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Discourses of authenticity in a pagan community: the emergence of the 'fluffy bunny' sanction

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COVER SHEET

Title: DISCOURSES OF AUTHENTICITY WITHIN A PAGAN COMMUNITY: THE EMERGENCE OF THE "FLUFFY BUNNY" SANCTION.

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DISCOURSES OF AUTHENTICITY WITHIN A PAGAN COMMUNITY: THE EMERGENCE OF THE "FLUFFY BUNNY" SANCTION.

The commodification of the religious impulse finds its most overt expression in the New Age movement and its sub-culture Neo-paganism. This paper examines discourses in the pagan community in an Australian state. Pagans, who have been characterised as individualist, eclectic, and diverse in their beliefs and practices, network through electronic mail discussion lists and chat forums as well as through local and national offline gatherings. We explore community building and boundary defining communications in these discourses. In particular, we examine interactions that reveal the mobilisation of pagans' concern with authenticity in the context of late-capitalism, consumer lifestyles and media representations of the 'craft'. Our analysis highlights a series of tensions in pagan's representations of and engagement with consumer culture which are evident in everyday pagan discourse. These notions of in/authenticity are captured by invoking the 'fluffy bunny' sanction.

I first heard the expression "fluffy bunny" one evening at a Pagans In The Pub (PITPub) gathering early in 2001. Pagans in the Pub is an event which migrated from the UK through the United States to Australia. Pagans select a central location where they meet on a regular basis once or twice a month. Over time I observed that most individuals seldom consumed more than one alcoholic drink during these sessions (if any). On the evening in question, about twelve people had gathered, a mixture of males and females seated in a warm, dimly lit, far corner of the hotel lounge with tables pushed together to facilitate discussion. Patrick, a young University student, was responding to a question from one of those present. He ended his comment by saying "… and not all the fluffy bunny stuff". This expression drew comment from the gathering who wanted him to clarify what he meant. He said, "oh you know people who watch 'Charmed' and 'Buffy' and …".

Comments that followed suggested that images and symbols presented in witchcraft type television programs were sentimental and skimmed the surface of 'real' magic, signaled by Danny's quip that "there's more to it than waving a wand around". People felt the craft was trivialised, for example the talking black cat in 'Charmed'. Privately, two of the women confided to me that they were 'Buffy' fans; they thought she was 'okay'. Other public figures came under attack for the same reasons. Notably Lorna Horne and Deborah Gray, who were also the focus of Ezzy's reflections on the commodification of Witchcraft (2001), were named as promoting and selling warm fuzzy ideas about the craft through their many publications and web pages. PITPub participants felt that mis-representations of the craft and surface meanings they generated were exacerbated by the commercial availability of products like spell kits and fairy wands that were perceived to promote those interpretations. It surprised me when those present named two young females who lived in the South-west Summerland region (the area where this study was undertaken) as exemplary offenders. These women conducted magic workshops and sometimes posted to e-lists. The exchanges between individual pagans at the pub revealed a questioning of the authenticity of media representations of the craft and of some pagan's extensive use of advertising, late capitalism's primary vehicle for promoting consumerism, as a means of promoting their pagan beliefs and practices (and making a living).

The fluffy bunny discussion revealed people's concern with how consumer culture impacted on the formation and negotiation of pagan identity; effects well documented by Foltz (2005). There

were suggestions that the craft was made an object of entertainment, trivialized, rendered superficial, fetishised, sentimentalised and devalued through commodification of tools and practices of spiritual meaning and worth. This was a group boundary defining exercise based on moral judgements of the type theorized by Lamont (1992). It explored pagan ethics associated with the deployment of pagan artifacts and spiritual understandings. Implicit in the discussion was a sense of a 'them' who were seduced by media images and popular practices, or implicated in producing them, and a (serious, authentic) 'us' who presumably distanced ourselves from such things.

Members of new social movements including environmentalists (Shepherd 2002), lesbians and gays (Kates and Belk 2001), and witches (Neitz 1994) often struggle to reconcile movement ideals with meaningful lifestyle practices. In regard to neo-paganism, tensions have been noted between spiritual ideals and pragmatic (including economic) concerns, between the idea of serious practitioners and 'dabblers' in the craft, and between those who would want to mainstream the religion and those who feel that paganism's strength lies in its sub-cultural 'cutting-edge', its esotericism (Berger, Leach and Shaffer 2003, 172-182; Pearson 1998, 52-53; Neitz 1994). These tensions were evident in the present study. What we offer here is a reflection on how similar concerns emerged in everyday pagan discourse when issues of profit making and charging for pagan services were discussed. Even though quantitative research has indicated that pagans' opinions seem to come out almost evenly on each side of issues, for example, to charge for services under certain conditions or not to charge (Berger, Leach and Shaffer 2003), the use of the "fluffy bunny" sanction signals some kind of collective sense of an authentic pagan lifestyle negotiated around spiritual ideals, consumer values and commodification of the craft. It should be noted however, that the term 'fluffy bunnies' has a longer history not pursued in this paper. We came across it in a poem reported by Pearson (1998, 45), who writes about wiccans in the European context.

As co-authors we bring unique bodies of expertise and experience to the discussion that write themselves into the story in distinctive ways. Coco engaged in participant observation with a neo-pagan community primarily focusing on the role of information and communication technologies in pagan identity formation, while Woodward has a theoretical interest in consumption studies using qualitative, interpretive methods. We therefore believe this study is able to shed some light on the manner in which links between consumption and meaning-making may be theorized in the context of the pagan religion.

IDENTITY, COMMODITY AND COMMUNITY

Neitz (1994) characterizes paganism as quasi-religion because members negotiate cultural meanings via loosely structured networks rather than through the traditional organizational and denominational means characteristic of other religions. She adopts Gusfield's notion of 'carriers' of a movement's practices and symbols to describe how pagans 'carry over' symbols from one social context to another and 'carry on' practices in their initiatory rites in small groups. Structure *per se* is provided by the broader culture via the provision of material resources and cultural norms. While Neitz investigated in-group perpetuation of the craft we suggest that symbolic icons and practices are not necessarily carried over 'intact' but are modified and evaluated in a dialogical way with images in mainstream consumer culture. We examine the interplay between values in the broader social structures of consumerism, the media and capitalism, and pagan ideals. Our interpretation takes Neitz's project a small step further to investigate how pagans debate these cultural strains.

Douglas and Isherwood (1979[1996]) argue that, as tools for making sense of the world, consumer objects assist people in demarcating social categories and thus assigning worth and value to things and people (also Douglas 1996). Miller (1987) argues similarly for studies of consumption that acknowledge relations between people and goods in industrial societies, switching the frame of analysis from the economic realm of objectification, to the process of consumer objectification. Such work involves identifying symbolic boundaries which Lamont describes as "conceptual distinctions that we make to categorise objects, people, practices" (Lamont 1992, 29). The process of exclusion is based on a person's judgement that he/she refuses to associate toward certain people because of particular cultural or moral reasons. In Lamont's research the idea of moral resources as the basis of exclusivity is especially important, and is often founded in simple assessments that another person is 'not like me'. For those who are excluded, feelings of snobbery, distance, and coldness from those practicing the exclusive behaviour is common (Lamont 1992). Generally, it is manifested as the feeling of difference from another person. The deployments of symbolic material culture become operators for such processes.

An extension that we make of Lamont's argument that moral outlook is a key resource for social differentiation is the way that aesthetics has become fused with moral and ethical projects of self development (Coco and Woodward 2003). In a consumer society one purchases objects – commodities such as Tarot cards, ritual tools, medieval dress - that enhance, edify, improve and sustain self. These objects then act as material boundary markers that suggest things people wish to cultivate about themselves and exclude polluting aesthetics/others. Miller's (1987) point about the creative work of consumption occurring during and after purchase rings true here: through the course of their trajectory as material components of human existence, objects offer continuous opportunities for managing the boundaries between self and non-self in a process which fuses aesthetics with ethics. In the case of pagans, particular styles of dress and adornment such as wearing a pentacle and the use of crystals and fragrances (aesthetics), which are understood to correspond to movements in nature and the spiritual realms, serve to connect individual ethics with pagan beliefs and values. Miller's approach helps us explore how Neitz's symbol carriers use artifacts, in the form of commodities and services, to generate pagan meanings and lifestyles.

It is also the case that images presented in the media provide storylines associated with the appropriate consumer items which people may use as cues for the construction of pagan identities and associated desires (Foltz 2005). Popular culture mediates images of paganism or the craft through television series like 'Buffy' and 'Charmed' which depict teenage witches as the central characters. Cinema has produced what South-west Summerland pagans referred to as "pagan type" movies, like the Harry Potter series. For the first showing of "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets" in Circle, (a city in the south-west Summerland region), pagans organized a collective movie-going event urging patrons to "come dressed up". Twenty pagans arrived, some dressed in capes, some carrying homemade Harry Potter wands (a small branch from a tree stripped of leaves), and others in their ordinary street clothes. Passers-by were curious and those who expressed a desire to be part of what was going on were invited to join in the fun. Pagans indulge in expressivity and play (c.f. Berger 1999) and both construct and consume media images of the craft.

While pagans may be ambivalent about the relationships between spiritual ideals and capitalist values they nevertheless seem to be comfortable in moving between religious activity and consumer capitalism, consumption and mediated representations of pagan spirituality (Foltz

2005). Drawing on ethnographic data we identify the ways consumer values and media representations of witchcraft are used as foils for the discursive construction of an authentic pagan identity. We explore pagans' reflections on ethics and aesthetics and their negotiations of truths, values and the good in their everyday discourse. A range of tensions emerges which we argue indicates the ways pagans in late capitalist (or post-modern) society reflexively create meaning-structures around the production and consumption of goods and services that have become popularized as 'pagan'. The nuanced features of these tensions reveal the conceptual distinctions and symbolic boundaries pagans create in establishing an 'authentic' pagan identity.

OBSERVING THE NEO-PAGAN SCENE IN SOUTH-WEST SUMMERLAND

My seven-year experience in a Dianic wiccan group afforded some legitimacy for wanting to participate in and study neo-pagan culture and I entered the field by seeking conversations with and support from key informants. I described my research as the Circle Pagan Study and the informants extended valuable information about how to enter and respect the community ethos in both online and offline environments. Wiccans and neo-pagans as grouped by Neitz (2000) form the major part of the community under study. One prominent pagan posted information about the study on his web site which acts as a portal for several pagan organizations and sites in Australia. I included an invitation to people to contact me through this page if they were willing to participate in an interview. Pagans were also informed and regularly reminded of my presence on the email discussion lists where I used my own first name and university email address. Once or twice a year notices were posted to inform any new people on the lists that I was still researching the community. My methods included observation, almost daily, and irregular participation on pagan email lists for a two-year period. This involved perusing between 10 and 75 online messages in one day. As discussion themes emerged the dates and posting number of sample messages were noted in small diaries which were used for keeping ethnographic records of email discussions.

The world-wide-web provides the potential for groups of people to become visible and develop a shared identity through the ongoing conversation enabled by internet communications technologies (Cowan 2005). Communications and conversations in South-west Summerland take place via two main email discussion lists, locally constructed web-pages as well as in geographical settings ranging from one-stop shopping malls to private homes and out of the way bushland retreats. EList1 (L1) was established in Circle during 1998 by Laura, a woman then in her late 40s. She had encountered the craft in the United States around 1997-98 and on returning home to Australia started L1 to help her connect with pagan-minded folk in Circle. EList2 (L2) broke away from L1 in 2000 over differences of opinion regarding appropriate topics for debate online and Laura's perceived heavy-handed moderation of L1. Some pagans also regularly use IRC (internet relay chat) and other chat facilities but during the observation period, L1 and L2 were central to communications networks where activities and events were posted, planned and/or coordinated. L1 and L2 have maintained ongoing daily activity to the time of this writing thus supporting Cowan's observation that online lists supported by offline relationships are likely to be sustained (2005). In online and offline places values are debated, moral stances are challenged/renewed, knowledge shared, emotional and physical support proffered, plans cooked up and 'newbies' (new members) welcomed.

Research in online environments raises particular issues to do with researcher transparence, informed consent and anonymity (Sharf 1999). Online forums are essentially public spaces and the extent to which a researcher can *ensure* anonymity and confidentiality to participants is

limited (Mann and Stewart 2000). Other online groups have experienced onslaughts of visitors when the names of their forums have been publicized (Reid 1996). Such an event would be particularly disruptive for South-west Summerland pagans who value and protect the Australian flavour of their lists (Coco 2003). In line with established reporting practices people's names, the names of places and of the email discussion lists have been changed in an effort to minimize potential breaches of trust with the community. Permission from individuals in both online and offline contexts was sought and granted for all but two direct quotations used in this paper. Two people who had posted to the lists were unable to be traced.

Feminist research, particularly the materialist orientation, focuses on where people are actually located in the relations of production and re-production and the ways their worlds are configured; the separation of fact and bias is not at issue (Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002, 13). As Blain (2004) argues, we work with a consciousness that knowledge is produced from the dialogical interplay between the researcher's personal experience as a practitioner and her interactions with 'insiders' and her interpretations; the act of research affects the researcher and the field. My participant observation offline involved some 367 hours of fieldwork attending many kinds of gatherings, for example local coffee meets, birthday parties and handfastings (the pagan equivalent of marriage), public and private rituals to which I was invited, Pagans in the Park (PITPark) and Pagans in the Pub gatherings and national and local festivals. At pagan gatherings I always revealed my role as a researcher and in time came to be referred to as a "pagan academic". On occasion pagans invited me to give presentations about my work in public gatherings like PITPark and the Magical Fair.

There are several topics that typically provoke heated discussions online and in offline community sub-groups that are similar to issues reported by Berger, Leach and Shaffer (2003) and Neitz (1994) in North American contexts. For example, tensions arise when individuals advertise courses in the craft for which they charge a fee, and over their qualifications to teach such courses in the first place. To illustrate how pagans think about consumerism and connect commercial practices with pagan ethics and aesthetics we present a number of online and offline excerpts that illustrate the breadth and depth of their reflexive negotiation of individual and collective pagan identity.

PAGANS IN CONVERSATION

ONLINE

L2 discussion, 2001 – 'Charging for Courses'

We draw our first illustration from a lengthy discussion thread about charging for courses initiated on L2 in 2001 (which contains enough writing to fill a small book). One of the rules of L2 is that advertising for purely commercial reasons is not permitted, though advertising courses in pagan culture and other pagan events is fine. Many list members would know Jason (the poster of "The Course in Witchcraft and Magick" discussed below) as a leading and highly visible member of the pagan community. He is dedicated to advancing paganism as a mainstream religion, participating on governmental advisory committees as well as convening a coven of a recognized pagan Church. So far, the kind of congregationalism and emergence of professional clergy, observed by Neitz (1994) and Berger, Shaffer and Leach (2003) in the United States, have not developed in the Summerland neo-pagan community. Jason informs people that he trained in America and was fully initiated as a pagan priest. He introduced PITPub to Summerland and passed on the responsibility of perpetuating it to other Pagans during the time I was participating.

He also has a full-time job unrelated to his pagan pursuits. Jason frequently attracts criticism on the lists for attempting to organize or lead pagans and for charging for craft training courses. One person, Barry, who was one of the protagonists on L1 and an initiator of L2, is quite vocal about his disagreement with some of Jason's practices. Barry traces his family history of witchcraft back some 500 years and claims traditional authenticity for his craft. He also holds down a full time job separate from his pagan practice but generally does not charge for training in the craft.

The discussion thread is initiated by Sam who describes himself as a traditional wiccan initiated by elders. His practice with his female partner combines the Alexandrian and Gardnerian traditions. Sam, who is conscious of previous online conflicts and offline interpersonal dynamics, says he wants "to try to move this more into the arena of an hypothetical discussion, removed from any specific personalities", a wish that other posters generally seem to have respected in their responses. In the interests of succinctness we have edited large sections of writing from the list postings to focus on commercialism directly but the original poster's opening gambit below gives an indication of the range of issues that were discussed and followed by others in the ensuing weeks. In the excerpt, the original post thread is indicated by the indent mark '>', with Sam's response to each comment following immediately below. Pseudonyms are inserted to facilitate the flow of the discussion. They are placed in brackets to indicate that they were not part of the original postings. Sam wrote:

> (Sam) For brevity I've snipped bits that aren't entirely relevant to my line of questioning, and also to try to move this more into the arena of an hypothetical discussion, removed from any specific personalities.
>
> (Jason's post) > A course on Witchcraft and Magick (Basic Level)
> > Starting …
>
> <snip>
>
> > Participants will be instructed in the following areas of study: History of
> > Wicca, Paganism and alternative spirituality, how a coven (the name given to a pagan ritual group) works, altered
> > states, legends and myths, festivals of the year, ritual tools, robes and
> > costuming, music and songs, herbalism, Aromancy (*sic*) and incenses, ritual,
> > healing, spells, charms and talismans, storytelling and divination.
>
> (Sam) Quite a comprehensive list of prospective subjects... but what is it that people are looking for in training or learning? What is it that the community seeks (if anything) in general? Is it specific skills? Is it an understanding of the mechanics? A sense of history? The experience of working in a tight knit group? (*sic*)
>
> What about ethics? To me this seemed an intriguing ommision (*sic*). …
>
> (Jason) > Cost: is negotiable depending on circumstance and is fully detailed upon
> > application, basically I would prefer you not to concern yourself with that
> > issue and decide if you want to do the course or not first. I work on the
> > premise that the information must get out there.

> (Sam) This statement interests me on a number of levels. First there is the age-old argument of should we, or should we not, be charging for such teachings in the first place. I've seen (and indeed partcicpated (*sic*) in) some spirited debates on this topic over the years. General feelings there folks?
>
> More to the point though is the ambiguity presented. "I work on the premise that the information must get out there". Fisrtly, (*sic*) if so, why the mention of cost at all, though at first glance the flexibility there is probably an asset for those not so well equipped to pay. And why exactly must the information get out there? Is there any contradiction between seeking a profit and community service, or working to some spiritual goal?
>
> How would you feel as a student knowing that the cost was $X (and does it change if this is as a profit, covering expensis, (*sic*) going to non-profit or community ends) and you can't meet that, and are studying for free, or a reduced amount? Would it matter to you? Place you in a different 'position', or 'social relationship' with the teacher? The other students? (*sic*) Or is it irrelevant?

Sam notes "(w)hat about ethics?" He has posited a contradiction between the pursuit of profit and community service and spiritual goals. Further, he suggests that variation from the normal "fee for service rule" may affect one's relationship with the teacher, thus introducing the idea that relationship is an important variable in teaching about spiritual matters. His questions, "but what is it that people are looking for in training or learning? What is it that the community seeks (if anything) in general? … (a)nd why exactly must the information get out there?" also hint at a feeling echoed in other pagan contexts (noted by Berger, Leach and Shaffer 2003) that maybe paganism should remain an esoteric movement.

In the piece below, posted two days later, Kerry a new comer to paganism and clearly someone who would contemplate taking classes such as the one Jason offers, responds to the posting edited above. She extends the theme about different types of relationships, mentor and protégé versus teacher and class, and links the distinction to practical issues; the number of people catered to makes a difference pragmatically and materials have to be paid for. Her post introduces the notion that it may be the nature of material relations that mediates the kind of balance that should be achieved between spiritual ideals and consumer practices in specific situations. She reproduces the words of the original advertisement posting as quoted by Sam, however she also includes some of his responses and then prefaces her comments to him with '***'. We keep these contextual signals in place in our quotations in order to delineate the order of different 'voices'.

> (Jason's post) > Cost: is negotiable depending on circumstance and is fully detailed upon
> > application, …
>
> (Sam) This statement interests me on a number of levels. First there is the age-old argument of should we, or should we not, be charging for such teachings in the first place. I've seen (and indeed participated in) some spirited debates on this topic over the years. General feelings there folks? (*sic*)
> (Kerry) ***I guess it depends on the style of tutorial, and how much the fees were.

> I don't agree with a mentor charging their protege, (*sic*) but in a classroom type situation, I feel that it is acceptable. Someone has to pay for the materials used, class hire etc. Also, the teacher's time is valuable. Shouldn't they get some sort of financial compensation for their time in preparing lessons and parting with their knowledge (that probably cost them to obtain via books, classes etc). I said that I believe a mentor should be free. I accept that they too, are teachers, and arrange for lessons, and have spent money on their education, BUT I feel that if you agree to be a mentor, then you should give up the opportunity to make money. Why? Because I feel that being a mentor is a privilege. If you have decided to pass your information on to one or two proteges (*sic*), then your reward is the knowledge that your information doesn't die with you, and that there are a few people who will carry on your 'line', or tradition. Also, it costs a lot less to educate one or two people, than a whole class full.
>
> (Sam) … why the mention of cost at all, though at first glance the flexibility there is probably an asset for those not so well equipped to pay. And why exactly must the information get out there? …
> (Kerry) *** …. I think that a statement like this would, to me, indicate that this person just wants to share information rather than make money. He is preparing to wave part of all of the fee for genuine students who can't afford it. Why mention the cost? Because the would-be student is then informed, from the work *(sic)* 'go' that there will be a cost involved. There are no little surprises. … If I knew that most of the money was pure profit, I would question whether the teacher was really only in it for the money.

Kerry links practical and teaching relationship issues to higher ideals; for a mentor the ‘payment’ should be the recognition and privilege of having their expertise acknowledged and passed to future generations. Her post evidences an ethical reflexivity that associates degrees of cost and issues of trust: if the dollar amount seems to be *just* “for a profit” then she would question the teacher’s motives; are the teacher’s motives to build community knowledge or to fill his own pockets?

On the same day as Kerry’s post, Randal, a solitary (a pagan who chooses not to belong to a pagan group, and practices their craft alone) and self-trained hermetician who referred to himself in an interview as a ‘friendly mage’, picks up on Kerry’s expert/protégé distinction and looks to history for guidance. He responds to Sam whose words now are indicated by ‘>>’ below, and another writer prefaced by ‘>’ posted the following:

> > Re: Charging...
>
> (Sam) > > My personal feeling is the traditional one - that money should
> > > not be charged for teaching.
> >
> > > Me also, while allowing that others have vastly different views.
>
> (Randal) You're a bit of a historian … (Sam). When did that tradition start?

> Apprentices even got paid while they were learning... Should we pay our students? But apprentices do work that the teacher can charge for, and at a profit, so the apprentice does bring in money to the teacher. This is all a very new idea, and the way in which we interact based around what we know (the information society) is constantly changing, as is the perceived value of information.

Sam replies to this post the next day by adding his ideas which raise the issue of historical precedents and the notion that perhaps contemporary paganism's preoccupation with the tension between monetary exchange and spiritual service is a relatively recent phenomenon.

> It *is* a new idea, and ironically it is one I've been discussing on another list also. Even looking at the 18th C. cunning folk we get a very mixed picture, with many charging for their services, and (though less often I believe) for their teachings. Others though (generally the less 'professional', the simple healers who may only know a few charms or have a 'gift') tended to work and/or teach for free... mostly out of a feeling of divine obligation or duty.
>
> I honestly think the monetary asceticism of modern Craft arose in the Romantic movement of the 18th C. with its romanticised views of nature, innate human nature, and its rejection of the evils it saw in industrialisation, and a corrupt establishment, both temporal and spiritual. This firmly entrenched the idea that money and honesty or spirituality didn't mix, and I believe on the whole they are right.
>
> Even so, I can't think of any other group (occult, ceremonial or otherwise) within the last century where some fees didn't apply until Gardner so it does make an interesting point, and I wonder how influenced he was in this by his experiences in the East? (Gerald Gardner, generally viewed as one of the instigators of the contemporary pagan revival).
>
> You are quite correct, both in recognising a pattern of medieaval (*sic*) Craft guild apprenticeships, and in the financial nature of them, ….

I seldom encountered Sam or Randal at large pagan gatherings, though Sam sometimes went to PITPub where we engaged in spirited conversations about the craft. Sam's and Randal's posts have essentially opened a way for thinking about how commerce and spiritual teachings could be connected legitimately. Implicit in the quoted posts is the question about the nature of the relationship via which monetary exchange takes place. If the payment is required simply "for profit", that is, it is *just* an exchange relationship of the type indicated by Ezzy (2001), then it is considered inappropriate. Foltz (2005) argues that for the most part, pagan commerce practices generally involve more personal relationships, introducing an element of the 'gift' in the exchange. It is this element of gift that Kerry raises in relation to the mentor relationship and Sam and Randal perceive in the apprenticeship relationship. The other underlying tensions revealed in these e-list postings reflect discourses in the broader neo-pagan movement: between traditional witches and modern pagans (c.f. Ezzy 2001), or between credentialed leaders (like Jason) and

self-developed practitioners like Randal (c.f. Neitz 1994; Berger, Leach and Shaffer 2003; Cowan 2005). Jason wants to charge for training in the craft but in practice Randal and Sam do not take this path to initiating others.

One of Miller's (1987) significant arguments centres on the important work consumers do in creating meaning from goods in industrial modernity, and in particular he emphasises the semiotic and cultural labor involved in, and after, the purchase of commodities. In late-capitalist religions, issues of credentialing, organization, identity politics and perpetuating the movement are inevitably bound up with concerns about commercial enterprise, morals and spiritual practices. It is instructive to witness how these tensions are revealed in offline activity.

Pagans, both groups and solitaries, come together for large festival occasions throughout the year. Two distinct types of festivals seem to have emerged in Australia; those that are frequented by pagans and serious acolytes and those that assume the character of markets where the general public wanders and purchases. The former, for example the Pagan Summer Gathering (PSG), are similar in profile to the festivals described by Foltz (2005), and are advertised in pagan forums online and offline. They usually follow a seasonal theme in which further immersion in the craft and participation in rituals and workshops is paramount. Retail outlets, if present, are low-key and attract only a small portion of attendee's interactions and attention. In markets however, like the Magical and Pagan Fairs discussed below, there is a predominance of pagan-run stalls from which the general public may purchase pagan artifacts. Rituals and talks aimed at providing information to the un-initiated are usually conducted throughout the event but the majority of interactions involve consumption practices. These markets are not camping-out or live-in events where participants experience prolonged contact with pagan people (c.f. Foltz 2005). Cowan (2005) queries whether pagans are doing anything differently online compared with the ways they construct their worlds offline. Certainly, differences of opinion and types of interaction I witnessed on e-lists were reflected in social interactions that occurred offline as well, as the examples below illustrate.

OFFLINE

Magical Fair , 2001 – A public forum

The Magical Fair ran for three days in Spring at a central cultural venue in Circle. On entering the large hall, I was greeted by an explosion of bright colours both in people's dress and in the decoration of stalls, though black predominated. Pagans dressed in a variety of clothing styles, in Medieval type costumes, jeans and shirts, short skirts and adornments emblematic of their pagan craft. There was a feeling of calm enjoyment with a pagan band playing in the background. On moving through the crowds I discovered the stage at the far end of the room with an open floor space in front. A huge dark blue banner covering almost the entire wall behind the stage featured a gold pentacle with a silver crescent moon on either side of it. Vendors engaged in conversation with potential buyers, taking time and often explaining and discussing the possible uses for the commodity, particularly if they learned that the customer was not a pagan. Pagan entrepreneurialism evidences a qualitatively different vendor-purchaser relationship than that found in the mass-marketing of witchcraft in mainstream society (Foltz 2005, 163). Through large windows one could see outside. Along a walkway outside the windows and overlooking the river, Tarot readers had lined up their round tables, covered with colourful cloths falling to the ground. Each reader was concentrating with customers on the divination at hand. I spoke to the person at the first table as I exited through a door onto the walkway. She informed me that she

was responsible for taking the Tarot reading bookings. Prices were advertised for half and one-hour sessions.

During the afternoon of the third day two well-known members of the community organised a public forum in the stage and dancing space. They invited four pagans with different craft backgrounds - none of whom are represented in the e-list excerpts quoted earlier - to participate on a panel that would field questions from the floor. I was approached to act as a panel member – a request I immediately experienced (perhaps over-reactively) as a challenge to prove the veracity of my pagan identity claim. My participation impressed some pagans present. Julie, a woman in her mid-forties who had been a pagan since her teenage years commented, "a lot of people are still afraid to stand up and be counted". The audience was composed largely of about twenty recognized pagans as most of the more general public attendance was thinning out at this stage. Some people moved around the edges, dropping in and out of the discussions, as they moved between stalls purveying crystals, clothing, aura imaging, healing massages, jewelry and craft tools, and astrological, craft and self-help literature.

One woman asked the panel, "what do you think about the popularisation of paganism?" I asked for clarification as to what she meant by 'popularization'. George, a long-standing pagan who had trained with Jason and joined his coven, said in dismissive tones, "you know things like the spell kits for teenagers, you can buy them in the newsagents". Discussion focused around the proliferation of spell kits, now widely available in Australia, which usually include a candle, some incense and a slip of paper with instructions to do a spell, for example to make your boyfriend love you. The indirect reference to young women (young gay men were not usually referenced in this manner) resonates with elements of the 'fluffy bunny' discussion held at PITPub noted earlier. In this pagan community there is strong evidence similar to that recognized by Neitz in her study of Dragonfest (2000) that even though neo-pagan imagery and practice open up new possibilities for performing sexuality, heterosexuality continues to define gender relations. The commercialization of craft magic was particularly anathema to pagans attending the forum. They said that you needed more than the tools to affect change. Magic needed to be conducted in the appropriate context with "right intent" and energy supported and evaluated by a community of others. Craft tools, sold as commodities in the absence of a context of practice was seen to promote 'dabbling' in the craft, not a serious engagement with its general principles and philosophy. These exchanges illustrate Miller's theory that commodities act as symbolic goods around which meanings and morality are negotiated.

In the forum exchanges, a distinction was being made between naïve and experienced members of the craft, where the naïve believe that using a few commodities that have become popular signs of the craft will affect a life change in the direction they wish. There is a strain between surface and deeper meanings of craft symbolism and between the subjective use of tools invested with personal meaning and the objectification of them as commodities. These communally derived meanings about the appropriate attitudes to, and understanding and deployment of craft tools act as generalized mechanisms of exclusion of 'inauthentic pagans'. Some pagans hypothesised the possibility of consumer aesthetic reflexivity, suggesting a trajectory of meaning-making and identity formation via consumption practices. They suggested that commodities may enable initial attraction to the craft. If seekers delved further into pagan literature and understandings about the tools they purchased or discussed them with pagans it could lead them to a spiritual community. They pointed out that seekers cannot start in the craft already adept or

experienced in ritual. An example of conversation from the Pagan Fair serves to illustrate how pagans think about the value of entertainment and marketing to promote their religion.

Pagan Fair, 2002 – Personal conversations

The Pagan Fair was held in a prominent open-air public space in the centre of Circle. It was a hot Spring day with clear blue skies. There were many retail outlets lined in parallel around the perimeter of the space purveying pagan type commodities such as drums, attire, ritual tools, herbs and crystals and literature. Laura set up her stall of pagan artifacts there, and Julie, accompanied by close friends, had erected a tent that advertised the features of her new coven. Throughout the day public rituals and stage events were performed on the large lawn space left between stalls and formal talks were scheduled in rooms in a nearby public building. As part of the formal talks, I gave a presentation entitled "Studying pagans: my experience". The following excerpts are taken from my diary notes which recorded interactions that occurred during the moments before and after my presentation.

> When I came into the room that was set aside for the talks Jason was there. He had just completed his talk and we struck up a conversation about general things happening in the community. I inquired as to how he felt about the current discussions on L2 which were targeting him again. He said, "the pagan community is moving on and changing and there are those that don't want that to happen" and I added, "because they can't do things in the ways they have in the past?" Jason went to say he doesn't waste his time worrying about what they are saying. He felt that the movement was developing its own momentum and it would move beyond those who wished to protect its esoteric nature.
>
> Jason was conducting one of the public rituals, which I could not attend because it was scheduled at the same time as my talk. We discussed the value of public rituals and he said that he felt that public rituals, though superficial, were important to "give the uninitiated an experience of ritual".

Public rituals at the Pagan Fair were managed by practicing pagans who set up the accoutrements for ritual and who knew the routines and meanings of symbolic gestures. Newcomers followed instructions given by the leaders (high priest and priestess in this case). I found that public rituals were always surrounded by a large crowd of onlookers as well. For Jason, and pagans I spoke to during this and other public rituals, these events were staged as a way of giving the non-pagans an aesthetic experience that might attract them to pursue the pagan worldview further. From the point of view of some pagan adepts then, the event, both the markets and public rituals are designed to be an entrée into pagan culture for the casual inquirer or even for just the Sunday consumer. In public performances, those pagans who wish to mainstream the religion demonstrate the appropriate use of commodities, for example athame (ritual knife), bowls and crystals, and connect them with authentic meanings and practices of the craft. However, a person who came up to me after my talk had quite a different view. From diary notes:

> … one woman came up the isle towards me from the back looking quite agitated. I could see she was probably quite serious about her pagan identity. She was dressed comfortably in a 'folky' kind of dark coloured dress, wearing some talismans and recognisable goddess symbols like a pentacle. She explained to me that she had been away from the pagan community for several years and had come back to have another look. She said she was "disgusted", "nothing's changed", the whole show was just "commercialisation".

> At the Pagan Fair in 2003, I was sitting on a concrete garden wall getting some rest in the shade when another pagan, who had driven three hours to attend, voiced similar kinds of emotions unsolicited. "I came all the way from [the south] today, just for this! It doesn't matter ripping off the public ('to rip someone off' means to charge unnecessarily and/or excessively for goods), but when you rip off your own - I won't be doing this again".

On the one hand some pagans see commercialization as manifested in events like the Pagan Fair as an outright betrayal of the craft while others see it as a mechanism for raising public awareness. In the pagan festival we can see a reconfiguration of the relations of production and consumption. As both producers and consumers of culture, pagans share knowledge and information with public others who purchase their commodities or services. However, pagan markets not only sell commodities, but in the same space provide rituals, and free talks and entertainments that serve to link symbolic meanings to commodities sold in stalls. Nevertheless, both Jason and the women who were disgusted, felt that 'real' paganism was something quite different from what could be garnered from a public festival and its commercial tone. Again the tension is over the values of commerce and the values of pagan spirituality. 'Real' pagans distance themselves from commercial interests and popular representations of the craft.

Pagans' feelings about their involvement in commercial events like the Magical Fair and Pagan Fair elicit ambivalences similar to those reported by Kates and Belk (2001) in their study of homosexuals' impressions of Lesbian and Gay Pride Day (LGPD) in the United States. As with LGPD, the fairs were located at publicly accessible and highly visible sites and conducted specifically to develop public awareness of the culture. However there are two points of difference in the pagan situation in Australia. Firstly, unlike the overtly mainstream commercial character of LGPD, all of the events and vendors at the kinds of pagan fairs I have mentioned were run by identified pagans. Secondly, these public fairs are different from pagan festivals like the Pagan Summer Gathering (PSG) which take place in out-of-the-way bushland retreats and are generally understood to cater to 'serious' or seriously intentioned pagans. At such festivals there is a conscious downplaying of capitalism and consumerism.

For example, at the three-day live-in PSG in 2003 days were divided into sessions for workshops, rituals, meals, ritual preparations and roundtable discussions. There was no charge to attend these sessions though there was an overall charge to cover costs of meals and accommodation. Further, a first aid room, The Blue Pentacle, was made available for health and safety reasons. Attendees at the conference volunteered their various skills to provide healing services in The Blue Pentacle. I manned The Blue Pentacle one afternoon explaining that while I don't have any of those kinds of skills I can find the right healer for the presenting problem – and indeed succeeded in doing so for two or three patients. One morning was set aside on the last day of the PSG for vendors to display and sell their wares. Stalls were fewer and the markets had a very different feel from other pagan markets – no pressure of selling/buying – more the sense of communication and sharing energy (Diary 26 January, 2003); the more personalised relationship approach to commerce identified by Foltz (2005). But often I observed (and experienced) how pagans would trade services for items or for other work like helping one to paint their house. There seems to be quite a difference between how pagans deal with the generalized 'public' in consumer society and how they interact with each other. This observation is somewhat supported by the woman's comment above that, "it doesn't matter ripping off the public" but for pagans to charge other pagans is quite a different matter. When I discussed her comments with other pagans one person commented that, "she hasn't plugged into the people – joined a group" (Diary, 2002).

One way that pagans in Circle keep in touch and attract seekers is through the regular PITPub gatherings. The following excerpt, taken from my observations at a PITPub evening, illustrates how individuals who earn their livings through pagan-related enterprises reflexively negotiate the prices they charge for services. It reveals the implicit belief that the amount charged must be weighed against ethics of service and care. At the same time the internal logic of capitalism mitigates a happy balance because cost, in monetary terms, is equated with worth or value. In other words it is difficult to attribute value for the 'gift' in a relationship where money is being exchanged.

Pagans in the Pub – 2002

Unlike one-off events like the Magical Pagan Fairs where members of a consuming public may or may not be interested in the pursuit of pagan spirituality, PITPub is a regular occurrence conducted for the purpose of allowing seekers to gain an informal introduction to pagan culture. At PITPub evenings the social space is quite fluid and a variety of people both long-term attendees and new seekers are likely to be present. The interaction reported here occurred when people were talking amongst themselves, settling in with drinks, food and introductions, and not yet gathered into the formal discussion part of the evening. I was sitting with five other people around a table socializing. There were three female Tarot readers, Laura, Margie and Pam and one male, Jack, who made craft items like pendants and staffs (similar to walking sticks), and one other woman. At the time, all of these people derived their incomes from their pagan related work; healing massage, tarot reading, making and selling craft items. They were discussing the matter of charging for services, what was considered reasonable and how they determined what was reasonable. Once each person had volunteered what they charged for services and explained their motivations, Laura commented that "if you charge a lot they complain, and if you don't charge too much they think they're not getting anything worthwhile … you can never work out a happy medium". Then Jack said that he displayed his items with a reasonable price but suggested to people that if it was worth more to them then they should choose to pay according to the value it held for them. His solution was to encourage reflexive consumption. He put the decision of cost onto the consumer, thus distancing himself from capitalist practices, and challenging the consumer to examine the relationship between their own consumer and spiritual values.

Another feature of the capitalist structuring of social relations in a consumer culture is the commodification of time and its equation with money (Adam 2003). Laura introduced 'time' as a valuable commodity and tied it to the process of earning an income. She explained that tarot reading contributed to her livelihood, she charged by the hour and when the time was up 'that's it'. Pam indicated that she sometimes felt that a particular reading needed longer than the hour (or half hour) and she preferred to continue to give the person the whole reading even if it went longer, but she did not charge for it. In fact, even though conscious that time was passing she deliberately avoided checking her watch which might indicate to her client that her interest was in getting the session over with rather than in the client's welfare. She felt that it was more important to impart to the client the benefit of the whole reading than to cut the consultation short or negotiate a larger remuneration. Margie offered what might be considered a mid-way position. She said that she was conscious of time passing when doing a Tarot reading, and the need to keep track of it. To take too long was to deprive herself of income. She used an alarm clock which she placed outside of the main consultation area so that it was just audible when it sounded. She used this signal to wind-down the consultation thus not going too far beyond her allocated time but at

the same time not cutting her client off abruptly, a gesture that would signal an impersonal exchange.

The tacit understanding underlying the Tarot readers' discussion was an ethical concern that somehow one should moderate the monetary value one places on goods and services that are connected with spiritual development and personal welfare. The people conversing reflexively explored tensions between managing the practical aspects of earning an income and the idealistic issues of contributing to the common good. Contrasting these discussions with online comments made by Sam quoted earlier and discussions in the Magical Fair forum, they highlight a distinction identified by Laura, "they don't like you charging to teach the craft, it's all right if you're charging for Tarot readings or something like that but if you charge to introduce people to witchcraft you'll get into trouble". It is possible then that the body of spiritual and magical teaching is considered sacred beyond fiscal issues, but it is more acceptable to charge for the accoutrements of paganism: the provision of divinatory or healing services and crafting of pagan tools.

Laura, Margie, Pam and Jack, who engage in commercial enterprises to make a living in the craft, may be compared with others like Jason, Randal and Barry who earn their livings in the secular workplace. Indeed, during the Magical Fair forum, the issue of charging for courses was also raised, echoing the online discussions that had been taking place around the same time. Although names were not mentioned, people discussed the morality of charging hundreds of dollars for courses in the craft. They were particularly concerned if the person already held a full-time job for which some judged he probably earned a reasonable living. Those present agreed that there was a difference between those who made their livings from the craft, either from purveying its accoutrements or magickal teachings, and needed to charge accordingly, and those who possessed other employment which may be sufficient to meet their personal needs. The latter should not need to charge large amounts for courses. However it was agreed that pagans should not presume to judge the extent of other pagan's needs or to query their financial arrangements. Individuals should be left to balance their personal needs and commitments but the general feeling was that unfettered profit making, particularly for training in the craft, was unacceptable.

COMMERCIALISATION, CAPITALISM AND PAGAN IDENTITY

The examples we have provided suggest that although paganism may be an exemplary post-modern religion it does not follow that its adherents rest in a commodified spirituality bereft of deeper spiritual meanings and practices. In fact, a discourse has emerged in which the 'authentic' pagan is being constructed through ongoing conversations around a series of distinctions. Issues of pagan identity, commercialisation of the craft and capitalist enterprise revealed many semiotic tensions regarding:

1. practical issues and religious ideals
2. capitalist values and spiritual values
3. naïve and experienced practitioners of the craft
4. 'modern' pagans and traditionalists
5. expansionism and esotericism
6. surface and deeper meanings of the craft
7. practices that were judged to be peripheral or central to community identity (for example the peripheral, 'pagan type' Harry Potter movie)
8. playful and serious engagement with the craft
9. media representations of witchcraft and pagan reality

It should be stressed at this point that whether there is such a being as an authentic pagan or not is not the issue. Through the production and consumption of craft artefacts and services pagans engage in what Lamont describes as aesthetic and moral projects of the self, by weighing their values and judgements against those of others, perhaps renegotiating them, and developing shared values as members of a community that calls itself pagan. It is pagans' reflexive engagement in these discussions both online and offline that gives them a sense of belonging and identity and a way of marking boundaries between themselves and others. Email lists provide the continuity for this negotiation keeping it alive and available to hundreds of others on a day-to-day basis (Berger 1999). Most cogently though we find that pagans are conscious of and practically engage in discussions about constructions of pagan identity and commodification of the craft which is exemplified in the notion of the "fluffy bunny".

A long discussion thread took place on L2 during 2002 in which participants debated what it meant to be a "fluffy bunny". Analysis of the various contributions revealed that a "fluffy bunny" would exhibit the kinds of characteristics illustrated by the first terms in the nine tensions listed above, pragmatic, profiteering, dabbling, modern, superficial, peripheral to community, playful and using multi-media to further practical and capitalist values. Some voices (a minority) argued that being a fluffy bunny was as legitimate a position as any other as not all people come to the craft with experience, for example. The first example links the "fluffy bunny" to those people who gain a surface grasp of pagan practices but fail to incorporate pagan beliefs into their day-to-day life practices.

Posted – 2002

> What about weekend pagans? What about people who only ever read 1 book and are *happy* with that? What about if they do fairy rituals (and yes, I've been to one!) and find some sense of inner peace in that? If that satisfies their yearning for a spiritual experience? (*sic*) If that is all the spiritual development they're capable of? Or what if they never finished highschool and reading any decent research is like trying to comprehend German? …
>
> So perhaps my definition of a fluffy is someone who views their religion as an adjunct – not as a lifes (*sic*) work – and it (*sic*) so, great. It gains nothing to be elitist and ask them to push further if they have stopped at the beginning of their path and started building a two-storey brick house. Or perhaps their path is just a wee bit shorter *shrugs*.

In the following posts the "fluffy bunny" is linked to the person who is uninformed, immature and lacking in their understanding of the forces of nature and consequently dangerous because they may mis-use magic.

Posted – Three days after above post.

> Ummmmm a fluffy
>
> for me a fluffy is a person who doesn't know what they are talking about, or as was said not steadfast in there (*sic*) beliefs. I am sure that we have all met the 12 year old who is a high priestess and the leader of huge demonic armies and has alliances with the elves!!!!;

Posted – Same day as "Ummmmm a fluffy" above

> What do I see as a 'fluffy'. To me these *are* people who see things in terms of sparkles and rainbows. Not, Like (*sic*) (Leanne's) friend, in a conscious effort to improve the

> world – a difficult path that I respect – but out of a refusal to accept or acknowledge unpleasant aspects of reality, and more importantly in themselves. It is one think (*sic*) to be aware of human frailty, or the shades of dark and light in life, and to strive ever to make it better and happier place, and quite another to bury one's head in the sand, preach love and light, but take no responsibility for their own actions and impulses (conscious or unconscious) by simply refusing to see them … perhaps what bugs me most about these type (*sic*) is not so much the superficiality (which the 'fashion-witch' has in spades) but the hyposcrisy (*sic*) which often enables them to do harm whilst preaching love and light, and never once recognizing the results of their own actions.

These discussions identify what are perceived as the superficial engagement with the craft, something one does on weekends, in their leisure time, not as a moral and spiritual code that informs their modes of being in the world. They refer to the superficial practitioner's tendency to focus only on the light, happy side of life without balancing it with the dark and difficult aspects of experience. Such unbalanced views, if promoted to unenlightened others, may have detrimental consequences for their welfare. Superficial practitioners, offering rituals and spells with only these elements, are likely to be unaware of how such imbalances can lead to harm for others.

During the fluffy bunny online discussions it became clear that the expression "fluffy bunny" was one that most people felt/hoped did not apply to them, though some people argued the finer points of the 'dark' and 'light' experiences and why the idea of a "fluffy bunny" engaged people's attention at all. One person's mail in a semiotic play of meaning humourously exemplified this concern. After someone else had mentioned that they 'pretend' to be a fluffy bunny in contexts where people would find a 'real' pagan too threatening, they posted:

Posted – Two days following post immediately above.

> Oh this is good, it's hard enough keeping up with the Fluffy Bunny
> discussion, are we now going to have one on TRAINEE?/FAKE FLUFFIES?
> Fake fluffies? Is that like the difference between fake fur and real
> fur, how am I going to know the difference between a real fluffy and
> a pretender to the throne? Has anyone got any ideas on this? I can't
> believe it's not a Fluffy! When is a Fluffy not a Fluffy? A new
> breed of Fluffy? Do you mean like a Hybrid? or (*sic*) is a Fake Fluffy some
> type of genetically engineered being that has been created in a lab
> (or read circle if you prefer)? Just when I thought I could safely
> recognise a Fluffy, now I read that there are Fake ones out there,
> oh I think I need a BEX! (medication for headaches) This whole Fluffy discussion is a riot, keep it up.....regards.

The expression "fluffy bunny" has come to be used as a shorthand way of signalling people's inauthentic engagement with witchcraft. At the 2003 PSG the woman who acted as high priestess for the Summer Rite warned the gathering that the event was not about "fluffy bunny" paganism. The expression "fluffy bunny" is used at all levels of pagan social interaction from interpersonal conversations to discussions at national gatherings and beyond. There are now many web pages dedicated to the discussion (just search the net with terms – 'fluffy bunny pagan'). It is often shortened to 'fluffy' and was used in this manner when the organiser of Pagan Pride Day was interviewed for *WitchCraft* magazine. In describing her encounters with the media, she said, "I

did however get an easy introduction to radio interviewing …, fielding some light and *fluffy* questions from a nice, happy DJ about being a Witch and my broom being superseded by a vacuum cleaner" (my emphasis, Porter 2003, 21)

CONCLUSION

Witchcraft, magic and pagan spirituality are keenly embraced by consumer culture which offers commodified forms of spiritual enlightenment for those willing and able to engage in the market for such spiritual goods. As exemplars of post-modern spirituality, pagans are eclectic in their practices and belief systems and physically identified as small groups or solitary individuals pursuing privatised religious practices. They both produce *and* consume the kinds of commodities generated through capitalist interests and media representations but this engagement with late capitalist values is ambivalent. The widespread commercialisation of the craft presents a dilemma for pagans. We found the extent to which they were identified as taking up capitalist opportunities to be an important tension in the formation of pagan identity. Pagans negotiated a sense of authenticity by debating capitalist and spiritual values in online and offline forums and through discussions in interpersonal relationships. While it was felt that a commodity had the potential to lead one to authentic spiritual practice, pagans believed that it was unlikely to do that unless mediated by moral ideals, such as trust and honesty and forging person-centred rather than commodity-centred relationships with other pagans.

The establishment of an 'authentic' - pagan identity is formed partly by one's ability to discern the proper limits of commodification and consumerism in the pursuit of religious practice. These limits are debated by and with others who may or may not be known to them. Others are 'present' communicatively in online fora (if not in offline places) and it is the negotiation of the proper relation between production, consumption and spiritual quest that makes possible constructions of authentic personal lifestyles. It is this aspect of pagan communications that reveals one way that post-modern citizens in consumer culture construct identities around the production and consumption of commodities.

Pagans engage reflexively with consumer values and practices betraying a tacit agreement that spirituality is not a commodity that can be wholly mediated by materialistic values (c.f. Heelas 1994). Reflexivity proves to be a play of tensions in which the *sense* of a particular identity is created which aligns with others participating in the conversation. This is constantly up for discussion and debate and concerns the values of traditional normative ideas like elitism, tradition, and history. We have argued that such an identity is negotiated as authentic in relation to what are perceived to be the superficial, playful and naïve features of late-capitalism and consumer lifestyles. The widely used and understood expression "fluffy bunny" acts as a trope to signal these notions and therefore serves to invoke a generally felt collective consciousness of an 'authentic pagan' identity.

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