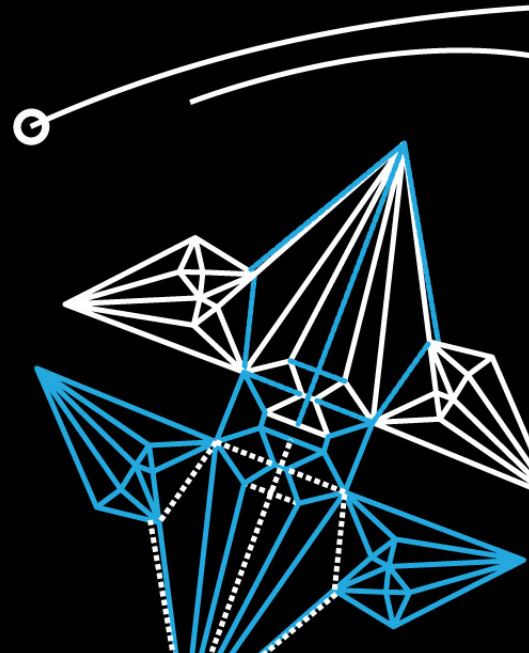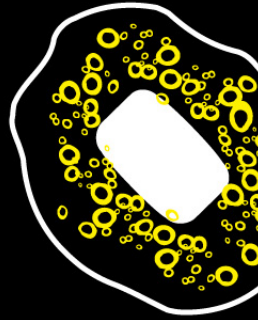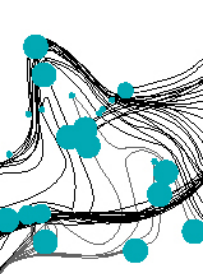# Personal branding:
A review on a contemporary phenomenon

Stefan Scheidt, M.A., EMBA, University of Twente/NL

Prof. Dr. Jörg Henseler, University of Twente/NL

DERMARKENTAG: Koblenz/Germany, 28 September 2018

Personal Branding: Old practice…

Alexander the Great is claimed as the first celebrity (Braudy, 1997)

Source: wikipedia.com

"Goethe achieved success by using all elements of the marketing mix" (Bendisch et al., 2013)

Source: wikipedia.com

Andy Warhol's "idea that 'everyone will be famous for 15 minutes' comments on a world where image reigns supreme"
(Schroeder, 2005, p. 1294)

Source: sfmoma.org

…with numerous contemporary examples…

Source: de.aliexpress.com

Source: wikipedia.com

Source: devonlive.com

Johnson battles to turn brand Boris from 'comedy act' to leading man

London mayor is pitching himself as a 'One Nation' Tory with the gravitas to take over from Cameron

Source: Rigby & Parker, 2015

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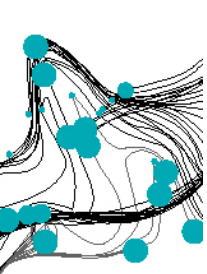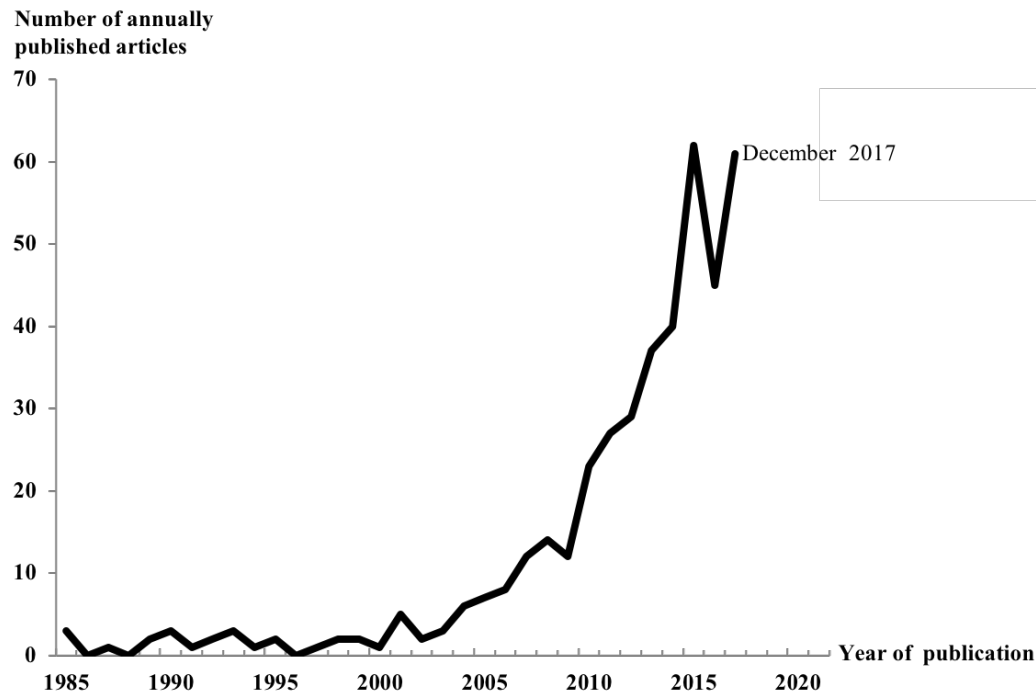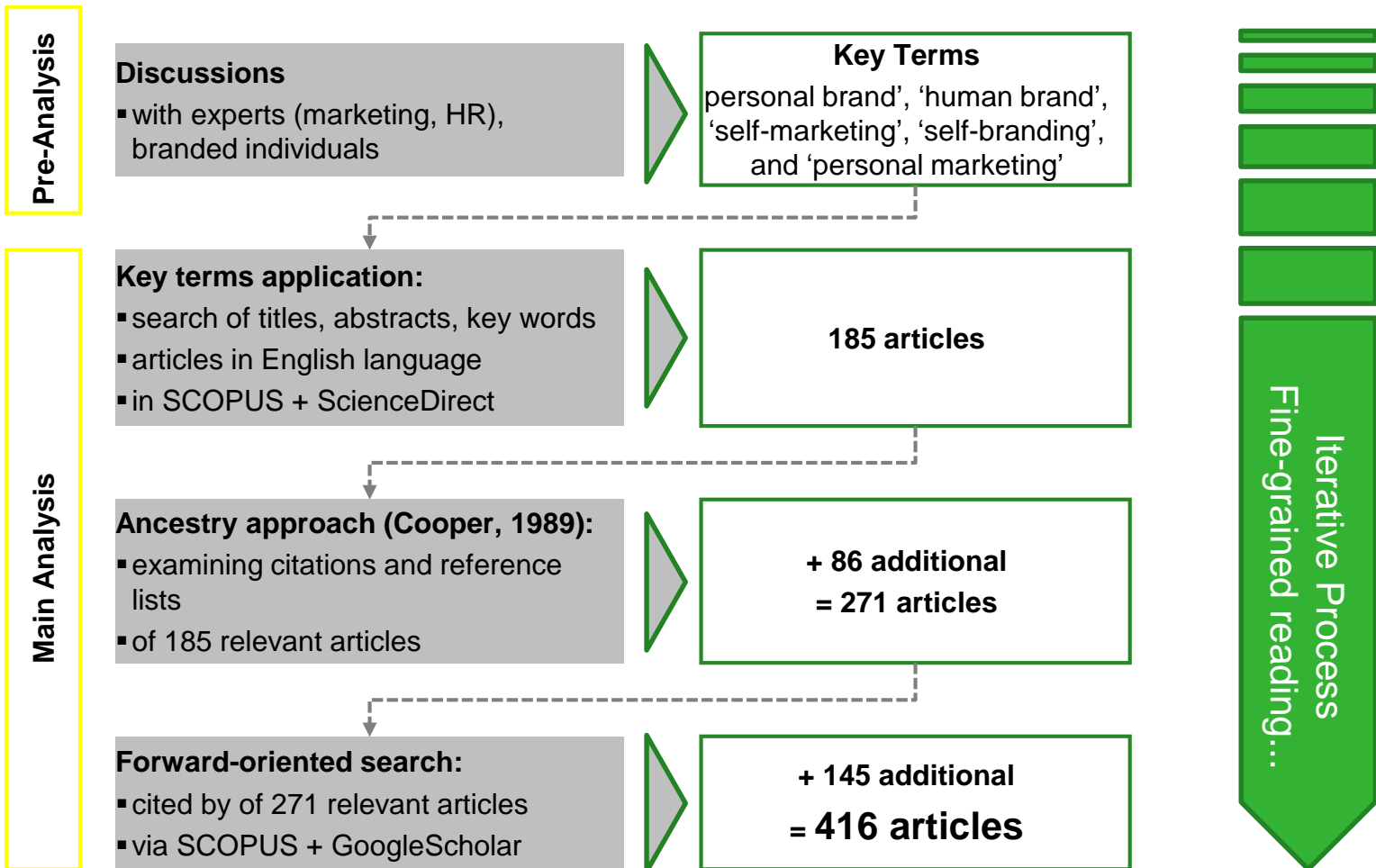
Personal Branding: Old practice…but young discipline

416 academic articles with relevance to the subject *personal branding* published in various journals (English language) from 1985 to 2017

Number of annually
published articles

December 2017

Year of publication

Interest from academic angle increased significantly after the mid-2000s

Methodology – Search Process

Pre-Analysis

Discussions
- with experts (marketing, HR), branded individuals

➤ **Key Terms**
personal brand', 'human brand', 'self-marketing', 'self-branding', and 'personal marketing'

Main Analysis

Key terms application:
- search of titles, abstracts, key words
- articles in English language
- in SCOPUS + ScienceDirect

➤ **185 articles**

Ancestry approach (Cooper, 1989):
- examining citations and reference lists
- of 185 relevant articles

➤ **+ 86 additional = 271 articles**

Forward-oriented search:
- cited by of 271 relevant articles
- via SCOPUS + GoogleScholar

➤ **+ 145 additional = 416 articles**

Iterative Process Fine-grained reading…

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Methodology – Areas for Investigation

What is a Personal Brand? What is Personal Branding?

Typologies and Categories

Antecedents of Personal Branding

Key Ingredients and Applications

Benefits of Personal Branding

Problems and Challenges with Personal Branding

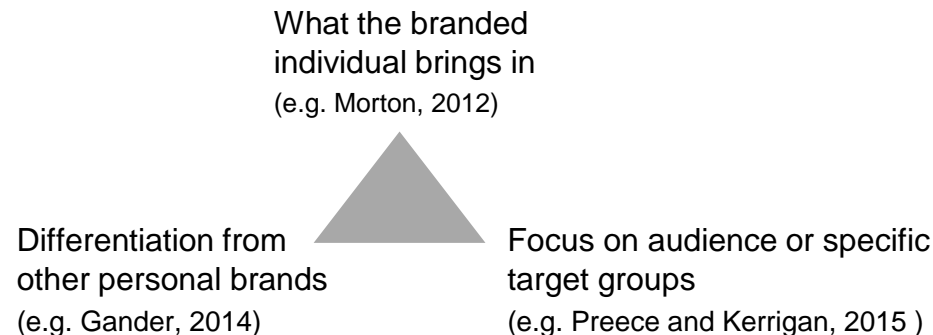...revealed 6 areas for investigation of personal branding

Findings: What is a Personal Brand / Personal Branding?

Diverse set of inconsistent terminology with terms such as

➢ self-branding (e.g. Hearn, 2008), self-marketing (e.g. Shepherd, 2005), corporate personhood (e.g. Gershon, 2014)

➢ personal branding (e.g. Harris and Rae, 2011; Lair *et al.*, 2005; Labrecque *et al.*, 2011)

➢ human branding (e.g. Carlson and Donavan, 2013; Close *et al.*, 2011; Thomson, 2006)

Definitions suggest a conceptual triangle

What the branded
individual brings in
(e.g. Morton, 2012)

Differentiation from
other personal brands
(e.g. Gander, 2014)

Focus on audience or specific
target groups
(e.g. Preece and Kerrigan, 2015)

Distinction between the process (personal branding) and the thing (personal brand)

Findings: Typologies and Categories (Number of Publications)

	Icon	Celebrity	Personal Brand	
				Visibility vs Availability?
Sports	1	11	30	
Academics	0	0	25	Student samples
Politicians	0	8	10	
Visual artists	0	5	6	Consistent with contemporary practice
Performing artists	1	18	8	
Nobility	1	0	0	Visibility vs Availability?
Producers of hedonic products	0	3	0	
Professional services	0	0	20	
Self-employed	0	4	0	
Business managers	0	2	18	Visibility vs Availability?
Content creators	0	4	37	Consistent with contemporary practice

Findings: Antecedents of Personal Branding

- ➢ Development of the new world of work (Philbrick and Cleveland 2015; van Oort, 2015)
- ➢ Visibility became a key currency in life (Fillis, 2015; Mills et al., 2015; Gehl, 2011)
- ➢ New understanding of individualism (Gershon, 2014; Hearn, 2008; Lair et al., 2005)
- ➢ Existential angst as major selling proposition for consultants (Harris and Rae, 2011)

Icons

Superstars

cultural meaning
and values

Celebrities

**Personal branding typologies
and their emergence**

neoliberalism
entrepreneurship
social media
the self

Micro-Celebrities

Personal Brands
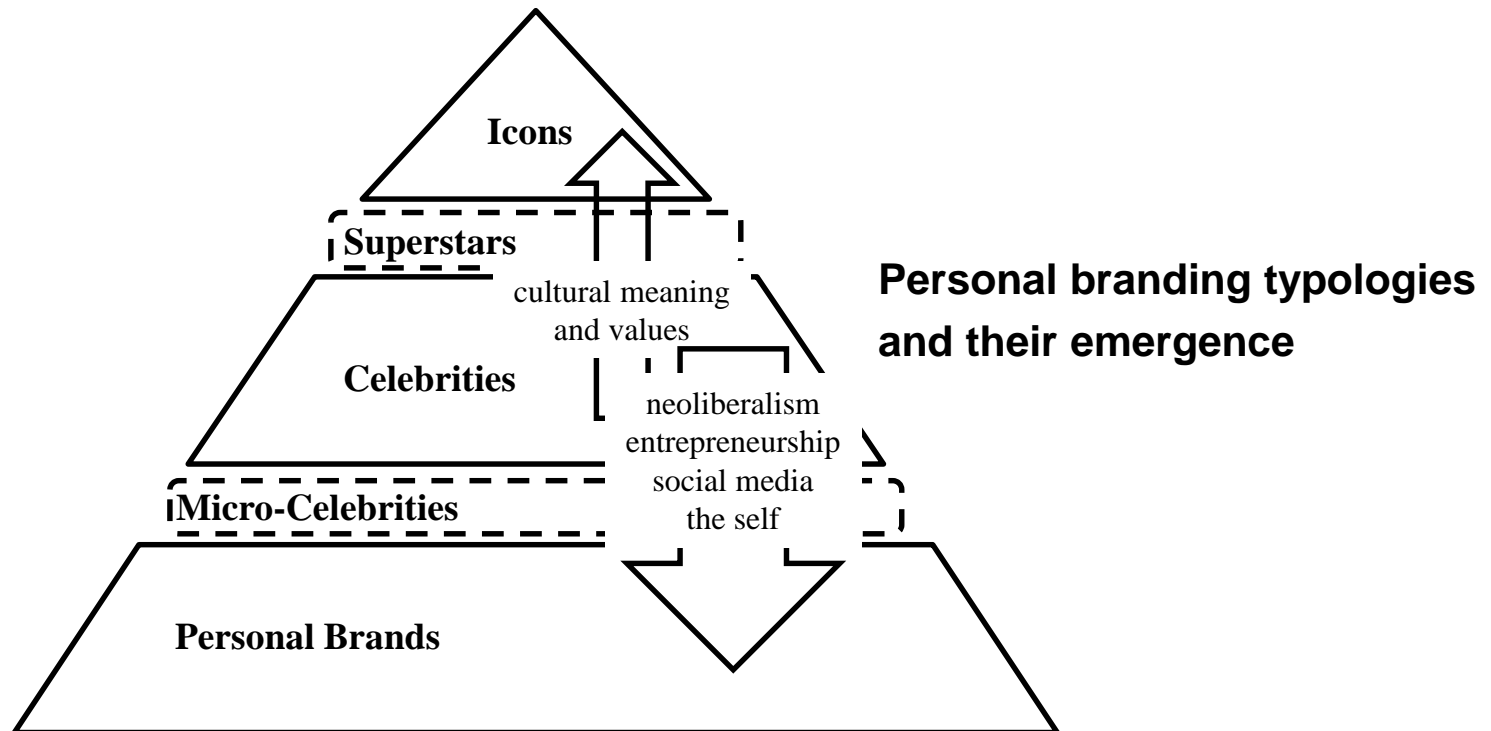
Findings: Key Ingredients and Applications

➤ Personality and its attributes, e.g. credibility (Arai et al., 2014) and authenticity (Mills et al., 2015; Moulard et al., 2014; Moulard et al., 2015; Thomson, 2006)

➤ Points of differentiation (Chen, 2013; Gander, 2014; Labrecque et al., 2011; Mills et al., 2015; Morton, 2012)

➤ Visibility

  ➤ physical footprint (Philbrick and Cleveland, 2015)

  ➤ digital footprint (Gander 2014; Harris and Rae, 2011; Labrecque et al., 2011; Morton, 2012; Philbrick and Cleveland, 2015)

  ➤ on-field and off-field (Parmentier and Fischer, 2012)

➤ Consumer-personal brand relationships (Carlson and Donavan 2013; Chen, 2013; Thomson, 2006)

➤ Brand meaning transfer effects and co-creation (Bendisch et al., 2013; Close et al., 2011; Parmentier and Fischer 2012; Speed et al., 2015)

Findings: Benefits of Personal Branding

The branded individual benefits…

➢ when competing for work, seeking advancement in specific occupations or professions, or pursuing a career path leading to higher financial earnings (Harris and Rae, 2011; Philbrick and Cleveland, 2015; Ternès et al., 2014).

➢ through improvement of abilities (Hearn, 2008; Philbrick and Cleveland, 2015) and achievement of much greater self-awareness, self-esteem, self-confidentiality, and self-worth (Gall, 2010; Gander, 2014; Preece and Kerrigan, 2015) by continuous self-reflection.

The target group of the branded individual benefits…

➢ by retail sales supported by endorsements (Carlson and Donavan, 2013; Huang et al., 2015; Mills et al., 2015; Preece and Kerrigan, 2015).

➢ by consumer-personal brand attachment that may advance identity construction (Cocker et al., 2015; Huang et al., 2015 Thomson, 2006)
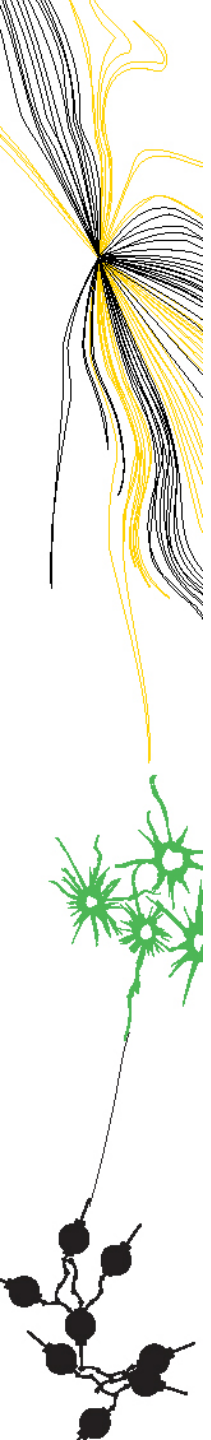
Society benefits from branded individuals…

➢ by their impact on development of new societal values (Fillis, 2015; Lindridge and Eagar, 2015; Schroeder, 2005)

Findings: Problems and Challenges with Personal Branding

➢ Feasibility of a general personal branding framework or theory.

➢ Authenticity

   ➢ acting "according to his/her true self"; counterexample: Paris Hilton who is a celebrity (Moulard et al., 2015)

   ➢ being "unconventional and […] seen to be going against the mainstream" (Lunardo et al., 2015) → differentiation by a bad boy/girl image?

➢ How to manage different target groups and multiple (online) identities?

➢ A "great brand is not built by accident" (Keller, 2013, p. 125) → how aware are people of their own personal brand and their brand building process?

➢ "If there is one rule for modern branding, however, it is that brands can never stand still" (Keller, 2013, p. 479) → how to handle longevity in personal branding?

➢ "Even if it were possible that we could all be famous, if everyone were famous, then no one would be famous" (Holmes and Redmond 2006, p. 14).

Conclusions – Implications

Updated definitions to better structure the fragmented approaches:

Personal branding *covers the process of establishing, maintaining, and developing an individual's personal brand with the active and selective integration of certain personal preconditions and with due consideration for the changing nature of the field in which the personal brand is to be established.*

*A **personal brand** is the continuously developing outcome of a collective act between stakeholders and the branded individual's entire personality by which she/he is visible within and beyond her/his professional field to stand apart from other personal brands and to fit into a defined field where these activities try to gain specific benefits.*

Conclusions – Research Agenda

➤ **Typology and category-specific definitions** as well as **models** answering research questions such as "How do top managers' personal brands emerge over time?".

➤ **Personal brand equity measurement**, which would seem to involve the minds of multiple stakeholder.

➤ Personal brands cannot function in isolation → **brand meaning transfer** processes between personal brands and their organisational environment and stakeholders.

➤ The **icon** as a personal brand typology, celebrity academics, or nobility.

➤ Social media influencers as the **new type of endorsers**.

➤ **Celefictions** (Kerrigan et al., 2011; Nayar, 2009), such as Harry Potter, Lara Croft or Dr Z.

In the end…

Personal branding has long outgrown its original academic role as another instance of "broadening the concept of marketing" (Kotler and Levy, 1969). Instead, it is worth appreciating personal branding as a distinct and interdisciplinary expression of branding and not just as a simple variation thereof.

Practitioners

BRIDGE THE GAP

Academics
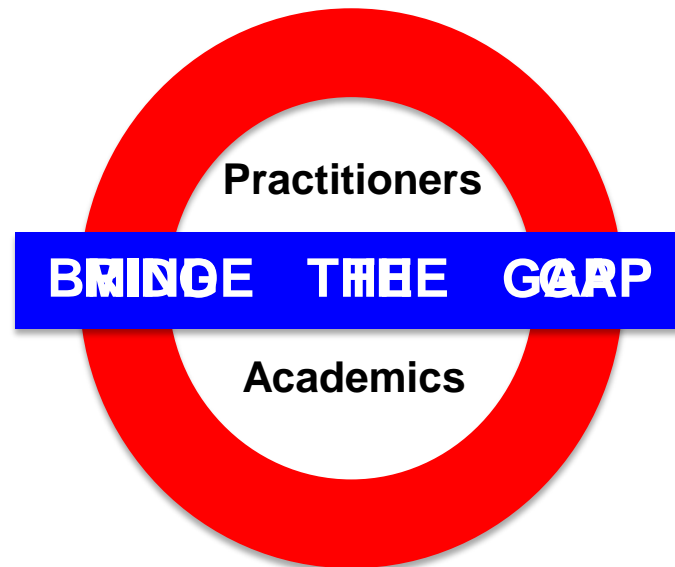
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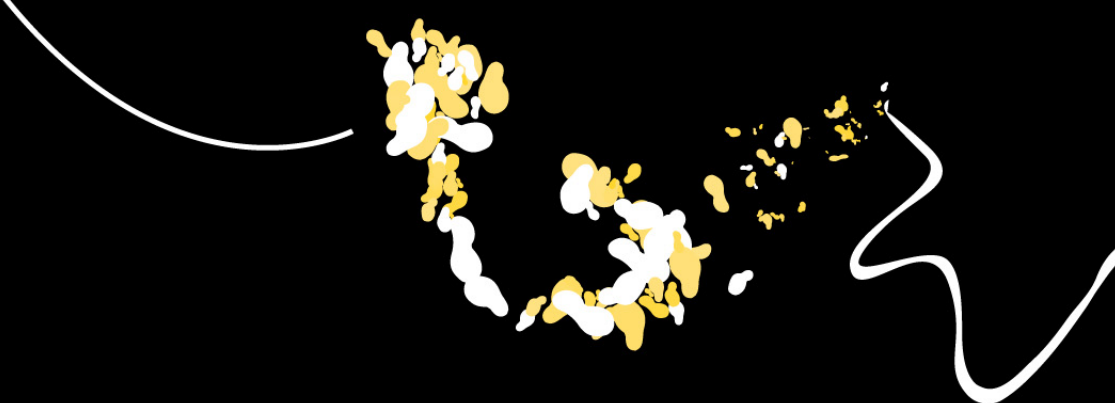
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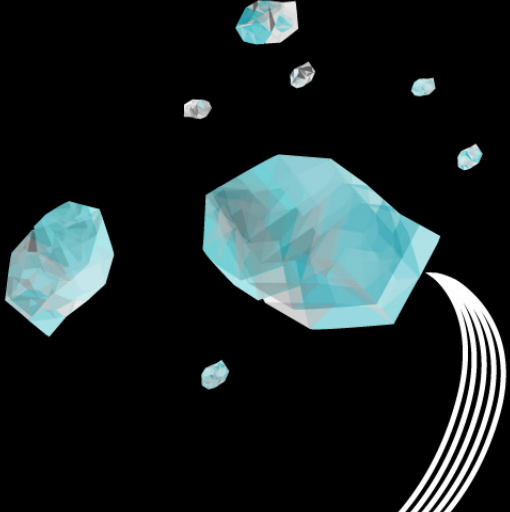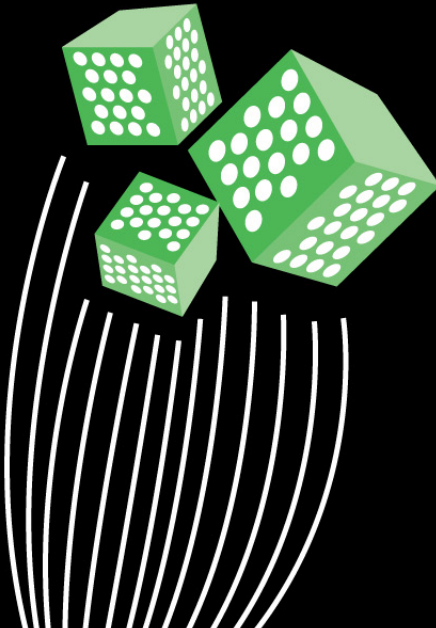
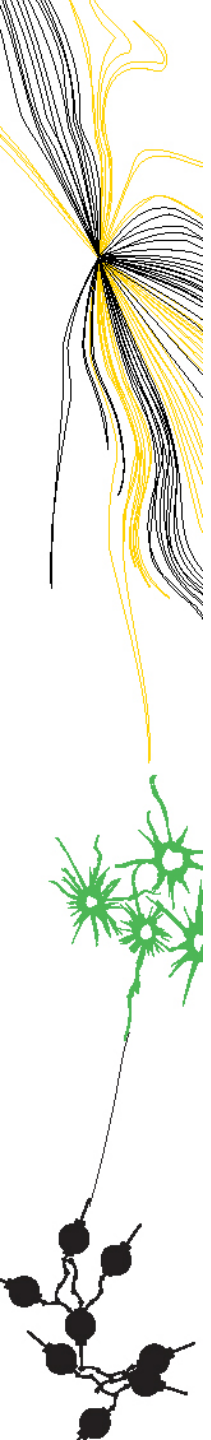# Overview of publications concerning three different personal brand typologies in different categories (1/12) Sports

	Sports
Icon	**David Beckham** (Kelting & Rice, 2013; Parmentier & Fischer, 2012)
Celebrity	Rascher et al., 2017; Sassenberg et al., 2012; Shuart, 2007; Summers & Morgan, 2008. **Ryan Giggs** (Parmentier & Fischer, 2012) **LeBron James** (Fresco, 2017) **Andy Murray** (Davies & Slater, 2015) **Suzann Pettersen** (Kristiansen & Williams, 2015) **Annika Sörenstam** (Cortsen, 2013) **Tiger Woods** (Tanner & Maeng, 2012)
Personal brand	**Athletes** (Agyemang, 2011; Arai et al., 2013; Arai et al., 2014; Ballouli & Hutchinson, 2012; Carlson & Donavan, 2013; Carlson & Donavan, 2017; Constantinescu, 2017; Desmarais, 2017; Emmons & Mocarski, 2014; Geurin, 2017; Geurin-Eagleman & Burch, 2016; Green, 2016; Hasaan et al., 2016; Hodge & Walker, 2015; Lebel & Danylchuk, 2014; Lobpries et al., 2017; McGhee, 2012; Mitsis & Leckie, 2016; Parris et al., 2014; Schwartz & Vogan, 2017; Staskeviciute-Butiene, 2014; Williams et al., 2015; Wilson & Liu, 2012; Zhou & Tainsky, 2017). **Athletic trainers** (Kahanov & Andrews, 2001; Walsh & Williams, 2017) **Football players** (Chadwick and Burton, 2008; Price et al., 2013) **Tennis players** (Lebel & Danylchuk, 2012; O'Reilly & Braedley, 2008)

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Overview of publications concerning three different personal brand typologies in different categories (2/12) Academics

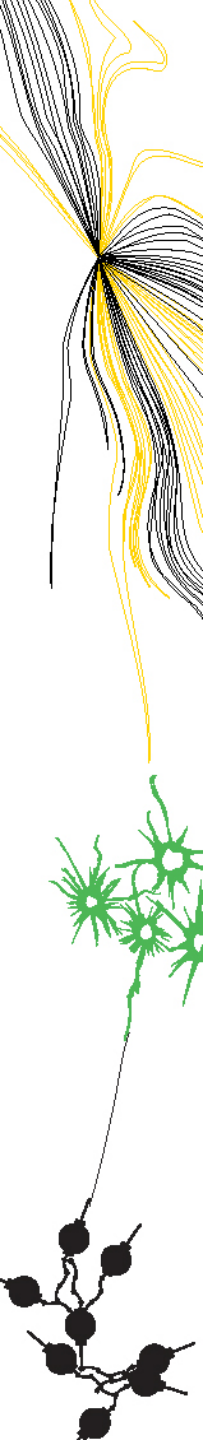|	Academics
Icon	
Celebrity	
Personal brand	Duffy & Pooley, 2017; Reif-Lehrer, 1992 **Professors** (Jillapalli & Jillapalli, 2014; Jillapalli & Wilcox, 2010; Zamudio et al., 2013; Zamudio & Meng, 2015) **Students** (Bronstein, 2014; Chakrabarti, 2014; Edmiston, 2014; Flostrand et al., 2016; Holmberg & Strannegård, 2015; Hood et al., 2014; Johnson, 2017; Jones & Leverenz, 2017; Lee & Cavanaugh, 2016; Manai & Holmlund, 2015; McCorkle et al., 1992; McCorkle et al., 2003; Myers, 2017; Shuker, 2014; Stanton & Stanton, 2013; Taylor, 2003) **Tattooed students** (Bergh et al., 2017) **Marketing positions** (Close et al., 2011) **Female labor** (Banet-Weiser & Juhasz, 2011)

Overview of publications concerning three different personal brand typologies in different categories (3/12) Politicians

	Politicians
Icon	
Celebrity	Street, 2004 **Tony Blair** (Scammell, 2007) **George W. Bush** (Tanner & Maeng, 2012) **Charles Kennedy** (Harris & Lock, 2001) **Benito Mussolini** (Swan, 2016) **Wladimir Putin** (Campbell & Denezhkina, 2017 **Kevin Rudd** (Burgess et al., 2017; Craig, 2014) **Donald Trump** (Hearn, 2016)
Personal brand	Chai & Kim, 2013; Coesemans and De Cock, 2017; Colliander et al., 2017; Jones, 2010; Kaneva & Klemmer, 2016; McKernan, 2011; Milewicz & Milewicz, 2014; Parker, 2012; Rozanova, 2017; Speed et al., 2015

Overview of publications concerning three different personal brand typologies in different categories (4/12) Visual artists

	Visual artists
Icon	
Celebrity	**Thomas Kinkade** (Fillis, 2015) **Ernst Ludwig Kirchner** (Weikop, 2012) **Pablo Picasso** (Muñiz Jr., 2014) **Andy Warhol** (Kerrigan et al., 2011) **Ai Weiwei** (Preece, 2015)
Personal brand	Baumgarth & O'Reilly, 2014; Hernando & Campo, 2017; Moulard et al., 2014; Preece & Kerrigan, 2015; Schroeder, 2005; Sjöholm & Pasquinelli, 2014

Overview of publications concerning three different personal brand typologies in different categories (5/12) Performing artists

	Performing artists
Icon	**David Bowie** (Lindridge & Eagar, 2015; Eagar & Lindridge, 2015)
Celebrity	**Marina Abramovic** (Marcus, 2015); **Drew Barrymore** (Choi & Rifon, 2012) **Russell Brand** (Mills et al., 2015); **Tyra Banks** (Keller, 2014; Persis Murray, 2015) **Matthew Broderick** (Tripp et al., 1994); **Cheryl Cole** (Cocker et al., 2015) **Bethenny Frankel** (Nayar, 2015); **Lady Gaga** (Click et al., 2013) **Ladi6** (Friend, 2015); **Dustin Hoffmann** (Tripp et al., 1994) **Elizabeth Hurley** (Barron, 2007); **Jena Malone** (Wohlfeil & Whelan, 2012) **Kylie Minogue** (Chapman et al., 2005); **Katie Price** (Cocker et al., 2015; Genz, 2015) **Julia Roberts** (Choi & Riffon, 2012); **Eugen Sandow** (Morais, 2013) **Oprah Winfrey** (Loroz & Braig, 2015)
Personal brand	**Film stars** (Mathys et al., 2016) **Models** (Parmentier et al., 2013) **Musicians** (Matenge, 2013; Turri et al., 2013; Saboo et al., 2015) **Classical musicians** (Scharff, 2015) **Folk musicians** (Meiseberg, 2014) **Pop musicians** (Huang & Huang, 2016)

Overview of publications concerning three different personal brand typologies in different categories (6/12) Nobility

	Nobility
Icon	**British royals** (Otnes & Maclaran, 2018)
Celebrity	
Personal brand	

Overview of publications concerning three different personal brand typologies in different categories (7/12) Producers of hedonic products

	Producers of hedonic products
Icon	
Celebrity	**Chefs** (Chen et al., 2017; Clark et al., 2016; Ehrmann et al., 2009)
Personal brand	

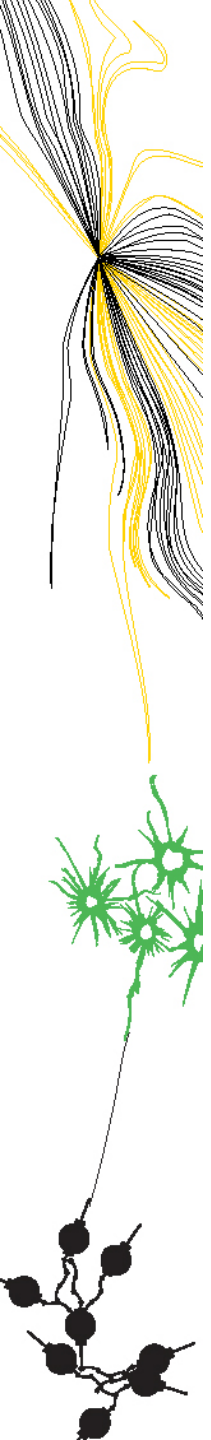# Overview of publications concerning three different personal brand typologies in different categories (8/12) Professional services

	Professional services
Icon	
Celebrity	
Personal brand	Maikstenine, 2009; Ogutu & Ougo, 2016; Shek et al., 2015 **Doctors** (Ioan et al., 2014; Luca et al., 2015) **Radiologists** (Kalia et al., 2017; Munden, 2015) **Psychologists** (Cederberg, 2017) **Nurses** (Trepanier & Gooch, 2014) **Health care staff** (Brigham, 2016) **Consultants** (Pagis & Ailon, 2017) **IT professionals** (Johnson, 2015) **Engineers** (Sheikh & Lim, 2011; Sheikh & Lim, 2015) **Salespeople** (Little, 2012) **Teachers** (Ilina et al., 2017) **Librarians** (Ahmad et al., 2016; Eke, 2012; Gall, 2010; Schneider, 2012)

Overview of publications concerning three different personal brand typologies in different categories (9/12) Self-employed

	Self-employed
Icon	
Celebrity	
Personal brand	Gandini, 2016 **Creative industry** (Duffy & Pruchniewska, 2017; de Klerk, 2015; Pruchniewska, 2017)

Overview of publications concerning three different personal brand typologies in different categories (10/12) Business managers

	Business managers
Icon	
Celebrity	**Martha Stewart** (Fournier, 2010; Murphy, 2010)
Personal brand	**CEO** (Alghawi et al., 2014; Bendisch et al., 2013; Chen & Chung, 2017; Erdoğmuş & Esen, 2017; Fetscherin, 2015; Friel & Duboff, 2009; Treadway et al., 2009; Wade et al., 2006; Zerfass et al., 2016) **Executives** (Karaduman, 2013; Schlosser et al., 2017) **Leaders** (Manurung, 2015; Nolan, 2015; Uymaz, 2016) **Entrepreneurs** (Ekhlasi et al., 2015; Raftari & Amiri, 2014; Razeghi et al., 2016) **Owner-manager** (Resnick et al., 2016)

Overview of publications concerning three different personal brand typologies in different categories (11/12) Content creators

|	Content creators
Icon	
Celebrity	**Bubz** (García-Rapp & Roca-Cuberes, 2017) **Elizabeth Gilbert** (Johns & English, 2016) **Jenna Marbles** (Maguire, 2015) **Zoe Sugg** (Berryman & Kavka, 2017)
Personal brand	**Journalists** (Bossio & Sacco, 2017; Brems et al., 2017; Bruns, 2012; Canter, 2015; Carpenter et al., 2016; Hanusch, 2017; Hanusch & Bruns, 2017; Hedman, 2015; Hedman, 2017; Hedman & Djerf-Pierre, 2013; Holton, 2016; Holton & Molyneux, 2017; Molyneux, 2015; Molyneux & Holton, 2015; Molyneux et al., 2017; Olausson, 2017; Ottovordemgentschenfelde, 2017; Schultz & Sheffer, 2012) **Novelists** (Makkai, 2016) **Resumé writers** (Bremner & Phung, 2015) **Interns** (Corrigan, 2015) **Influencers** (Khamis et al., 2017) **Bloggers** (Ahmad et al., 2013; Bronstein, 2013; Kretz & De Valck, 2010; Pihl, 2013; van Nuenen, 2016; Wang et al., 2015) **Style bloggers** (Liu & Suh, 2017) **Fashion bloggers** (Delisle & Parmentier, 2016; Duffy, 2015; Duffy & Hund, 2015; Safitri, 2017) **YouTubers** (Chen, 2013; Lovelock, 2017; Smith, 2014; Tarnovskaya, 2017)

Overview of publications concerning three different personal brand typologies in different categories (12/12) Categories implying specific fields

- **Sports:** Athletes, athlete trainers, athletes from specific disciplines (e.g. tennis players, football players, golf players)
- **Academics**: Professors, students
- **Politicians:** Prime ministers, presidents, election candidates, ordinary politicians
- **Visual artists:** Painters, sculptors, architects, photographers, video/film producers and directors
- **Performing artists**: Singers, actors, musicians, dancers, comedians, models
- **Nobility:** Royals, family members of higher and lower nobility
- **Producers of hedonic products**: Chefs de cuisine, restaurant staff, clothing, jewellery and furniture designers, wine producers, food artisans
- **Professional services:** Doctors, nurses, psychologists, librarians, engineers, consultants, teachers
- **Self-employed:** creative workers, personal trainers, hair stylists
- **Business manager:** CEOs, executives, top managers, entrepreneurs, business owners
- **Content creators:** journalists, novelists, resumé writers, authors, bloggers, podcasters, social media influencers, YouTubers

Daisywheel model of artistic brand stakeholders
(Preece and Kerrigan, 2015)
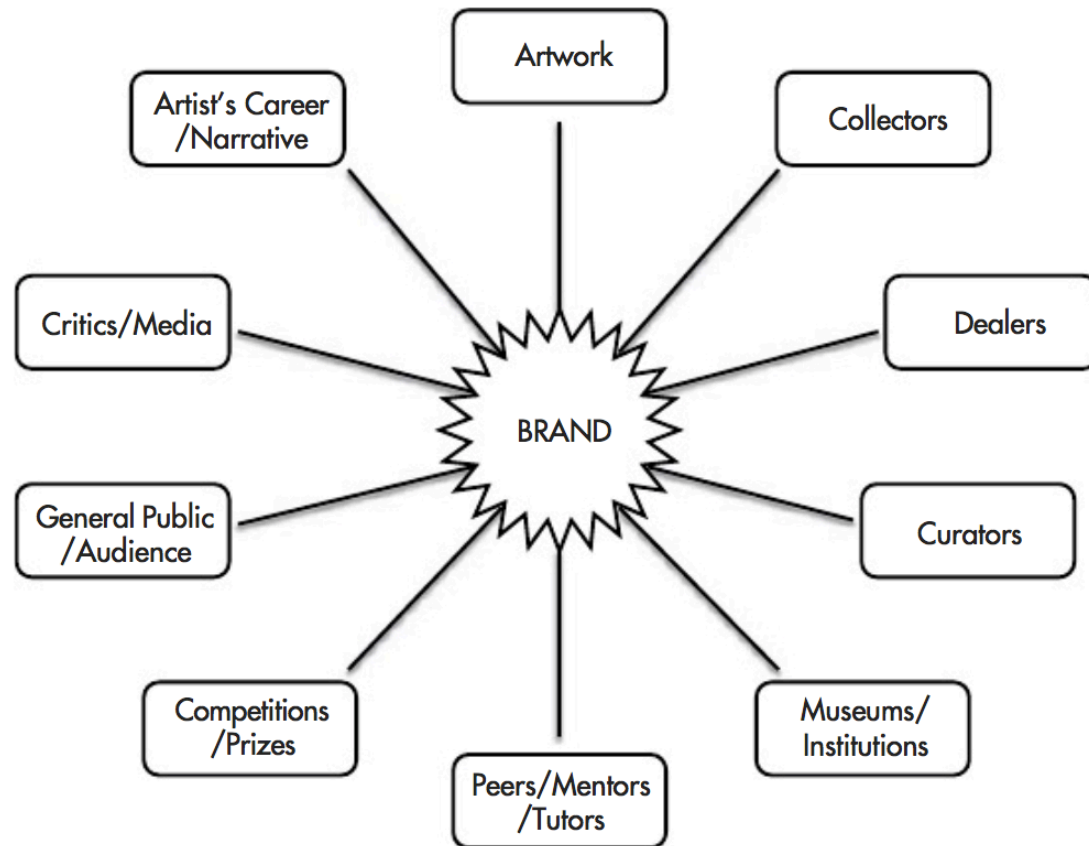
Construction of the artistic brand
(Preece and Kerrigan, 2015)