



## Once upon a market dreary: the prescient marketing principles of Edgar Allan Poe

Stephen Brown and Pauric McGowan

Department of Management, Leadership & Marketing, Ulster University Business School, Ulster University, Jordanstown, United Kingdom

### ABSTRACT

An American icon, Edgar Allan Poe (1809–1849) is famed for his fiendish tales of fear and trembling, and premature burial. He is less well known as a businessperson, let alone a marketing thought leader. Poe, though, was not only an entrepreneurially inclined self-promoter of genius, but he practised prescient marketing principles that are pertinent to present circumstances. In a world where dark tourism, dead celebrities and disinterred brands loom large, Poe's principal principles – *perversity*, *poetry*, *plagiary*, *plasticity* – are prior portents of marketing precepts. Written in an appropriately literary style, this paper shows that dead men do foretell tales. Of markets dreary.

### ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 26 January 2018  
Accepted 27 August 2018

### KEYWORDS

Macabre marketing; undead ideas; literary theory; Edgar Allan Poe; Poe's Ps

*Even in the grave all is not lost.*

— E. A. Poe, *The Pit and the Pendulum*

Great literature is a guide for life, business life included. From Bruce Barton's belief that the Bible is a how-to sales manual, via the entrepreneurial lessons that can be gleaned from Jane Austen, to the contemporary fad for Ayn Rand's infamous *Fountainhead*, the world of books has had a wealth of influence on CEOs and their subordinates (Desai, 2017; Morson & Schapiro, 2017). Granted, the classics-for-corporations genre is routinely derided by leading authors and literary critics alike (Sutherland, 2017). But this disdain has done little to subdue the Melville-for-Managers, Milton-as-Marketer, Miller-shills-Selling school of thought (Brawer, 1998; Czarniawska, 2000; Simmons, 2004).

So entrenched is learn-from-literature tradition that *The Economist* (2014) urges executives to eschew 'outward bound' for 'inward bound' training programmes. That is, to abandon fire walking, paint balling, bungee jumping and analogous team-building exercises for collective contemplation of great works of literature by Dante, Dickens, Dickinson, Drabble or Dostoevsky. However, when it comes to Jeffrey Archer's *Clifton Chronicles* or Katie Price's *Playing With Fire* – both set in the world of business – inward bound boosters are less bullish. For the most part, managers are advised, in a corporate rerun of the hoary highbrow-lowbrow divide, to stick to canonical classics, such as Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* or Shakespeare's *Othello*,

rather than sully their thinking with grubby genre fiction akin to *Fifty Shades of Grey* or *The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo* (Desai, 2017).<sup>1</sup>

Although 'lesser' works of literature may be beneath inward bounders' dignity, marketing scholars see things differently (Belk, 1986). Many years ago, Mulvihill (1985) maintained that the blockbuster novels of James A. Michener contained useful information on the prehistory of marketing. More than a few consumer researchers have culled the corpus of romantic fiction in order to better understand compulsive consumption and maternal matters more generally (Brown, 1995; Patterson & Aherne, 2006; O'Donohoe, 2018; O'Malley, Patterson, & Bheacháin, 2006). Science fiction's alleged ability to forecast the future has likewise attracted the attention of several aesthetically-inclined, anticipatory-orientated marketing academics (Fitchett, 2002; Schroeder, 2000; Smith & Higgins, 2000). Ditto the poems of Dr. Seuss (Holbrook, 1995), the fairy stories of H.C. Andersen (Belk, 1997), the conspiracy thrillers of Dan Brown (Drummond, 2006) and the black comedy confections of Scotland's Alan Spence (O'Donohoe & Turley, 2000).

This paper extends that tradition by showing how Edgar Allan Poe, past master of the macabre, can send shivers down the spine of marketing thought. In a world where dark tourism is wildly popular (*The Economist*, 2017), dead celebrities are worth a fortune (D'Rozario, 2017) and the demonic magic of the marketplace is attracting ever more academic attention (Daunt & Greer, 2017; Davari, Iyer, & Guzmán, 2017; Miles, 2018), Edgar's unsettling ideas are worth exhuming and examining. For all his personal foibles and professional failings, Poe was both entrepreneurially inclined and an astute self-promoter who not only had an unerring feel for what the market wanted but disbursed words of advice to budding business-people (Hartmann, 2008; Hayes, 2009; Tomc, 2002). And while some may wonder whether long-dead writers have anything to say to latter-day managers, it is widely recognised that great artists are 'the bearers of special wisdom, foresight or intuition' (Whalen, 1999, p. 47), nothing less than the anticipatory antennae of humankind (Belk, 1986).

We begin with a few words on Edgar's life and tumultuous times, which were not unlike our own in certain respects. Our article continues with a summary of Poe's principal marketing principles – four in total, plus three para-principles – which are derived from close readings of his rich and varied corpus, as well as the sizeable secondary literature. A brief assessment of the entrepreneurial abilities of America's 'super-eminent necrophile' then follows (Fiedler 1967, p. 137), before we conclude with a word from 'The Raven', whose unforgettable refrain almost broke the steampunk internet.

## Go Poe

In a cogent analysis of the Gothic literary tradition, Fisher (2002, p. 79) describes Poe as a 'drunken, drug-ridden, debauching necrophiliac creature whose own morality, or lack thereof, filtered into his writings'. This thumbnail summary, although not entirely inaccurate, is widely held (Ackroyd, 2009). According to Hoffman (1972), however, there are many other Edgar Allan Poes in addition to the warped author of weird tales like 'Ligeia', 'Berenice', 'The Black Cat', 'The Premature Burial', 'The Cask of Amontillado' and 'The Pit and the Pendulum'. He was the founder of several stupendously popular literary genres, including horror, fantasy, science fiction, and the detective story. He was one of the greatest poets, biggest hoaxers, humorous satirists, and insightful literary theorists of the nineteenth century. He was the progenitor of the penurious, garret-dwelling, arts-for-art's-sake artist – Baudelaire's

*poète maudit* – who not only rebelled against the loathsome bourgeoisie but spat on their graves for good measure. His insidious posthumous influence, furthermore, is evident in everything from sports franchises (the Baltimore Ravens) and fashion statements (the glowering Goth look), through assorted surrealist artworks (Max Ernst's, Rene Magritte's, André Breton's) and rebellious rock music (Lou Reed, Iggy Pop, Iron Maiden), to popular computer games (the *Dark Tales* series), long-running television shows like *The Simpsons* (whose first Halloween special featured 'The Raven') and blockbuster movie sagas, not least *Star Wars* (the latest incarnation of which includes starfighter captain Poe Dameron).

For his contemporaries, though, Edgar Allan Poe was a hard-headed, hard-working, hard-driving member of the Fourth Estate, a regular contributor to – and de facto editor of – several successful literary journals including the *Southern Literary Messenger*, *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine* and the *Broadway Journal* (Hayes, 2009). When not debilitated by the demon drink, his industry, his output, his ambition, his amiability, his virtuoso versatility was never less than wondrous. True, he became something of a literary lion late in his career, when 'The Raven' earned him speaking gigs on the lucrative Lyceum circuit. Poe's long-standing plans to establish his own periodical likewise came to naught, albeit untimely death intervened just as things were looking up. His posthumous reputation, what is more, was sullied by a jealous rival, Rufus Griswold, who wrote the spiteful obituary that established Edgar's standing as 'a long suicide, a womanizer and heavy drinker who died at 40 after a lengthy drinking session' (Connelly, 2017, p. 233). It is a reputation that dogs him to this day. But for those in the know, Poe was one of the world's first literary entrepreneurs, a marketing minded author who earned a living, of sorts, from his writings (Whalen, 1999).

What people tend to overlook about Edgar is that he wasn't unusually delinquent, nor unduly dedicated to debauchery. On the contrary, he was a man of business (Hartmann, 2008). His adoptive father, John Allan, was a dour Scotch-Irish merchant who not only built his dry goods retailing warehouse into a thriving concern, but put the boy to work in it. There, Edgar acquired the rudiments of his stepfather's calling and the work ethic that stood him in good stead. A natural salesman, he was blessed with an ability to charm, if not quite the birds from the trees, then his very first publisher, who was persuaded to issue a volume of Poe's juvenile verses, even though poetry, then as now, didn't sell. Suitably chastened, Edgar duly eschewed odes and devoted his energies instead to the seemingly insatiable demand for short stories, sensational short stories especially, which filled the pages of the popular periodicals that proliferated in the early nineteenth century (Hayes, 2009). These periodicals didn't pay much to their contributors – and often paid late – but they paid enough to let the ambitious get by. If it weren't for his substance abuse issues, which aren't exactly unknown among artistic types, Poe could have been an affluent 'authorpreneur' (*The Economist*, 2015), the E.L. James or J.K. Rowling of his day.

Nowhere is Edgar's marketing nous better illustrated than in the case he made for an early short story. Writing to Thomas W. White, the editor of the *Southern Literary Messenger*, he acknowledged that 'Berenice' may be a tad tasteless. But tastelessness, he contended, was what readers really wanted. Bad taste not only sold by the bushel, but the badder the taste, the better the sales. And strong sales, not stated sensitivities, were the only metric that mattered in the scribbling industry. 'Poe was keenly aware,' Collins (2014, p. 28) reports, 'of the difference between what the public claims to value versus what it actually buys'. More than that, Galloway (1987, p. 8) makes abundantly clear, 'Edgar Allan Poe was a professional

man of letters with an astute sense of the contemporary market'. He had, Buranelli (1977, p. 40) insists, 'a hard, pragmatic sense of what the public was prepared to pay for and he gave it what it wanted'.

In this regard, the legendary literary critic Leslie Fiedler (1982) once observed that although Poe wrote with the market in mind, the market didn't want what he wrote. What Fiedler failed to appreciate is that (1) Poe's contributions increased the circulation of every magazine he worked for, and (2) our proto-authorpreneur toiled in particularly unpropitious circumstances. Yes, the early nineteenth century witnessed a revolution in printing technology and availability, a media explosion on a par with today's digital revolution (Hayes, 2009). But the absence of international copyright protection meant that the pages of US periodicals were filled with pirated content from foreign authors, not least literary luminaries like Charles Dickens. Copious copy, furthermore, was provided for free by gentlemen authors, aristocratic amateurs who penned piquant articles in their spare time. Poe, in other words, worked in conditions not unlike today's mediascape, where all-conquering Googzilla rides roughshod over copyright, professional writers find it difficult to earn a living, and well-meaning Twitterati (to say nothing of bloggers, vloggers and e-book authors) daily deliver user-generated content that disturbs, disrupts, and destroys the once mighty business model of old media empires (Timberg, 2015).

### Poe's Ps

Edgar Allan Poe, Whalen (1999) contends and Hayes (2009) concurs, is a paradigmatic precursor of our post-truth times, an antebellum augur whose prophetic utterances are pertinent to present circumstances. He was, according to the former's appropriately mercantile analogy, a 'leading indicator' of things to come (Whalen, 1999, p. 47). This was a man who, when writing about the far distant future in 'Mellonta Tauta' foresaw a political situation where democracy gives rise to demagoguery, despotism, and lowest common denominator discourse. This was a man who not only anticipated the Big Bang theory, but anticipated both the Big Crunch and Multiple Universe theories in addition. This was a man whose prescience extended to print-on-demand, as well today's socially-mediated blogosphere where long tails, tall tales and tart tweets are two a penny. This was a man who predicted more than a century before Paul D. Converse – at a time, remember, when confidence tricks and shameless chicanery characterised commercial culture (Cook, 2001) – that marketing had the makings of an 'exact science'.

But what does Edgar's marketing science consist of? No one knows for sure, because the necrophile's necrophile alludes to mercantile matters rather than announces them. However, a 'close reading' of Poe's scintillating oeuvre – in accordance with prior lit-crit. contributions to marketing scholarship (e.g. Hackley, 2003; Holbrook, 1995; Scott, 1994; Stern, 1989)<sup>2</sup> – as well as the voluminous secondary literature (biographies, reflective essays, critical commentary, etc.), suggests that his principal principles can be conveniently, if crudely, summarised under four main headings: *Perversity*, *Poetry*, *Plagiarism* and *Plasticity*.

### Perversity

Published in 1843, at the pinnacle of Poe's seven-year stretch of superlative storytelling, 'The Black Cat' tells the tale of a wife-killing, cat-torturing psychopath, who confesses to

his heinous crimes while awaiting capital punishment. In an attempt at self-justification, the condemned man blames his behaviour on the 'spirit of perversity'. By this he means the primitive impulse that is made manifest in actions or activities that are not good for us. And that we know are not good for us. Yet we do them anyway. Driven by the 'imp of the perverse', people do things they aren't supposed to *because* they aren't supposed to. Elsewhere, Poe compares the feeling to standing on the edge of a precipice, simultaneously petrified yet perversely possessed by an unaccountable urge to plunge headlong into the abyss. 'Have we not a perpetual inclination, in the teeth of our best judgment, to violate that which is law merely because we understand it to be such'.

Poe's imp hasn't gone away. If anything, it's bigger than ever. It has been commodified, moreover. It is nothing less than an Inc. of the Perverse. Humankind's unquenchable 'thirst for self-torture' is nowadays made manifest in manifold high-risk activities, such as sky-diving, base jumping, free climbing, and white-water rafting, all of which are catered for by canny commercial operators (Smith & Raymen, 2017). Tough Mudder, for example, is a wildly popular ten-mile, obstacle-strewn endurance event, often held in unforgiving environments, which sells survival for the fittest (Dean, 2017). It attracts approximately 700,000 participants per annum, most of whom take perverse pride in their aches, pains, abrasions, bruises, broken limbs and near-death experiences (Broughton, 2017).

Such activities can of course be rationalised. According to Scott, Cayla, and Cova's (2017) study of Tough Mudders, gain-from-pain behaviours help people cope with the sedentary character of contemporary corporate life. They not only bring physical bodies back into the corporeal equation but do so with cold-shower intensity. On top of that, the ordeal provides a temporary escape from the intolerable burdens, incessant demands and existential anxieties of the modern world. This may be so, but as the authors themselves concede, there is something deeply paradoxical – some would say aberrant – about the fact that 'consumers spend millions of dollars every year on analgesics and opioids, while exhausting and painful experiences such as obstacle races and ultra-marathons are gaining in popularity' (Scott et al., 2017, p. 22).

Equally perverse, if less ostentatious than organisations shilling suffering successfully, are those that oppose mainstream marketing ideology. For more than 60 years, marketing has been beset by a belief that the customer is both king and sovereign and never less than always right. Customer coddling, if not quite the be all and end all of marketing management, is central to its worldview. It features in every fundamentals textbook and taught to every greenhorn undergraduate (Hackley, 2003). Yet as Cialdini (2000) and others have demonstrated (Goldstein, Martin, & Cialdini, 2007), *denial marketing*, such as that employed by toy stores at Christmastime (you want it, can't have it, try again later), *delaying tactics*, not least those practised by limited-edition luxury goods retailers (where waiting lists for the waiting list aren't unusual) and *deliberate disorientation*, as in the case of IKEA's brilliantly befuddling Brobdingnagian superstores (where a wrong turn takes terrible toll on shoppers' sanity), are remarkably effective means of moving the merchandise, eccentric though they appear to more conventionally minded marketing managers. Tormenting the customer is a time-tested sales tactic (Brown, 2004), as customer fisticuffs on Black Friday perennially prove (Wood, Butler, & Neate, 2014).

Edgar, if anything, went even further. He didn't so much disdain his customers as detest them. As Lepore (2009) makes clear, the ever-penurious Poe was more motivated by cash than acclaim when penning his greatest hits. However, he didn't thank those

who stumped up for his weird wares, or revelled in his remarkable 'rhyme on top of rhyme in a shameless cascade' (Meyers, 1992, p. 303):

Poe strenuously resented the public...You love Poe or you don't, but either way, Poe doesn't love you. A writer more condescending to more adoring readers would be hard to find. 'The nose of a mob is its imagination,' he wrote. 'by this, at any rate, it can be quietly led.' (Lepore, 2009)

As forthright remarks go, only Ryanair's Michael O'Leary has been more open about his antipathy towards paying customers especially the 'fat bastards' who find the slim-fit seating arrangements unsuitable (Hogan, 2013).<sup>3</sup> An Irishman by descent, irascible Edgar was the Michael O'Leary of the Romantic movement.

### Poetry

Poe was a poet to a T. Mad, bad and dangerous to know, he was broodingly Byronic, gruesomely Gothic and, according to some, incestuously inclined (Collins, 2014). Arguably the ultimate Romantic poet, Edgar lived fast, died young and left an unparalleled literary legacy. His first published works were poems, as were his last. He took tremendous pride in, and repeatedly referred to, the phonic similitude of his surname and what he was born to be, a *poe-t*. His greatest lifetime achievement was a poem and what a poem 'The Raven' remains. Its unforgettable refrain became a mid-nineteenth century catchphrase on a par with Just Do It, We Try Harder, Diamonds Are Forever (Ackroyd, 2009). 'The Bells', what is more, became a Yuletide favourite – akin to Coke's classic 'Holidays are Comin' – that was employed by prominent brands for promotional purposes (Hayes, 2009). Indeed, on reading the miraculous rhymes of 'Annabel Lee', it's hard not to conclude that Edgar Allan Poe was the greatest copywriter Hallmark never had. Even T.S. Eliot, no admirer of Poe, conceded that he possessed 'to an exceptional degree, the feeling for the incantatory element in poetry, of that which may, in the most literal sense, be called "the magic of verse"' (Eliot, 1970/1949, p. 209).

Nowadays, of course, Poe is revered for his short stories of the grotesque and arabesque. But it was Baudelaire's advocacy and Mallarmé's translation of his deserving verses that made Poe's prodigious international reputation, which eventually shamed his homeland into recognising the great man's genius (Hoffman, 1972). Marketing, analogously, has long ignored its poetic heartbeat, preferring to see itself as an essentially utilitarian enterprise (Holbrook, 1995). Show me the money, rather than weave me a rainbow, is marketing's dominant logic (Holt, 2004). Fracking the Big Data strata is our field's new frontier (Thompson, 2018).

Yet, much like the motley-wearing Fortunato in 'The Cask of Amontillado', who gets buried alive in a cap 'n' bells costume, marketing's poetic impulse still jingles (Downey, 2016; Sherry & Schouten, 2002; Wijland & Fell, 2009). It jingles in rhyming brand names like FitBit, GoPro, Hubba Bubba, Reece's Pieces, and Seven-Eleven. It jingles in chiming brand names such as Burts Bees, Brooks Brothers, Bobbi Brown, and Bed, Bath and Beyond. It jingles in brilliantly original neologisms such as Swiffer, Charmin, Febreze, Cingular and Pentium, which 'sounds like something that can be found on the periodic table of the elements' (Frankel, 2004, p. 50), as well as celebrated slogans *à la* J'adore Dior, Do the Dew, Guinness is Good for You and You Can't Fit Quicker Than a Kwik Fit Fitter.



Impressive as they are, the poetasters of marketing are no match for Edgar Allan Poe, whose naming ability beggared belief. Whether it be people (Peter Profitt, Tabatha Turnip, Solomon Seadrift, Kathleen O'Trump), places (Rue Morgue, Sauerkraut Alley, Alexander the Great-opolis), periodicals (*Hum-Drum*, *Rowdy-Dow*, *Lollipop*, *Penn*) or pretend business enterprises (apparel retailer Cut and Come Again, aesthetically challenged construction firm, Eysore, spoof health and beauty aid, Oil of Bob), Poe's nominative ability was bedazzling. His neologisms alone include 'multicolour', 'normality', 'sentience' and 'tintinnabulation' (Hayes, 2009). If he were alive today – and bearing in mind that names are arguably the most important element of the branding mix (Danesi, 2006) – he could have made a fortune as a moniker marketing consultant. 'An established name,' Edgar shrewdly stated, 'is an estate in tenure, a throne in possession' (Hayes, 2009, p. 73). The Intellectual Property Office would surely agree.

On top of that, Poe was partial to product placement. More than a century before brand name dropping became part of marketing's promotional repertoire (Hackley & Hackley, 2012), Poe found room in his stories for popular patent medicines like Morrison's Pills, Brandreth's Pills and Swaim's Panacea. Written in 1839, 'The Man That Was Used Up' mentions almost many products as today's bling-slinging rap releases and brand-bespattered movie franchises. Except Edgar never got paid. He did, though, set out his philosophy of poetry, a philosophy that anticipated today's micro-messaging mindset (Johnson, 2011). Most fully articulated in 'The Philosophy of Composition', a mischievous skit on how he wrote 'The Raven', Poe maintains that works of literature should be short. Short enough, ideally, to be read in a single sitting. And while his idea of short and our idea of short are worlds apart, the sentiment is very much in keeping with today's ethos of tweets, texts, tags and thumbnails, of OMG, FYI, LOL and BTW, of less is best and more's a chore, a bore, a snore.

It is true, of course, that Edgar was writing for a readership that venerated 'the terse, the well-timed, the readily-diffused in preference to the old forms of the verbose and ponderous' (Whalen, 1999, p. 72). However, he wholeheartedly embraced the prevailing principle of pithy parsimony and periodically expressed a preference for 'the curt, the condensed, the well-digested in place of the voluminous' (quoted in Whalen, 1999, p. 107). If emojis had been available back then, poemojis would have been his preferred mode of communication (especially if he was being paid by the pictograph).

### **Plagiarism**

Poe was a plagiarist. He purloined his ideas on poetry from Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who purloined his from the German romantic writer Friedrich Schelling (Ljungquist, 1994). Not that Poe was greatly bothered. Back then, plagiarism was largely regarded as artful appropriation – a springboard for betterment – rather than trespassing on someone else's property and therefore tantamount to embezzlement (Everton, 2013). Intellectual property laws were rather more limited than those that obtain nowadays and Poe suffered as much as he benefitted from their absence. His creative work was widely reprinted, both in the US and Europe, but the author wasn't remunerated in return (Evlev, 2013). That said, he often sold the same article several times over to separate publications and, as the de facto editor of assorted journals, he did onto others as he was hard done by. While bemoaning being ripped off, Poe recognised that what

he didn't get in hard cash, he gained in cultural capital. He was Bourdieusian before Bourdieu was born.

Although Poe publicly supported Dickens' campaign for copyright protection – even as he shamelessly stole stylistic tricks from Byron, Shelley, and British literary periodicals such as *Blackwood's* – his real plagiaristic genius lay elsewhere. Edgar employed the P-word as a promotional device. His reputation was made, not only by the power of his poetry and prose but also by his writings about other writers. He was a literary critic whose book reviews were brutal, bordering on barbaric (Hartmann, 2013). He was known as the Tomahawk Man. He captured more scalps than Buffalo Bill killed bison. His books may have been full of premature burials, but he left his literary rivals for dead.

To this end, Edgar employed the standard reviewer repertoire of parody, persiflage, and gratuitous put downs. Plagiarism, however, was the tomahawk's cutting edge. When Poe accused Longfellow of plagiarism, at a time when the latter was the Mister Big of American letters, he did more to cement his rebellious reputation than almost anything bar badmouthing Boston's literary elite, whom he derisively described as 'Frogpondians' (Hartmann, 2008).<sup>4</sup> And when Edgar was reciprocally accused of plagiarism – as if! – he sued the scoundrel successfully and reaped the PR rewards that come with the attorney-infested territory.

On top of that, Poe was a self-plagiarist supreme. He retold the same stories again and again, (albeit with a modicum of variation). He republished his own works repeatedly (under different titles and with a few judicious tweaks). And not only rereleased them in greatest hits packages but reviewed himself anonymously (with tomahawk suitably sheathed). He also wrote about his writings, allegedly revealing the tricks of the trade while artfully poe-moting the originals. He was doing what today's movie makers, rock bands, and advertising agencies do with their director's cuts, expanded editions and making-of-the-ad 'paratexts' (Hackley & Hackley, [in press](#)). A master of brand extension, Edgar Allan Poe was the Calvin Klein of the uncanny, the Dove of the living dead. According to Hayes' (2009) insightful analysis of 'The Domain of Anaheim', Edgar even anticipated the theme park. The mind simultaneously boggles at the thought and recognises the very real commercial possibilities: the Ride of the Red Death, the Pit 'n' Pendulum Roller Coaster, the Ulalume Flume, et al. If he'd called it The Domain of Anaheim, it would have been way too spooky for words.

Although the Disney of dark marketing didn't make much money from his oeuvre (Daunt & Greer, 2017), Poe's a paradigm for our times, where plagiarism is both universally practised and widely proscribed (Earls, 2015). Plagiarism, arguably, is the tell-tale heart of 21<sup>st</sup>-century marketing activity. Brand managers copy each other with impunity – *pace* the innumerable Tough Mudder imitators – while remaining sufficiently different to attract customers and avoid accusations of passing off (Moon, 2010). And, of course if it eventually goes to court, the publicity benefits can outweigh the costs, as Richard Branson's brand building behaviours are testament. The attraction to, and avoidance of, plagiarism is the systole and diastole of marketing's cardiac condition (Earls, 2015), not least in the cultural industries:

When companies have a huge success that takes everyone by surprise, their competitors quickly mobilise resources to introduce similar products in an attempt to emulate that



success. The rise of rap, or hip hop, or even YouTube parody artists, forced record companies to modify their artist rosters. The TV sitcom *Seinfeld*, the ‘show about nothing’, proved so successful that it led to a number of shows emulating the quirky chemistry between key characters within a Manhattan backdrop. (Saintilan & Schreiber, 2018, pp. 31–32)

If history, as de Tocqueville declared, ‘is a gallery of pictures where there are few originals and many copies’ (Knowles, 1999, p. 778), Poe’s portrait is the face that launched a thousand crypts.

### **Plasticity**

Plagiarism, according to the eminent legal authority Richard A. Posner, is inherently ambiguous. One of the reasons it is attracting so much attention at present ‘is because its boundaries are becoming vague and contested’ (Posner, 2007, p. 9). Edgar is no less indefinite. Despite his oft-stated emphasis on specificity, singularity, economy of effort, Poe’s corpus is polysemous, enigmatic, and consistently cryptic (Silverman, 1992). Indeed, if it weren’t anachronistic, the word that describes him best is plasticity. The variety of literary genres he contributed to (gothic horror, speculative sci-fi, epic poetry, detective stories, etc.), the range of writing styles he employed (verisimilar, analytical, hyperbolic, parabolic and arabesque), the staggering array of rhetorical devices he utilised (everything from *accumulatio* to *zeugma*) are testament to his authorial versatility (Zimmerman, 2005). When combined with his penchant for unreliable narrators, as well as the plethora of doubles and *doppelgängers* that pepper his plots, to say nothing of the fluidity of his posthumous reputation, it’s clear that Edgar Allan Poe is impossible to tie down (Hoffman, 1972). Each and every one of his major works has been subject to innumerable interpretations – ‘The Fall of the House of Usher’, above all (Woodson, 1969) – and these in turn have been reinterpreted and wrangled over repeatedly. His writings are a Rorschach Test for close readers.

Edgar’s ambivalence, at first blush, is antithetical to marketing’s mindset, where immoderate mutability is frowned upon. The foundational premises of the field, thanks largely to Philip Kotler, are analysis, planning and, not least, control. From the glory days of the Unique Selling Proposition, via the hard-and-fast positioning paradigm, to the deep-seated belief that brand identities must be coherent, consistent, coordinated and completely crystal clear, ambiguity is anathema in marketing departments (Brasel, 2012). Incremental changes, admittedly, are necessary now and then, if only to keep things fresh, relevant, in tune with the times and, above all, the competition. But remaining the same – recognisably the same – is not only the key to brand longevity but the foundation stone of marketing’s mighty edifice (Kotler, 2008).

There is a growing consensus, though, that semantic singularity is impossible to sustain in today’s fast-moving, fleet-footed, constantly changing competitive environment of customer co-creation, social mediation, and disruptive upheaval in every imaginable domain (Berthon, Holbrook, Hulbert, & Pitt, 2007; Fournier & Avery, 2011). Whereas brands were once conceptualised as hard, tangible, occasionally immovable objects – pyramids, icebergs, buildings, wheels, ladders, et al. – today’s branding gurus wax lyrical about manifolds, *gestalts*, collages, clouds, penumbras, distillations and analogous intangibles (Bastos & Levy, 2012). Ambiguity is everywhere (Fanning, 2009). Polysemy is prevalent (Puntoni, Schroeder, & Ritson, 2010). Brand

plasticity is the order of the day (Fournier, 2015). And Poe's prescience is once again apparent. It is now generally accepted that iconic brands, those that rise above the rest, do so not because they stay true to themselves and refuse to fall for passing management fads. They succeed, rather, thanks to their ability to radically reinvent themselves in anticipation of, and response to, the social and cultural contradictions of contemporary consumer society (Holt, 2004). In such circumstances, ambiguity is beneficial, flexibility is necessary, opacity is advantageous (Brown, McDonagh, & Shultz, 2013).

Poe's plasticity, in short, is in tune with our times. More than that, plastic is an apt metaphor for Edgar's lifetime achievements and posthumous reputation. A mirror metaphor, rather, an inverted image of his ups and downs. As Meyers (1992) makes clear, Poe's reputation hit rock bottom in the immediate aftermath of his still mysterious death, largely on account of Griswald's hostile obituary (a tomahawkee, he tomahawked in turn).<sup>5</sup> According to Carlson's (1970) anthology of evolving critical opinion, it took the best part of a century to escape the obituarist's spiteful smear campaign ('Poe exhibits scarcely any virtue in either his life or his writings'). Nowadays, he stands alongside Melville, Twain, Hemingway and Fitzgerald in America's admittedly androcentric great man pantheon.

The reputation of plastic, conversely, has precipitously declined. In a celebrated scene in Mike Nicols' 1960 movie *The Graduate*, we are informed that 'plastics' are the future, a harbinger of cornucopian consumer society to come. Few would say that today, where plastics are deemed demonic, nothing less than the unstoppable destroyer of earth's fragile ecosystem (Cookson, 2018; Tett, 2017). And while premature burial by polyurethane is almost Poe-like in its perversity, there's no denying that the mephitic pit of contemporary consumer culture is threatened by a pliable polypropylene pendulum that's just as menacing as Edgar's original.

Literary reputations, however, are nothing if not ductile. Like PET plastic bottles they are eminently collapsible. Poe's often reprehensible behaviour – which ranges from marrying a 13-year-old to selling a household slave – is ripe for reassessment, as is his undeniably deplorable treatment of women, both literally and literary. In a world of #MeToo, #PoeToo is a distinct possibility.

## Poe what?

In January 2009, the bicentenary of Poe's birth precipitated an outpouring of commemorative books, learned articles, reflective essays and, perhaps predictably, collectors-edition reprints of the author's ample oeuvre. Edgar may have divided ante-bellum opinion, to put it politely, but in death he has been a bonanza for the publishing industry, which has never been reluctant to cash-in on an anniversary. He'd have been cashing in too, no doubt, if such a thing were possible.

Perhaps the most intriguing contribution to this commemorative corpus was *In the Shadow of the Master* (Connelly, 2009), a lavishly-produced, artfully-illustrated tribute by many of the most commercially successful members of the Mystery Writers of America (an association whose annual awards are called the Edgars). Containing contributions from literary luminaries like Stephen King, Jeffrey Deaver, Sue Grafton, Tess Gerritsen and Michael Connolly, the anthologists waxed lyrical about Poe's lasting influence, prophetic prescience and continuing inspiration. None, admittedly, mentioned their prodigious predecessor's self-promotional prowess, but King and Co's rich and varied

reflections indicate that Edgar remains an open book, an interpretive cornucopia, a horn of plenty of perversity (plus poetry, plagiarism and plasticity).

His corpus, in truth, is something of a *poe-jective* test for marketing scholars. In addition to the Ps previously mentioned, at least three more *para-Ps* are readily identifiable: *prosopopoeia*, *peripeteia* and *parechesis*. The first of these is the 'proper' rhetorical term for personification, treating inanimate objects as living things. Although humankind's personifying propensity goes back to the dawn of time (Miles, 2018), it was resurrected and reinvigorated during the Romantic movement of the nineteenth century. And Edgar, alongside contemporary luminaries like Charles Dickens and Hans Christian Andersen, put the Poe into *prosopopoeia*. True, he attacked the anthropomorphic inclinations of rival writers, not least Longfellow, but as one literary authority dryly observes, citing Stephen King's Overlook Hotel in evidence, 'ever since Poe's House of Usher, it has been conventional to describe Gothic mansions in human terms' (Zimmerman, 2005, p. 288). Animating the inanimate is, if anything, even more prevalent in marketing, where sentient brands, product life cycles and retail store personalities are two a penny, as is Object Orientated Ontology among our academy's *avant-garde* (Brown, 2010). Poe, though, warns of the dangers of 'objectless personification' which is prone to descend into 'allegorical abstraction'. The marketing implications, if any, of this allegedly inexorable theoretical trajectory remain unknown.

*Peripeteia* is the technical term for surprise endings, the 'twist in the tale' that arrests, astonishes and leaves rapt readers slack-jawed with admiration (Miller, 2015; Tobin, 2018). It's a literary device that Poe perfected and popularised in startlingly original detective stories like 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue' (an orangutan did it) and 'The Purloined Letter' (which was hidden in plain sight all the while), to say nothing of his terrifying 'Tell-Tale Heart' (where an unreliable narrator, like the legendary Cretan Liar, confesses all). It's a device that pervades popular culture nowadays – as innumerable 'spoiler alerts' attest – but is conspicuously absent from works of scholarship. The closest most academic articles come to a twist in the tale is a token 'limitations' section coupled with routine reminders that 'additional research is necessary'. Marketing researchers often claim that their chosen topic is 'surprisingly neglected', yet they neglect to consider surprise endings. Are we missing a trick? Additional research on *peripeteia* is necessary.

*Parechesis* is yet another literary device that Poe repeatedly employed. It pertains to the repetition of sounds for poetic effect, as in 'the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain' ('The Raven', stanza 3, line 1). The most familiar forms of *parechesis* are alliteration, where initial consonants are repeated, and assonance, where vowel sounds echo euphoniously. In this regard, marketing may like to think of itself as a science but its signature achievements, surely, are *parechesis* in excelsis. The 4P's, the 7S's, the 30R's, the 4A's and so forth are what our field is best known for. Even those who know nothing about marketing know about the 4Ps (see Constantinides, 2006). As a comprehensive review of the literature makes clear, the 4Ps construct is not only 'quintessential to marketing', but 'follows directly from and expresses the very nature' of our discipline (van Waterschoot & de Haes, 2008, p. 42). Like it or not, it is our trademark framework, our signature dish, the Big Mac of marketing thought.

Some readers, admittedly, may be dismayed by this deduction. If so, they'll be devastated by the fact that Poe would regard the Ps as solid proof of marketing's 'scientific' standing. Edgar wrote a very great deal about scientific endeavour and his *magnum opus*, *Eureka*, was a lengthy work of cosmological speculation, a wholehearted

hymn of praise to science, an early attempt at the ‘popular science’ genre, latterly perfected by the Stephen Hawking, Richard Dawkins and Carlo Rovelli of this world. Edgar Allan Poe, Beaver (1976, p. xviii) observes, believed that ‘all art constantly aspired towards the condition of science’ and that ‘all science constantly aspired towards the vision of art’, poetry especially. Poe’s notion of marketing as an ‘exact science’ is no less poetic, no less artistic, no less literary.

Marketing science, in other words, is too important to be left to marketing’s scientists.

## Poets know it

In April 1844, Edgar Allan Poe moved to New York City, the epicentre of American publishing. He announced his arrival with a fanfare of self-promotion. ‘The Balloon Hoax’, a hold-the-front-page humbug, on a par with the best of P.T. Barnum, was published as a special edition of the *New York Sun*. It caused a city-wide, States-side sensation. Edgar’s astounding claim that the Atlantic had been successfully crossed by a hot-air balloon was sufficiently within the bounds of possibility to be believable. And the public fell for it big-time. Whatever else is said about Poe, he was a guerrilla marketer of genius, a founding father of the fake news format.

Positing Edgar Allan Poe as a prescient marketing guru similarly smacks of post-truth imposture. He was, after all, one of the most flagrant failures of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. During his lifetime, he barely scraped a living. He signally failed to fend for his family. He lived hand-to-mouth, sometimes surviving on molasses sandwiches. He abused more than a few narcotic substances and lost several well-paid jobs as a result. He tomahawked practically every literary coterie on the east coast and couldn’t get his books published. He made enemies with ease and was his own worst enemy to boot (Collins, 2014).

A moment’s reflection, however, reveals that there’s rather more to our proto marketing man than meets the eye. Proclaiming Poe as a paragon is not a satiric take on today’s management guru machine, which lauds the leadership of Attila the Hun, the strategic vision of Genghis Khan, the stock-picking acumen of Karl Marx, et cetera (Morson & Schapiro, 2017). Edgar Allan Poe *really was* a small businessman. He lived by his pen, not patronage. He came from a family of merchants and bankers. He was blessed with many totemic entrepreneurial traits (Gilmore, Carson, & Grant, 2001) including dogged *persistence* (lifelong determination to found a literary journal), fierce *competitiveness* (repeatedly entering and winning literary competitions for cash), and surpassing *self-confidence* (never doubting that he was not only a man of genius but that ‘The Raven’ was the greatest poem ever). When sober, furthermore, he was personal charm personified, a glad-handling networker of rare talent.

Edgar, in addition, was a marketer supreme. He targeted the then massive market for mourning (Rizzo, 2013). He positioned himself as the bad boy of the books business – complete with mordant look, surly expression and ur-Goth attire – thereby benefitting from the ‘rebel sell’ sensibility (Heath & Potter, 2004). A marketing strategist *avant la lettre*, he boasted about his ability to assess which works of literature would sell and sell well. Tactically too, his heart-tugging begging letters were entreaties of genius, solicitations that put today’s promotional flyer writers and corporate debt collectors to shame. It is even contended that Edgar deliberately chose his obituarist because: (1) he knew that the Reverent Rufus Griswold would trash his achievements; (2) his many admirers would react

ferociously to Griswold's malign misrepresentation; and (3) that, in so doing, they'd keep his name before the reading public (Fiedler, 1967). If this Machiavellian marketing manoeuvre is true, Edgar's abilities surely rank alongside those of the twisted geniuses behind New Coke. Since sales of the carbonated cordial increased considerably after the alleged debacle, many conspiracy theorists contend that New Coke was a PR stunt of dazzling perversity (Oliver, 2017). The imp goes ever on.

## Way to Poe

Once described as the Shakespeare of America (Collins, 2014), Edgar Allan Poe is a paradigm for our undead times, where doppelgänger brands and vampire squid corporations loom large (Freund & Jacobi, 2013). Unlike Shakespeare, however, Edgar has never been held up as an exemplar for executives, let alone an entrepreneurial inspiration akin to Jane Austen (Sutherland, 2017). Granted, Poe died in penury 170 years past and, for much of that time, was considered an aberrant abomination. However, in today's nostalgia-imbued epoch, where revivals are de rigueur and retromarketing is rife (Routledge, 2016), Poe is an antebellum savant whose time has come, a sage for our age, an augur ever after.

It is generally accepted that marketers can learn much from history (Tadajewski & Jones, 2016). Literature and the arts are equally instructive (Desai, 2017; Muñiz, Norris, & Fine, 2014). This paper combines both, by extracting contemporary lessons from a nineteenth-century author of rare talent, the ever-prescient Edgar Allan Poe.

Poe's Ps? We need them now as nevermore before.

## Notes

1. In fairness to literary elitists, they *do* have a point. Although Dan Brown's bestsellers have benefitted the tourist trade in Barcelona, Paris, Florence and Rome, among others, few corporations in the hospitality sector look to *The Shining* for inspiration. Amazon is unlikely to draw much comfort from *The Store*, James Patterson's recent conspiracy thriller about an irredeemably evil e-tailing entity that targets its customers in more ways than one. And when it comes to retail mall management, J.G. Ballard's riot-torn *Kingdom Come* is rarely read as a best practice guidebook, much less issued to new employees on arrival.
2. Close reading is an analytic procedure pioneered by Edgar Allan Poe (Ljungquist, 1994) and formalised by the so-called 'New Critics' in the middle decades of the twentieth century. As the name implies, close reading involves detailed scrutiny of the literary text under consideration. It ignores authorial intention, cultural context, literary history or any other extraneous matter and focusses instead on the poem or story itself, the words on the page. Most of the literary analyses published by marketing scholars either adhere to, or employ variants of, the close reading method. Psychoanalytically-led, Patsiaouras, Fitchett, and Davies (2016) is a notable exception.
3. Perhaps the drollest description of the Ryanair encounter was written by Douglas Coupland (2016), the Canadian novelist-cum-cultural commentator who often expatiates on the mores of late-capitalist consumer society (*Generation X*, *Microserfs*, 'McJobs', etc.). Tied up in a meeting in Berlin, and having missed the last Lufthansa flight to London, he asks himself, 'Who else flies to London? The answer: Ryanair. But wait. I've never flown with them, and aren't they the ones where people fly standing up so they can get more people on the plane?' (287). Later on, after a bit of a boarding debacle, he amusingly muses, 'Once inside, I'm actually oddly disappointed that the seats aren't arranged in vertical sarcophagus mode, that would have been cool' (288). Don't tell Michael.

4. Although Poe was never reluctant to expropriate others' ideas – 'The Raven' borrowed from Dickens' *Barnaby Rudge* and its rhyme scheme was snaffled from Elizabeth Barrett Browning – the Longfellow War was Poe's own imp of the perverse. Jealous perhaps of Longfellow's popular success, Edgar not only accused the eminent Harvardian of 'literary piracy' but continued the premeditated attack in a series of public comments and rejoinders with a Longfellow aficionado called 'Outis'. Outis, of course, was himself. Frogpondians, incidentally, referred a frog pond on Boston Common back then.
5. As with the sinking of the *Titanic* (Brown et al., 2013), countless conspiracy theories surround Poe's untimely death (Ackroyd, 2009). It has been variously attributed to heart disease, delirium tremens, alcoholic poisoning, nervous prostration, brain congestion, brain lesion, brain tumour, meningeal inflammation, hypothermia, epilepsy, apoplexy and syphilis (Meyers, 1992). Hypoglycemia and homicide have also been posited (as in Matthew Pearl's melodramatic novel, *The Poe Shadow*).

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

## Notes on contributors

*Stephen Brown* is engaged in an on-going study of the origins and evolution of 'authorpreneurship'.

*Dr Pauric McGowan* is Professor of Entrepreneurship and Business Development at the Ulster University Business School. He has, for over two decades worked with and researched owner-managers of entrepreneurial firms in pursuit of their ambitions for growth. He is a Distinguished Business Fellow of the Ulster University in recognition of his work at the interface between the business practitioner community and the University. He is also a Fellow of the Marketing Institute of Ireland, a Fellow of the Higher Education Association and a Fellow of the Institute for Small Business and Entrepreneurship, (ISBE).

## References

- Ackroyd, P. (2009). *Poe: A life cut short*. London: Vintage.
- Bastos, W., & Levy, S. J. (2012). A history of the concept of branding: Practice and theory. *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing*, 4(3), 347–368.
- Beaver, H. (1976). Introduction. In E. A. Poe, *The science fiction of Edgar Allan Poe* (pp. vii–xxi). London: Penguin.
- Belk, R. W. (1986). Art versus science as ways of generating knowledge about materialism. In D. Brinberg & R. J. Lutz (Eds.), *Perspectives on methodology in consumer research* (pp. 3–36). New York, NY: Springer.
- Belk, R. W. (1997). The Goblin and the Huckster: A story of consumer desire for sensual luxury. In S. Brown, J. Bell, & D. Carson (Eds.), *Proceedings of the Marketing Illuminations Spectacular* (pp. 22–45). Belfast: University of Ulster.
- Berthon, P., Holbrook, M., Hulbert, J. M., & Pitt, L. F. (2007). Viewing brands in multiple dimensions. *Sloan Management Review*, 48(2), 37–45.
- Brasel, S. A. (2012). How focused identities can help brands navigate a changing media landscape. *Business Horizons*, 55(3), 283–291.
- Brawer, R. A. (1998). *Fictions of business: Insights on management from great literature*. New York, NY: Wiley.
- Broughton, P. D. (2017, October 7). The business school tradition feels like an outdated grand tour. *Financial Times*, p. 11.



- Brown, S. (1995). Sex 'n' shopping: A 'novel' approach to consumer research. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 11(8), 769–783.
- Brown, S. (2004). O customer, where art thou? *Business Horizons*, 47(4), 61–70.
- Brown, S. (2010). Where the wild brands are: Some thoughts on anthropomorphic marketing. *The Marketing Review*, 10(3), 209–224.
- Brown, S., McDonagh, P., & Shultz, C. J. (2013). Titanic: Consuming the myths and meanings of an ambiguous brand. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 40(4), 595–614.
- Buranelli, V. (1977). *Edgar Allan Poe*. Indianapolis: G.K. Hall.
- Carlson, E. W. (1970). *The recognition of Edgar Allan Poe*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Cialdini, R. B. (2000). *Influence: Science and practice*. London: Pearson.
- Collins, P. (2014). *Edgar Allan Poe: The fever called living*. Boston: New Harvest.
- Connelly, M. (2009). *In the shadow of the master*. New York, NY: William Morrow.
- Connelly, M. (2017). *The poet*. New York, NY: Hachette.
- Constantinides, E. (2006). The marketing mix revisited: Towards the 21st century marketing. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 22(3–4), 407–438.
- Cook, J. W. (2001). *The arts of deception: Fraud in the age of Barnum*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Cookson, C. (2018, January 27). The problem with plastic. *Financial Times Magazine*, pp. 20–28.
- Coupland, D. (2016). Klass warfare. In D. Coupland, *Bit rot: Stories and essays* (pp. 287–289). London: Windmill.
- Czarniawska, B. (2000). *Writing management: Organization theory as a literary genre*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- D'Rozario, D. (2017). 'Delebs' (dead celebrities): Why some succeed and some fail. *Journal of Customer Behavior*, 16(2), 161–181.
- Danesi, M. (2006). *Brands*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Daunt, K. L., & Greer, D. A. (2017). The dark side of marketing: Introduction to the special issue. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 33(15–16), 1231–1235.
- Davari, A., Iyer, P., & Guzmán, F. (2017). Determinants of brand resurrection movements: Why consumers want dead brands back. *European Journal of Marketing*, 51(11–12), 1896–1917.
- Dean, W. (2017). *It takes a tribe: Building the Tough Mudder movement*. London: Penguin.
- Desai, M. (2017). *The wisdom of finance: Discovering humanity in the world of risk and return*. London: Profile.
- Downey, H. (2016). Poetic inquiry, consumer vulnerability: Realities of quadriplegia. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 32(3–4), 357–364.
- Drummond, K. (2006). Culture club: Marketing and consuming *The Da Vinci Code*. In S. Brown (Ed.), *Consuming books: The marketing and consumption of literature* (pp. 60–72). London: Routledge.
- Earls, M. (2015). *Copy, copy, copy: How to do smarter marketing by using other people's ideas*. Chichester: Wiley.
- Eliot, T. S. (1970/1949). From Poe to Valéry. In E. W. Carlson (Ed.), *The recognition of Edgar Allan Poe* (pp. 205–219). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Everton, M. (2013). Literary piracy. In K. J. Hayes (Ed.), *Edgar Allan Poe in context* (pp. 188–197). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Evlev, J. (2013). The literary profession. In K. J. Hayes (Ed.), *Edgar Allan Poe in context* (pp. 159–168). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Fanning, J. (2009, December 28). How the man in the jacket gets under a nation's skin. *The Irish Times*. Retrieved July 16, 2018, from [www.irishtimes.com](http://www.irishtimes.com)
- Fiedler, L. (1967). *Love and death in the American novel*. London: Cape.
- Fiedler, L. (1982). *What was literature?* New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.
- Fisher, B. F. (2002). Poe and the Gothic tradition. In K. J. Hayes (Ed.), *The Cambridge companion to Edgar Allan Poe* (pp. 72–91). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Fitchett, J. (2002). Marketing sadism: *Super-Cannes* and consumer culture. *Marketing Theory*, 2(3), 309–322.
- Fournier, S. (2015). Rethinking brands. In S. Fournier, M. Breazeale, & J. Avery (Eds.), *Strong brands: Strong relationships* (pp. 397–399). London: Routledge.

- Fournier, S., & Avery, J. (2011). The uninvited brand. *Business Horizons*, 54(3), 193–207.
- Frankel, A. (2004). *Word craft*. New York, NY: Crown.
- Freund, J., & Jacobi, E. (2013). Revenge of the brand monsters: How Goldman Sachs' Doppelgänger turned monstrous. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 29(1–2), 175–194.
- Galloway, D. (1987). Introduction. In E. A. Poe, *Comedies and satires* (pp. 7–22). London: Penguin.
- Gilmore, A., Carson, D., & Grant, K. (2001). SME marketing in practice. *Marketing Intelligence and Planning*, 19(1), 6–11.
- Goldstein, N. J., Martin, S. J., & Cialdini, R. B. (2007). *Yes: 50 secrets from the science of persuasion*. London: Profile.
- Hackley, C. (2003). We are all customers now...rhetorical strategy and ideological control in marketing management texts. *Journal of Management Studies*, 40(5), 1325–1352.
- Hackley, C., & Hackley, R. A. (2012). Unpaid product placement: The elephant in the room in the UK's new paid-for product placement market. *International Journal of Advertising*, 31(4), 703–718.
- Hackley, C., & Hackley, R. A. (in press). Advertising at the threshold: Paratextual promotion in the era of media convergence. *Marketing Theory*. doi:10.1177/1470593118787581
- Hartmann, J. (2008). *The marketing of Edgar Allan Poe*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
- Hartmann, J. (2013). The art of reviewing. In K. J. Hayes (Ed.), *Edgar Allan Poe in context* (pp. 198–208). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hayes, K. J. (2009). *Edgar Allan Poe*. London: Reaktion.
- Heath, J., & Potter, A. (2004). *The rebel sell*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.
- Hoffman, D. (1972). *Poe Poe Poe Poe Poe Poe Poe*. London: Robson.
- Hogan, M. (2013, November 8). Michael O'Leary's 33 daftest quotes. *The Guardian*. Retrieved September 6, 2018, from [www.theguardian.com](http://www.theguardian.com)
- Holbrook, M. B. (1995). *Consumer research: Introspective essays on the study of consumption*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Holt, D. (2004). *How brands become icons: The principles of cultural branding*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Johnson, C. (2011). *Microstyle: The art of writing little*. New York, NY: Norton.
- Knowles, E. (Ed.). (1999). *The Oxford dictionary of quotations*. Oxford: OUP.
- Kotler, P. (2008). *FAQs on marketing answered by the Guru of marketing, Philip Kotler*. London: Marshall Cavendish.
- Lepore, J. (2009, April 27). The humbug: Edgar Allan Poe and the economy of horror. *The New Yorker*. Retrieved July 10, 2018, from [www.newyorker.com](http://www.newyorker.com).
- Ljungquist, K. P. (1994). Edgar Allan Poe. In M. Groden & M. Kreiswirth (Eds.), *The John Hopkins guide to literary theory and criticism* (pp. 579–581). Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Meyers, J. (1992). *Edgar Allan Poe: His life and legacy*. London: John Murray.
- Miles, C. (2018). *Marketing, rhetoric and control: The magical foundations of marketing theory*. London: Routledge.
- Miller, C. R. (2015). *Surprise: The poetics of the unexpected from Milton to Austen*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Moon, Y. (2010). *Different: Escaping the competitive herd*. New York, NY: Crown.
- Morson, G., & Schapiro, M. (2017). *Cents and sensibility: What economics can learn from the humanities*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Mulvihill, D. F. (1985). Michener on marketing. In S. C. Hollander & T. Nevett (Eds.), *Marketing in the long run: Proceedings of the Second Workshop on Historical Research in Marketing* (pp.485–493). East Lansing: Michigan State University.
- Muñiz, A. M., Norris, T., & Fine, G. A. (2014). Marketing artistic careers: Pablo Picasso as brand manager. *European Journal of Marketing*, 48(1–2), 68–88.
- O'Donohoe, S., & Turley, D. (2000). Dealing with death: Art, morality and the marketplace. In S. Brown & A. Patterson (Eds.), *Imagining marketing: Art, aesthetics and the avant-garde* (pp. 86–106). London: Routledge.
- O'Malley, L., Patterson, M., & Bheacháin, N. (2006). Paperback mother. In S. Brown (Ed.), *Consuming books: The marketing and consumption of literature* (pp. 83–95). London: Routledge.

- O'Donohoe, S. (2018). *Reading beyond the lines: Expectations, identity and embodiment in relating to A Monster Calls*. Paper presented at CCT conference, June, Odense.
- Oliver, M. (2017, October). *Consumer-brand relationships in conspiratorial narratives*. Paper presented at ACR conference, San Diego.
- Patsiaouras, G., Fitchett, J. A., & Davies, A. (2016). Beyond the couch: Psychoanalytic consumer character readings into narcissism and denial. *Marketing Theory*, 16(1), 57–73.
- Patterson, A., & Aherne, A. (2006). A step-by-step guide to *Bridget Jones's Diary*, *Fight Club* and the 'how-to' industry. In S. Brown (Ed.), *Consuming books: The marketing and consumption of literature* (pp. 183–194). London: Routledge.
- Posner, R. A. (2007). *The little book of plagiarism*. New York, NY: Pantheon.
- Puntoni, S., Schroeder, J., & Ritson, M. (2010). Meaning matters: Polysemy in advertising. *Journal of Advertising*, 39(2), 51–64.
- Rizzo, T. M. (2013). The cult of mourning. In K. J. Hayes (Ed.), *Edgar Allan Poe in context* (pp. 148–156). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Routledge, C. (2016). *Nostalgia*. London: Routledge.
- Saintilan, P., & Schreiber, D. (2018). *Managing organizations in the creative economy*. London: Routledge.
- Schroeder, J. E. (2000). The consumer in society: Utopian visions revisited. *Marketing Intelligence and Planning*, 18(6–7), 381–387.
- Scott, L. M. (1994, September). The bridge from text to mind: Adapting reader-response theory to consumer research. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 21(3), 461–480.
- Scott, R., Cayla, J., & Cova, B. (2017). Selling pain to the saturated self. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 44(1), 22–43.
- Sherry, J. F., Jr., & Schouten, J. W. (2002, September). A role for poetry in consumer research. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 29(2), 218–234.
- Silverman, K. (1992). *Edgar Allan Poe: Mournful and never-ending remembrance*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.
- Simmons, J. (2004). *Dark angels: How writing releases creativity at work*. London: Cyan.
- Smith, O., & Raymen, T. (2017). Deviant leisure: A criminological perspective. *Theoretical Criminology*, 21(3). doi:10.1177/1362480616660188
- Smith, W., & Higgins, M. (2000). 'Trust no one': Science fiction and marketing's future/present. In S. Brown & A. Patterson (Eds.), *Imagining marketing: Art, aesthetics and the avant-garde* (pp. 107–123). London: Routledge.
- Stern, B. B. (1989, December). Literary criticism and consumer research: Overview and illustrative analysis. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 16(3), 322–334.
- Sutherland, K. (2017, June 17). Cents and sensibility. *Financial Times*, p. 9.
- Tadajewski, M., & Jones, B. G. B. (2016). *Historical research in marketing management*. London: Routledge.
- Tett, G. (2017, November 18). Why plastic is no longer fantastic. *Financial Times Magazine*, p. 46.
- The Economist*. (2014, October 4). Philosopher kings: Business leaders would benefit from studying great writers. *The Economist*, p. 80.
- The Economist*. (2015, February 14). Authorpreneurship. *The Economist*, p. 66.
- The Economist*. (2017, November 4). Trends in tourism: Fatal attractions. *The Economist*, pp. 70–71.
- Thompson, C. J. (2018, June). *This is not a Chairman's address*. Paper presented at CCT2018 Conference, Odense, Denmark.
- Timberg, S. (2015). *Culture clash: The killing of the creative class*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Tobin, V. (2018). *Elements of surprise: Our mental limits and the satisfactions of plot*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Tomc, S. M. (2002). Poe and his circle. In K. J. Hayes (Ed.), *The Cambridge companion to Edgar Allan Poe* (pp. 21–41). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- van Waterschoot, W., & de Haes, J. (2008). Marketing mix metaphorosis: The heavy toll of too much popularity. In P. J. Kitchen (Ed.), *Marketing Metaphors and Metamorphosis* (pp. 42–61). Basingstoke: Palgrave.
- Whalen, T. (1999). *Edgar Allan Poe and the masses*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

- Wijland, R., & Fell, C. (2009). Critical brand poetics: 'From the M at the end of the earth'. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 25(7-8), 745-761.
- Wood, Z., Butler, S., & Neate, R. (2014, November 29). They're going to need a bigger boot: Black Friday brings shopping frenzy. *The Guardian*, p. 5.
- Woodson, T. (1969). *Twentieth-century interpretations of The Fall of the House of Usher: A collection of critical essays*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall.
- Zimmerman, B. (2005). *Edgar Allan Poe: rhetoric and style*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Copyright of Journal of Marketing Management is the property of Routledge and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.