

Surprise Under the Hood: Sustainable, Aesthetic, and Hedonic-Ludic Electric Vehicle Marketing

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Mobility a key global challenge – not just a regional issue.
Research in UK has contributed continuously to
the sustainable mobility conversation.





We've been here before...

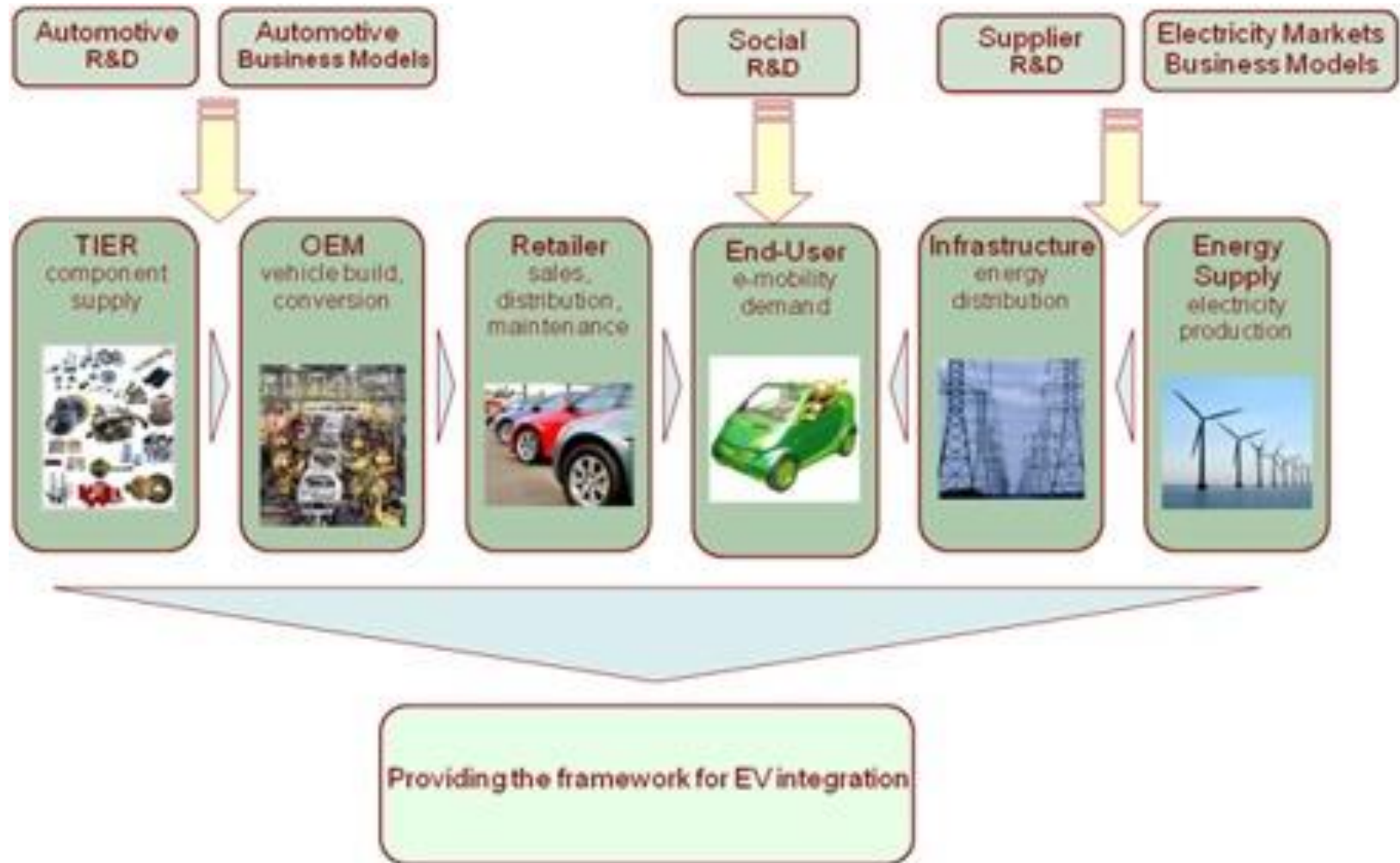


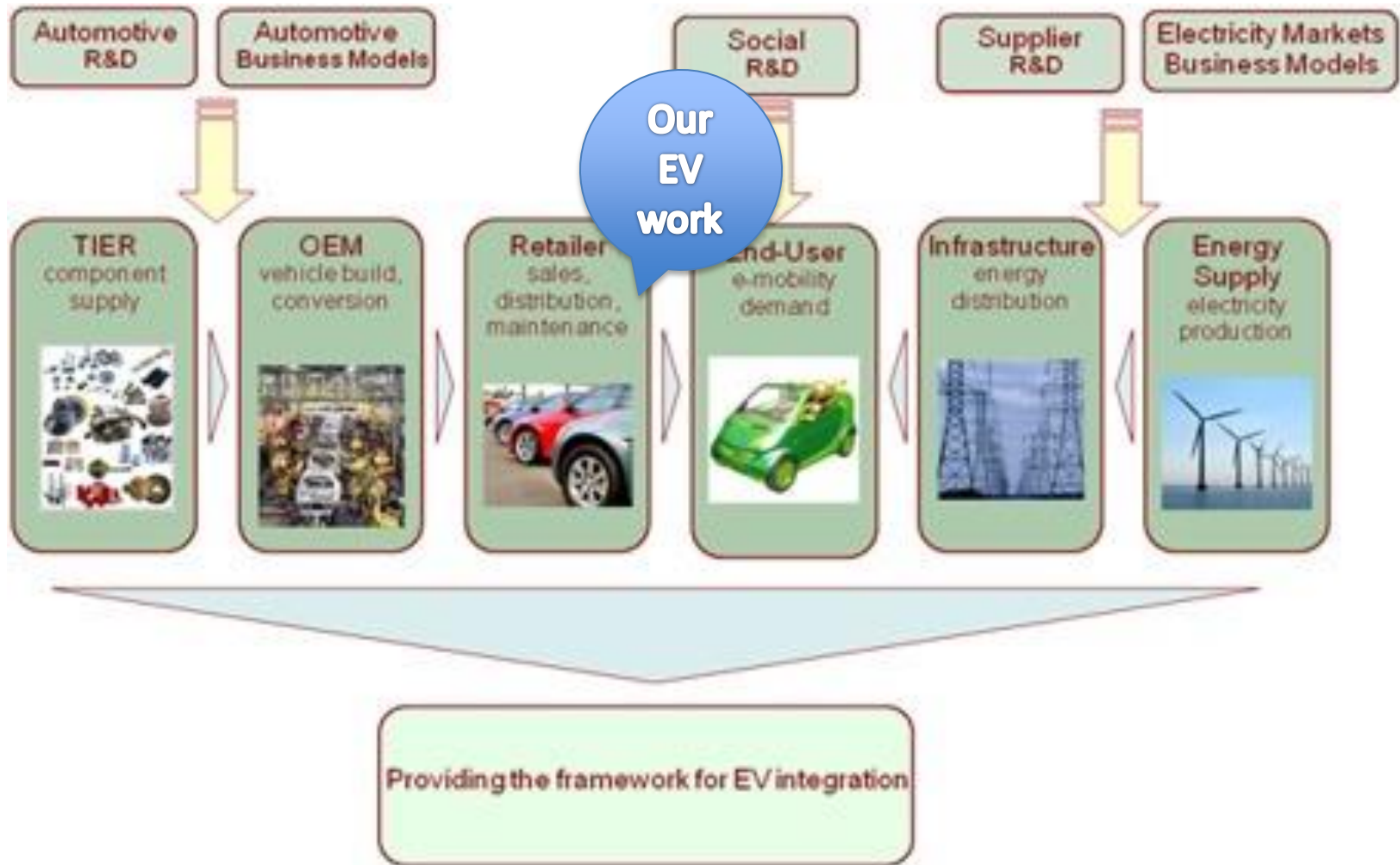
http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0489037/?ref=fn_al_tt_1



<http://www.newvideo.com/docurama/revenge-of-the-electric-car/>

The Cardiff Framework





Sustainable product marketing usually...





...focuses primarily on sustainable product attributes.

Why Electric Vehicles: The Cognitive-Rational Arguments

Bill Destler, President, Rochester Institute of Technology

- Efficiency: 75% vs. 25% for gasoline
- Emissions: zero carbon with renewable power
- Versatility: Multiple and local energy sources
- Infrastructure: Existing power distribution system
- Range: Americans drive < 40 miles (64 km) per day
- Inevitability: Next-gen technologies (e.g., fuel cells) require electric drive trains

However...The rational argument doesn't always win the day, even among the most sustainably-minded consumers. There is a gap between sustainable attitudes and actual buyer behavior. Sometimes...

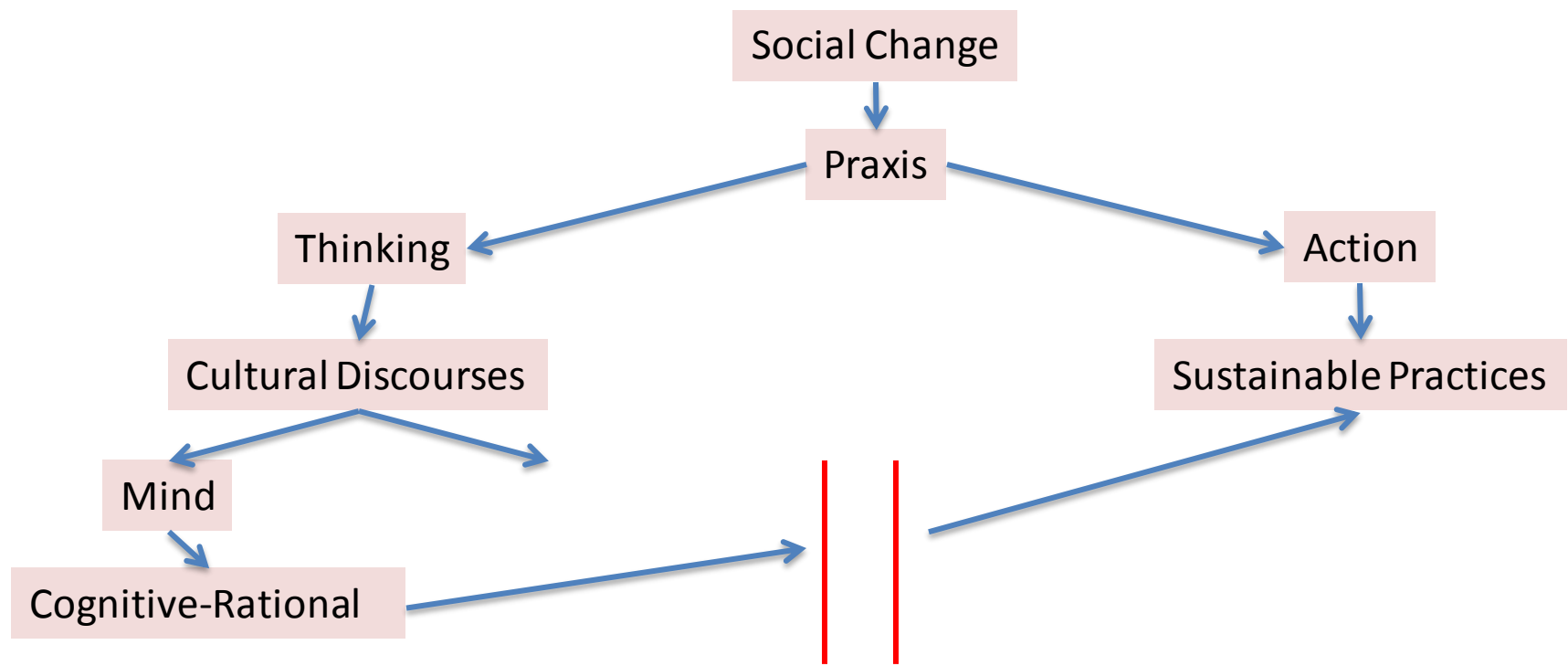


WE BUY THINGS WE DON'T NEED
WITH MONEY WE DON'T HAVE
TO IMPRESS PEOPLE WE DON'T LIKE.

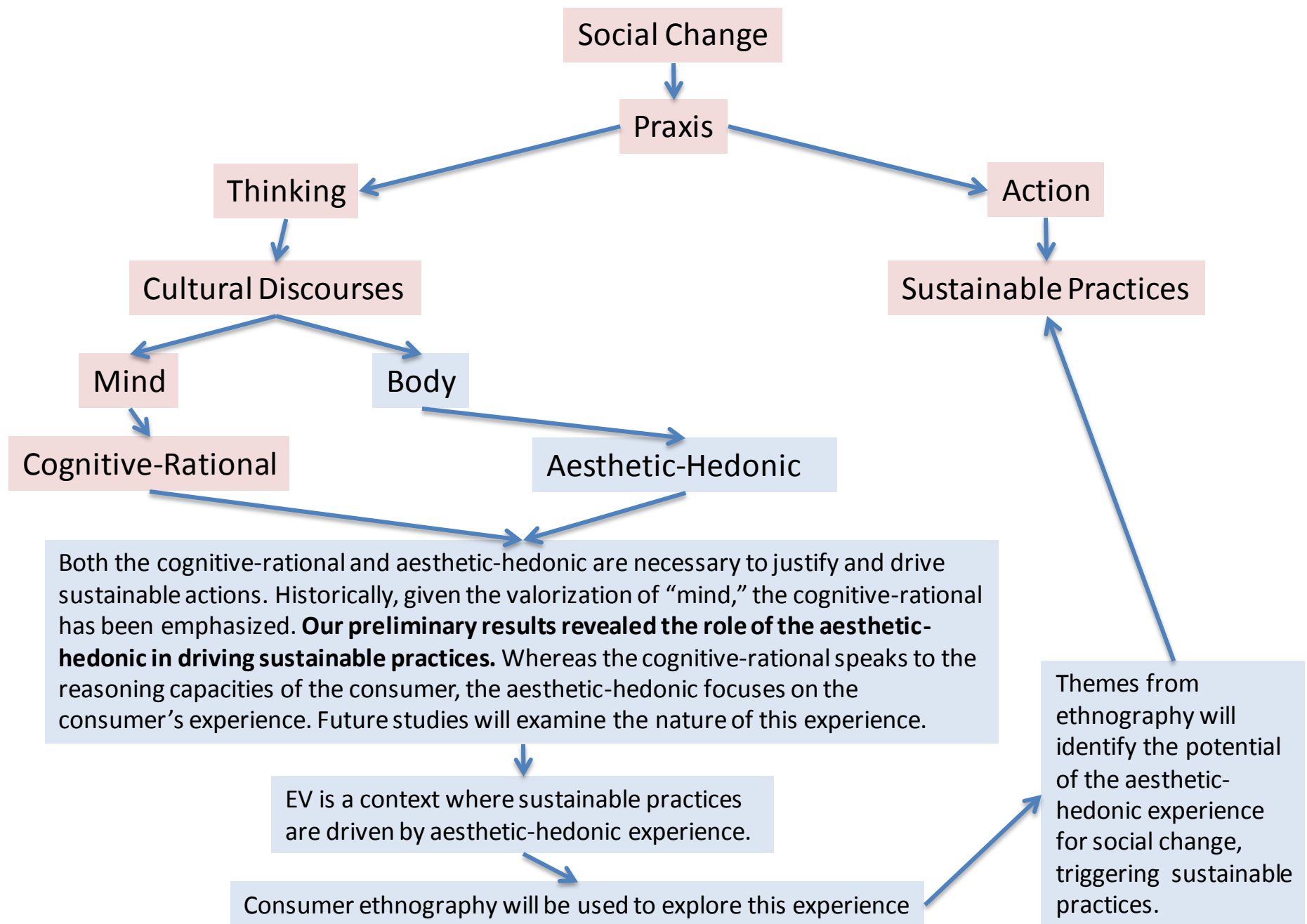
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Attitude Behavior Gap

"Numerous theoretical frameworks have been developed to explain the gap between the possession of environmental knowledge and environmental awareness, and displaying pro-environmental behavior. Although many hundreds of studies have been done, no definitive answers have been found." Kollmuss & Agyeman (2002)



The Attitude-Behavior Gap



Tesla markets its cars differently...



Focusing **primarily on aesthetics and hedonic-ludic product attributes**, rather than all-electric motor.

Luxury aesthetics and functional design demonstrate graceful collaboration in the flagship Tesla sedan:

“With the All Glass Panoramic Roof, Model S is the only sedan capable of delivering a **convertible-like drive experience every day**. It's more than a sunroof: the entire roof is constructed from lightweight safety glass. With a simple swipe of the Touchscreen, it opens wider than any other sedan's panoramic roof...” (Tesla Motors)





“Introducing a car so advanced it sets the new standard for premium performance...Performance Plus takes one of the world’s best sedans into supercar handling territory, while also improving the ride quality and range...**Model S epitomizes efficiency, embodying the grace and performance of a world-class athlete.** Its sculpted form expresses a constant state of speed and motion.” (Tesla Motors)

Ethnographic Research Contexts:

Electric motorcycle racing: TTXGP, Isle of Man TT Zero



Motoczysz, USA – “Winner of the 2012 Isle of Man TT Zero, with 100+ mph average lap times”

<http://hollywoodelectrics.com/about/testimonials/>

Zero SR



Aaron, male, 30's

So if you've ever ridden a motorcycle, right, and somebody puts you on a brand new one, and instantly you're on the freeway? I looked down and I'm already going 60mph, right? **And you- you had no sense of that because it was so quiet. It was so smooth.** And the acceleration was so instantaneous that I loved it. I loved it. It's fantastic. The best description I've heard of what the experience is like actually came from our CTO, Abe. He describes **it as 'riding a magic carpet'**. It's like a magic carpet ride. So you're essentially distilling the motorcycle experience down to its most simple element. Not unlike surfing, where with a simple twist of the throttle and a shift of weight, you can glide through turns...you can accelerate, decelerate...at this point I've got mine programmed in such a way that with the regenerative breaking, kind of like engine breaking, I never have to use the break. I just twist it on, come off a little bit, and I just carve right through the turns.

Aaron (cont.)

Well, it's definitely- the gas bike is for classic rock or heavy metal, and like 'I'm definitely going to be seen', and **the electric bike is more like the classical music. It's more like jazz...maybe a certain kind of vocalist or something like that.** Again, you're kind of slipping in, unseen and unheard. That's why our (FX) kind of think of it as a stealth fighter. You can kind of go places with that bike that you probably shouldn't, and you won't be seen or heard from.

Shannon, male, 40's

You're actually more aware of your environment on an electric motorcycle than a gas bike, because you hear things. You're going to hear an ambulance a lot sooner than you would on a gas bike...is just the entire feeling of **you forget that you're on a motorcycle entirely. It's almost like sailing on a road**, because there's no distraction with vibration or noise or smell of exhaust.

Gabriel, male, 30's

Gabriel: Why a Zero? It's the best looking motorcycle I've found! I don't like the way the crotch rockets look. You know, they're just not my style, I guess. This is a little closer to my style. I would prefer a shovelhead Harley, or a vintage-looking bike.

Diane: Like an Indian?

Gabriel: Indian, maybe, or even Triumph, but a Shovelhead Harley is what I would want. But this, to me, looks cool enough, I guess. It does the job. And, really, it's more about riding and the feel of it, kind of. I feel like this is more agile. It's 250 pounds, which is light for a bike. Getting it up and out of my truck is pretty easy. I just have a ramp and just wheel it up. I just feel like it's more agile than most cruisers.

Gabriel (cont.)

Diane: What if Harley made, like, another Shovelhead?

Gabriel: Would I go for it? Well, the Shovelheads are good because they're vintage and old. They look like they've been through hell and back, and the Harley can't remake the Shovelheads, that's not going to happen. But if they made, say, a Sportster that was electric, then, yeah, I'd probably go. It would have to look really beautiful. **This still looks good, and it's not trying to be something else...**

Ethnographic Research Contexts:

Electric Golf Cars: Golf and retirement communities



GEM: Global Electric Motorcars



Grocery shopping
Post Office
Liquor store

Visiting friends &
neighbors...
and even golfing



Ethnographic Research Contexts:

Electric Snowmobiles: Lapland



Elmacchina, Sweden – “Introducing the electric snowmobile”

Ethnographic Research Contexts:

Electric Automobile Racing



Quimera, Spain – “Responsible Racing”

Formulec, France – “The future of racing, now”



Preliminary Research Findings: A Gain, not a Sacrifice

It's about the hedonic experience of acceleration, handling and the admiring gaze. It's about the quiet of the road, not the roar of the engine.



Other Considerations: Preserving the Passion

- Car culture and motorcycle culture are here to stay (at least for now), but they are amenable to change
- Electric vehicle racing is developing out of the desire to preserve racing in a changing world
- R & D creates innovations in a competitive setting
- What works at the track will work on the street
- “What wins on Sunday sells on Monday!”

Key research challenge:

What conditions are needed to realise consumer EV adoption, particularly in densely populated parts of the world? In other words, how can we better understand consumer likelihood to buy EVs?

Consumer Ethnography

(A very quick and dirty explanation)

Understanding Consumption in its Social and Cultural Contexts



Building Theory from Lived Experience



Colonial Beginings



Bronisław Malinowski, ca. 1920

Academic Breakthroughs



Subcultures of Consumption: 1995 and



Re-inquiry in 2006

Goals of Ethnographic Research

- To gain a rich, textured, holistic understanding of behavior in its social and cultural context
- To understand life as people live it, not merely as they *report* living it



Oh no, not
another
survey!

Ethnographic Methods



Solving the puzzles of consumer society

Building the Puzzle

- *Corners and edges:* The boundaries of a phenomenon
- *Similar colors and patterns:* Similarities and differences in people's experiences and behaviors
- *Unifying lines:* Threads of continuity, a sense of how things connect into a bigger picture
- *Foreground objects first:* Main explanatory themes of meaning and practice
- *Background last:* Social and cultural context

The Next Ethnographic Research Context:

Exotic electric cars: Europe and America



Tesla Roadster, USA – “0 – 100 kph in under 4 seconds”

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Thank you! Diane & Pierre

