to the selfie nature of the photo.

Combining both a "push" and "pull" (Serazio, 2013, p. 3) style of advertising, Whitney Simmons in her post from March 16th, 2018 (Figure J) during Tarte's second

trip to Bora Bora, is posed holding one of Tarte's new lipsticks and applying it onto her lips. The photo is meant to look candid but is taken to advertise the product. In the same post on a different photoset (Figure K), you can see Whitney holding Tarte's new products with her body out of frame. This image is similar to Samantha's in that it is only the product that is feature and mimics more of a traditional style of advertising.

As Serazio (2013) mentions, word of mouth marketing is all about "credibility and trustworthiness" (p. 100), and consumers want to trust in their favourite influencer's opinion that these products are great, and that they are truly recommending them out of love and not just capital gain (Banet-Weiser, 2012a, p. 5). However, this is how influencers make their livelihood and when that is the case, you can never quite be sure. This is only amplified by the use of discount codes that influencers are given to share with their followers. In a post caption by Whitney Simmons on March 14th, 2018 (Figure L), she writes: "Save 15% off EVERYTHING at Tarte with code WHITNEYtarte @tartecosmetics…" As well, lifestyle influencer Niki DeMar who has 3.4 million followers on Instagram, put in her post's caption from March 17th, 2018 (Figure M): "You guys can use my tarte discount code NIKItarte for 15% off everything through 3/18! Go get those tarte products." Discount codes are well known to make influencers a commission, so there is some obvious capital interest for them to give the code out to their followers. Beyond this though, this type of promotion of Tarte is much more forward than just holding up a product to the camera, as it is a call of action of sorts to really incentivise consumer to "go get those Tarte products."

Selling Beauty and Glamour

When it comes to influencer marketing for a cosmetic company, you cannot ignore the use of beauty and glamour to intrigue the consumer. The overwhelming majority of the influencers that have worked with Tarte on their sponsored brands trips over the year have been women who fit into a particular societal standard of beauty. Many have long hair, tanned skin, thin or toned physiques, and their make-up is done at all times. However, there is a lot of maintence that is involved in being a beauty influencer to uphold those societal standards, or what Duffy & Wissinger (2017) refer to as "glamour labour" (p. 4654). Glamour labour involves keeping up one's appearance in order to remain employed in the beauty industry (p. 4654), and indeed there is no doubt that the influencers on Tarte's brand trips feel the constant pressure to look the part. In an Instagram post by Samantha Ravendahl on October 15th, 2016 (Figure N) from Bora Bora, you can see her laying on a dock by the water. She is wearing a full face of makeup, in great shape, most likely spray tanned, and wearing eyelash extensions, which she specifies in the caption. These are all ways influencers maintain that "idealized" (Goffman, 1959, p. 53) appearance in order to be considered marketable.

This constant maintenance of influencer's appearance is only intensified during Tarte's brand trips, since the beach locations leave many influencers wanting to wear swim suits. There is an added unspoken pressure from society for women's bodies to look a certain way in order to look presentable on the beach. I cannot say for certain, but it is possible that Tarte selects mainly the influencers who fit into this societal beauty and body standard to represent their brand. In Samantha's post on October 17, 2018 (Figure O), she has posted a full body shot of herself by the water, and it is evident that she has

worked on maintaining a slender and tan figure. This is also the case with Whitney

Simmon's post from March 13th, 2018 (Figure P), where she also looks toned and tan.

This glamour labour that beauty influencers are participating in is not only

important to secure employment, but also to deflect the constant judgment that they are

familiar with from their audiences. Banet-Weiser (2012a) mentions that with self-

branding comes this unavoidable judgment and assessment (p. 87), so maintaining one's

appearance to a standard that is deemed acceptable by the public is also important for

influencer's success. Unlike the general public, the influencers working with Tarte have

many followers and a lot of eyes on them (Marwick, 2015, p. 14). Truly influencers are

the new celebrities, or micro-celebrities as Marwick (2013) maintains, and with this "high

status" (p. 122) comes the potential criticism of being a public figure.

As previously stated, many of the influencers working for Tarte on their brand

trips are women. This makes sense as many of the influencers working in the beauty

community are women, and it is a niche market that has historically held a place for

women to thrive (Banet-Weiser, 2012b, p. 47). As well, word of mouth marketing did

start with women selling Avon or Tupperware products to their peers. Yet, when women

are used as marketing tools, often times, their bodies are also utilized to sell products. It

is s a common amongst the influencer's posting for Tarte during these trips that their

bodies are quite exposed, it is a beach trip after all. Whitney Simmons in her post on June

8th, 2018 (Figure Q) is pictured leaning over a bar in a bikini. She is looking towards the

camera, but the backs and sides of her body are prominent in the shot. As communicated,

these influencers do work hard to maintain their body image, and should be able to show

it off, but it is likely Tarte is utilizing influencer's bodies, knowing it will give further

exposure to their products and brand. Belisle (2018), discusses the use in the early twentieth century of "bodily commodification" (p. 44) of female department store employees to sell clothes, and I believe it is no different when it comes to selling cosmetics in the twenty-first century.

What is Not Seen: Hidden Labour Behind the Posts

It is as equally important in the case of Trippin' with Tarte influencer Instagram posts to analyze what is not visible in the posts as what is. What is not seen is the sheer amount of labour that goes into being an acceptable brand representative as well as creating impressive content that advertises the brand accurately. In all of the posts examined in this paper (Figures A-Q) there is behind the scenes work that creates both authentic and natural looking photos, but also something beautiful, glamourous, and professional looking. These two aspects indeed seem antithetical and may put influencers in an authenticity bind (Pooley, 2010, p. 82). But it is necessary to provide content that satisfies the relationship influencers have with consumers, and the relationship they have with brands, and that is not an easy feat.

Indeed, the immaterial work of influencer brand management is often not even regarded as legitimate work (Dyer-Witherford, 2001), however, the perfect Instagram post that satisfies both the influencer and the brand is not as easy as it looks. There could be hours of styling, hair and makeup that an influencer and/or a team will partake in. As well as the time it takes to get the photo through a photoshoot. Once a photo is selected, often times the influencer will make some edits, and then figure out a perfect caption. To many this is not seen as work, but this is the day to day life of those who self-brand as

well as work for brands. Immaterial labour is largely invisible to many due to the production of something cultural and not tangible (Hardt, 1999, p. 94). This is especially true during Tarte brand trips which are cleverly disguised as vacations. To the average consumer it may look like a time for influencers to relax, but in reality, it is very much a blurring of work and leisure, emphasis on the work. For these influencers, Banet-Weiser's (2012a) ideas of the authentic and commodity self being blurred (p. 13) is very much applicable, to the point where there is very little distinction.

Further, not only is there hidden, immaterial labour, when it comes to influencer's work on brand trips, but also getting invited or invited back on said brand trips. With the precarity of immaterial work (Duffy & Wissinger, 2017), it is important that influencers are participating in maintenance of themselves through "glamour labour" (Duffy & Wissinger, 2017, p. 4654), make themselves noticeable to brands and followers in order to secure sponsorships through "visibility labour" (p. 4655- 4656), as well as aspire for further exposure, even though it may involve no compensation, through "hope labour" (Corrigan & Kuehn, 2013, p. 10). Through their labour, this is influencer's way to prove themselves to their followers and brands they partner with, and that constant need for confirmation can certainly be not only challenging but tiresome.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Tarte's regular sponsored brand trips have certainly brought attention to the direction in which I believe influencer marketing is headed. The trend of brands hosting influencers on exotic trips, or even at events such as music festivals, is a way for brand

promotion without it being incredibly apparent to the followers of influencers. It is not out of the ordinary that influencers get invited to events, so brands are just taking advantage of this by making sure they are getting some recognition. Recognizing this, Tarte has been hosting one or two brand trips a year since 2016.

Due to the targeted, yet, authentic nature that influencers can provide during sponsored trips or events, I see this type of influencer marketing continuing to grow, and even move beyond beauty brands. There are many niche markets of influencers such as gaming, home improvement/DIY, cooking, and more that could be utilized by brands in the same way as Tarte has with beauty and lifestyle creators. Perhaps brands unrelated to the beauty industry would not necessary want to travel to luxury beach destinations that are highly associated with glamour, but I can see something similar to #TrippinWithTarte occurring in other product categories as well.

While the future for influencer marketing looks bright at the moment, there is also the potential that with new facets of the industry, such a sponsored brand trips, it provides more of an opportunity for audiences, and even fellow influencers, to respond adversely to seemingly 'authentic' social media posts. Especially with the ostensibly extraordinary life many influencers live, as well as the frequency of vague disclosure, the labour that influencers engage in becomes more obvious and starts to look like an inauthentic performance. Audiences are becoming more aware of many influencer's 'calculated authenticity' which leads to distrust that is inconvenient for the brand and influencers. Influencer performativity is meant to be undetectable to their audience, so if consumers start to catch on to the approach influencers take to come off as authentic, many of which I have outlined, then the industry could potentially hit its limit.

Recently, even influencers themselves are revealing the mechanics behind their Instagram posts. Influencer Gabbie Hanna, currently at 3.8 million followers on Instagram, recently pulled a stunt on her Instagram that went viral. During the 2019 Coachella music festival, Hanna posted images of her with a photoshopped background, making it look like she was at Coachella when, in fact, she was not (Jackson, 2019). Her audience had no notion that her photos were staged until she announced in a video that it was a fake stunt (Jackson, 2019). *Newsweek* reports that Hanna wanted to create the experience of going to Coachella for her followers without actually having to go to the desert and asserts that "social media is a lie" (Jackson, 2019). This antic by Hanna reveals, the nature of the calculated authenticity of influencers, and the hidden labour, in this case quite extreme, that goes into creating a performance for their followers.

This case emphasizes the point that #TrippinWithTarte also makes, which is that it is sometimes difficult to decipher what is real and what is produced when it comes to influencer's Instagram posts. Influencers working for Tarte have more incentive to create a more glamourous, yet still authentic persona in order to represent the brand in an attractive way. While not the all influencers working with Tarte reveal, the way that Gabbie Hanna did, the labour behind the work that they do, I hope I have revealed that there are subtle ways in which a managed performance can be detected.

Indeed, the many types of labour that influencers put into their work is so fascinating that with unlimited time and resources for this project, I would want to interview as many influencers as possible, particularly beauty and lifestyle creators. It would be interesting to understand the process that an influencer goes through in order to craft a persona, interact with their audience, and stage and edit their photos directly from

the source. It is possible that many influencers would not be very forthright with this information, as it is a large part of their livelihood, but nonetheless, I believe it would be intriguing to interpret this profession through their understanding. I would also like to specifically interview a selection of influencers who have worked for Tarte on Trippin' with Tarte and discuss with them what the specific requirements are of an influencer when participating in these sponsored brand trips. This would support the concept that influencers are indeed working on these trips, and that it is not just an extravagant vacation.

In addition to interviewing influencers, I believe it would be beneficial to interview audiences of these influencers as well. Further research on this project would involve selecting consumers who follow many of the #TrippinWithTarte influencers and assessing if they can identify where authenticity can be calculated. As well, I would be interested to know from audiences, more broadly, if they feel as though influencers are being authentic to consumers, and if they recognize the labour that goes into influencer's work. Including a multitude of perspectives on these topics would enhance the future of this project and serve to support the arguments presented.

These perspectives would further enhance the ideas that brands and influencers are thriving in a neoliberal era, but ultimately still dependents on each other for success. Influencers are self-branded and can choose how they present themselves to their audience, often in a seemingly authentic way. However, in order to advance in the precarious working environment, they need to work for brands and understand their interests as well. In the case of Tarte, that means portraying a beautiful and glamorous image, while also suggesting likability. Brands are aware of the dependency that

influencers have on sponsorships and take advantage of the authentic nature of the

relationship with their audience for capital gain. That is the nature of a brand and

influencer relationship, and Trippin' with Tarte while exciting to the audience, is no

exception.

REFERENCES

Abidin, C. (2016a). "Aren't these just young, rich, women doing vain things online?": Influencer selfies as subversive frivolity. *Social Media + Society, 2*(2), 1-17. doi: 10.1177/2056305116641342

Abidin, C. (2016b). Visibility labour: Engaging with influencers' fashion brands and #OOTD advertorial campaigns on Instagram. *Media International Australia, 161*(1), 1-15. doi: 10.1177/1329878X16665177

Advertising Standards Canada. (2018). Influencer marketing steering committee disclosure guidelines. *Ad Standards*. Retrieved from http://adstandards.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Influencer-Marketing-Steering-Committee-Disclosure-Guidelines-Jan-2019.pdf

Arvidsson, A. (2006). *Brands: Meaning and value in media culture*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Banet-Weiser, S. (2012a). *Authentic*^{TM}*: The politics of ambivalence in a brand culture*. New York, NY: New York University Press.

Banet-Weiser, S. (2012b). "Free self-esteem tools?": Brand culture, gender, and the Dove real beauty campaign. In R. Mukherjee & S. Banet-Weiser (Eds.), *Commodity activism: Cultural resistance in neoliberal times* (pp. 39-56). New York, NY: New York University Press.

Belisle, D. (2018). Crafting the consumer workforce. In K. Asquith (Ed.), *Advertising, consumer culture, and Canadian society: A reader* (pp. 39-52). Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.

Bruhn, M., Fritz, K, & Schoenmueller, V. (2017). Authenticity in branding – exploring antecedents and consequences of brand authenticity. *European Journal of Marketing, 51*(2), 324-348. doi: 10.1108/EJM-10-2014-0633

Corrigan, T. F., & Kuehn, K. (2013). Hope labour: The role of employment prospects in online social production. *The Political Economy of Communication, 1*(1), 9-25.

Cunningham, S., & Craig, D. (2017). Being 'really real' on YouTube: Authenticity, community, and brand culture in social media entertainment. *Media International Australia, 164*(1), 71-81. doi: 10.1177/1329878X17709098

De Peuter, G. (2011). Creative economy and labour precarity: Contested convergence. *Journal of Communication Inquiry, 35*(4), 417-425. doi: 10.1177/0196859911416362

Duffy, B. E., & Wissinger, E. (2017). Mythologies of creative work in the social media age: Fun, free, and "just being me." *International Journal of Communication, 11*, 4652-4671.

Dyer-Witherford. N. (1999). *Cyber-Marx: Cycles and circuits of struggle in high-technology capitalism*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Dyer-Witherford, N. (2001). Empire, immaterial labor, the new combinations, and the global worker. *Rethinking Marxism, 13*(3/4), 70-80.

Federal Trade Commission. (2017). The FTC's endorsement guides: What people are asking. *FTC Endorsement Guides*. Retrieved from http://adstandards.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Influencer-Marketing-Steering-Committee-Disclosure-Guidelines-Jan-2019.pdf

Forbes, K. (2016). Examining the beauty industries use of influencers. *Elon Journal of Undergraduate Research in Communications, 7*(2), 78-87.

Foucault, M. (1982). The subject and power. *The University of Chicago Press, 8*(4), 777-795. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/1343197?origin=JSTOR-pdf&seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents

Goffman, E. (1959). The presentation of self in everyday life. In *Contemporary Sociological Theory* (2012, 3rd ed), 46-61. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell.

Goldhaber, M. H. (1997). The attention economy and the net. *First Monday, 2*(4). Retrieved from http://firstmonday.org/article/view/519/440

Hardt, M. (1999). Affective labor. *Boundary 2* 26(2), 89–100.

Hardt, M., Negri, A. (2009). *Commonwealth*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Hearn, A. (2008). 'Meat, mask, burden': Probing the contours of the branded 'self'. *Journal of Consumer Culture, 8(*2). doi: 10.1177/1469540508090086

Hearn, A. (2012). Brand me "activist." In R. Mukherjee & S. Banet-Weiser (Eds.), *Commodity activism: Cultural resistance in neoliberal times* (pp. 23-38). New York, NY: New York University Press.

Hearn, A. (2017). Verified: Self-presentation, identity management, and selfhood in the age of big data. *Popular Communication: The International Journal of Media and Culture, 15*(2), 62-77. doi: 10.1080/15405702.2016.1269909

Jackson, D. (2019). YouTuber Gabbie Hanna 'faked' going to Coachella: 'I can pull this off." *Newsweek*. Retrieved from https://www.newsweek.com/youtuber-gabbie-hanna-faked-coachella-1404711

Marwick, A. E. (2013). *Status update: Celebrity, publicity, and branding in the social media age.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Marwick, A. E. (2015). You may know me from YouTube: (Micro-) celebrity in social media. In P.D. Marshall & S. Redmond (Eds.), *A companion to celebrity* (pp. 333-347). West Sussex, UK: John Wiley & Sons.

Neff, J. (2019). How to succeed with influencers: Brand playbook. *Ad Age*. Retrieved from https://adage.com/article/cmo-strategy/succeed-influencers/316313

Pooley, J. (2010). The consuming self: From flappers to Facebook. In M. Aronczyk & D. Powers (Eds.), *Blowing up the brand: Critical perspectives on promotional culture, 21* (pp. 71-89). New York, NY: Peter Lang.

Serazio, M. (2013). *Your ad here: The cool sell of guerilla marketing*. New York, NY: Press.

Slater, D. (1997). *Consumer culture and modernity*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Taylor, A. (2014). *The people's platform: Taking back power and culture in the digital age*. Toronto, ON: Random House Canada.

APPENDIX

Figure A)
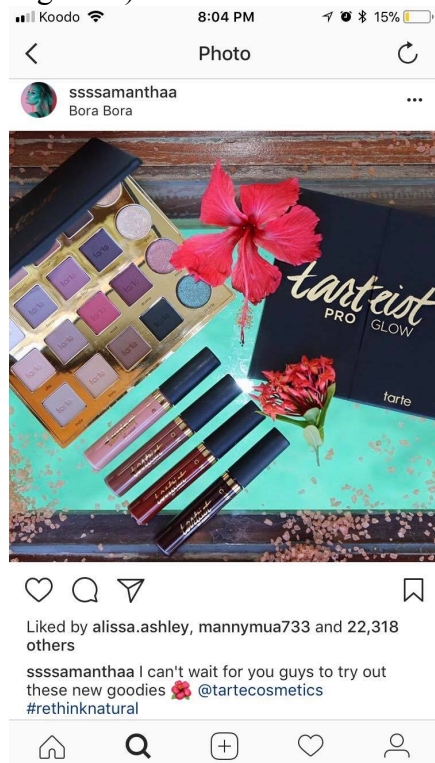

Figure B)

Figure C)

Figure D)

59

Figure E)

8:11 PM   Koodo   14%

Photo

155,354 likes

patrickstarrr When you try to look like Jasmine but end up like the damn Genie... 😐
.
Thanks @tartecosmetics for the amazing time! #trippinwithtarte #rethinknatural #patrickstarrr
.

Figure F)

8:58 PM   Koodo   2%

Photo

Liked by **tartecosmetics**, **sarahbelleelizabeth** and **103,778 others**

sierrafurtado Wishing I was still dancing around on this beach... instead I'm laying on the couch looking like a fetus watching the bachelor 👍 ...
...
#trippinwithtarte @tartecosmetics

Figure G)

Figure H)

Figure I)

Figure J)

Figure K)

Figure L)
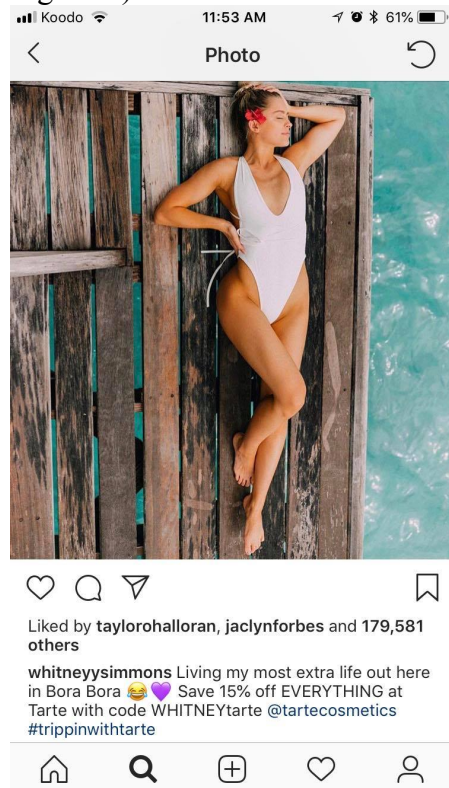
Figure M)

niki
Bora Bora, French Polynesia

Liked by **tanamongeau**, **tartecosmetics** and
207,879 others

niki Woke up to this view for a week. Completely
blessed and thankful. Huge thank you to
@tartecosmetics...but guess what, it doesn't end
here! You guys can use my tarte discount code
NIKItarte for 15% off everything through 3/18! Go get
those tarte products 🐬🏄‍♀️🏔 @thenatewest
#trippinwithtarte #borabora #springbreak

View all 4,510 comments

Figure N)

ssssamanthaa
Bora Bora

Liked by **katy**, **alissa.ashley** and **28,846 others**

ssssamanthaa woke up in paradise 🌴 bathing suit
by @alltwerkandnopray and lash extensions by
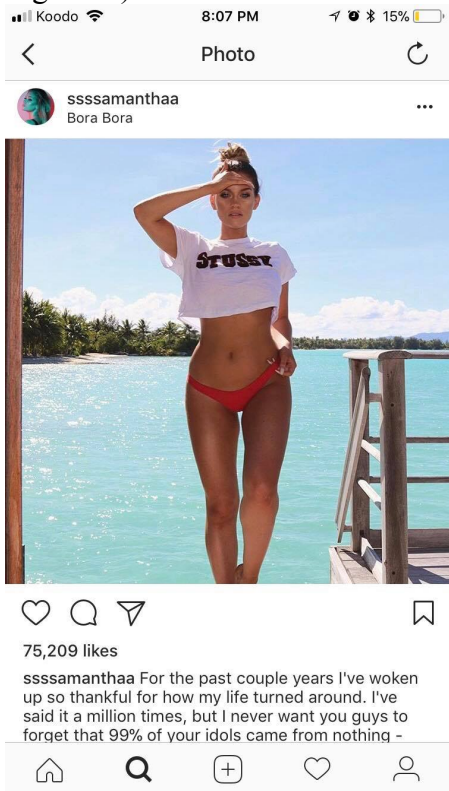@crestandcrown 💦 #trippinwithtarte

View all 77 comments

lindahallberg Omg I am so jealous of you all! It seems
amazing!!!

OCTOBER 15, 2016

Figure O)

Figure P)

Figure Q)

VITA AUCTORIS

NAME: Brenna O'Gorman

PLACE OF BIRTH: Windsor, ON

YEAR OF BIRTH: 1994

EDUCATION: Catholic Central High School, Windsor, ON, 2012

                         University of Windsor, B.A., Windsor, ON, 2017

                         University of Windsor, M.A., Windsor, ON, 2019