



# YouTube Beauty Gurus and the emotional labour of tribal entrepreneurship

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## ABSTRACT

Tribal entrepreneurship valorises emotional bonds between consumers and entrepreneurs, yet this emotional dimension is little understood. Drawing from a netnographic study of YouTube Beauty Gurus as tribal entrepreneurs, and uniting the concept of emotional labour with theories of moral emotions, we demonstrate the importance of emotional labour to tribal entrepreneurship's success. We observe novel forms of emotional labour performed by tribal entrepreneurs, relating to the expression of self-conscious and other-praising moral emotions, in addition to new technology-enabled forms of emotional censorship that silence the expression of other-condemning moral emotions in central tribal gathering spaces. Furthermore, we highlight the emotional labour performed by the broader tribe as their compassion for the entrepreneur stimulates tribal defense via the suppression of other-condemning emotions. We extend theories of tribal entrepreneurship by theorising the role and importance of emotional labour. Our findings also extend broader theories of emotions and contribute to discussions of immaterial labour.

## 1. Introduction

Online spaces facilitate the formation and congregation of consumer tribes surrounding various consumption-related practices and passions (Cova, Kozinets, & Shankar, 2007; Hamilton & Hewer, 2010; Kozinets, 2007). Such tribes present opportunities not only for established commercial organisations (see Canniford, 2011; Goulding, Shankar, & Canniford, 2013; Kozinets, Hemetsberger, & Schau, 2008), but also for entrepreneurial tribe members. Tribal entrepreneurship is theorised as the leverage of collective knowledge to introduce new products and services (Cova et al., 2007; Goulding & Saren, 2007; Guercini & Cova, 2015), emphasising the *intellectual* labour necessary for such undertakings. However, whilst research notes tensions between an individual's commitment to a tribe and their desire to profit from entrepreneurial ventures (Kozinets, De Valck, Wojnicki, & Wilner, 2010; Langer, 2007), the complex *emotional* transactions required to translate tribal bonds into market exchange have been largely overlooked. We address this theoretical gap by considering the emotional labour that is integral to the success of tribal entrepreneurship. Specifically, we unite Hochschild's (1983) concept of emotional labour with Haidt's (2003) work on moral emotions in order to theorise the emotional dynamics surrounding this unconventional form of entrepreneurship.

We present the findings of a netnographic study of the 'BeautyTube' tribe, an online consumer tribe centering around beauty-related vlogs (video blogs) on YouTube. Specifically, we document the emotional

dynamics surrounding the commercial activities of entrepreneurial 'Beauty Gurus' within the tribe. Our findings demonstrate that existing emotional bonds within the tribe introduce a moral dimension to tribal entrepreneurship, which may evoke negative tribal emotions if improperly managed. We find that successful tribal entrepreneurship consequently requires the performance of significant and novel forms of emotional labour by both the tribal entrepreneur and the broader tribe. We highlight the distinct risks and challenges presented by tribal entrepreneurship's emotional dimension, and the emerging strategies of emotion management that can contribute to its success.

## 2. Theoretical background

To contextualise our study we first review existing work on consumer tribes and tribal entrepreneurship, highlighting a limited emphasis on emotions, before introducing theories that may enable us to better understand tribal entrepreneurship's emotional dimension.

### 2.1. Consumer tribes and tribal entrepreneurs

Contemporary business research is punctuated with references to 'subcultures of consumption' (Schouten & McAlexander, 1995), 'brand communities' (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001), and 'consumer tribes' (Cova et al., 2007). Collectively these studies acknowledge that a desire for belonging may be satisfied through social interaction surrounding

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products or services. Yet in drawing from Maffesoli's (1996) neo-tribalism discourse, literature on consumer tribes also highlights their unstable and transient nature, as they form, disperse, and reform over time (Cova et al., 2007; Cova & Cova, 2002; Goulding et al., 2013; Maffesoli, 1996). Tribes are bound together by "shared emotions, styles of life, new moral beliefs and consumption practices" (Cova & Cova, 2001:67), rather than geography, and online platforms increasingly provide the anchoring locations through which tribe members experience a collective identity (Cova et al., 2007; Hamilton & Hewer, 2010; Kozinets, 1999, 2006).

Scholars have acknowledged the potential for tribe members to become entrepreneurs, leveraging their insider knowledge of their tribe's consumption rituals, related needs and desires, and the deficiencies of existing market offerings, in order to introduce new products and services (Cova et al., 2007; Goulding & Saren, 2007; Guercini & Cova, 2015; Martin & Schouten, 2014). Such instances of tribal entrepreneurship illustrate Toffler's (1981) notion of prosumption, as producer and consumer blur, and Goulding et al. (2013:816) propose that tribal entrepreneurship "alter[s] the power balance between marketers and consumers, as tribal members take the lead in dictating procedures of co-production." However, these developments may produce tensions between the market and cultural purpose of a tribe. Bengtsson, Östberg, and Kjeldgaard's (2005) study of the tattooing subculture indicates that commercialisation may be resisted where there is a perceived boundary between the 'sacred', non-commercial sphere of the subculture, and the starkly contrasting 'profane' aspects of the market. Similarly, Langer (2007) proposes that marketers to the fetish community risk alienation if members lose feelings of exclusivity following commercialisation. However, prior research is limited by its focus on niche tribes that actively position themselves in opposition to mainstream markets (e.g. goths, tattoo enthusiasts, the fetish community, tabletop game players) (Bengtsson et al., 2005; Cova & White, 2010; Goulding & Saren, 2007; Langer, 2007), which might explain in part the observed resistance to commercialisation. Tribal entrepreneurship that emerges from more conventional markets (e.g. mainstream fashion and beauty products) has received less attention, and it is possible that such tensions may be less prominent in these markets, or may take different forms.

Whilst prior work acknowledges broader tensions between consumer tribes and commercial activities, the complex *emotional* dimension of tribal entrepreneurship has been largely overlooked. Whilst entrepreneurship itself is acknowledged to be an emotional 'journey' (Cardon, Foo, Shepherd, & Wiklund, 2012), tribal entrepreneurship is unconventional in that it stems from *existing* emotional bonds between consumers and entrepreneurs. Tribal entrepreneurs must find ways to maintain their emotional bonds with the tribe whilst simultaneously finding ways to commercialise them. Despite acknowledgement of the importance of emotional bonds within consumer tribes (e.g. Cova & Cova, 2002; Hamilton & Hewer, 2010), prior research lacks an explicit examination of the emotions that surround tribal entrepreneurship. For instance, whilst Kozinets et al. (2010) observe communal-commercial tensions experienced by bloggers involved in a product seeding campaign, their analysis focuses on the bloggers' narratives, rather than emotional exchanges between the actors involved. We address this theoretical gap by exploring the complex and dynamic emotional interplays surrounding tribal entrepreneurship. In order to enrich our understanding of these emotional dynamics, we draw from established theories of emotion in sociology and social psychology.

## 2.2. Emotional labour and moral emotions

First, we draw from the concept of emotional labour. According to Hochschild (1983) we all engage in *emotion work*, managing and regulating our feelings in order to enrich our interpersonal relationships. However, she proposes that feelings have long been commodified as *emotional labour*. Employees are encouraged to display emotions

according to integrative display rules that suit the particular market task, under- or over-performing emotions to make customers feel a certain way (Hochschild, 1983; Wharton & Erickson, 1993). Flight attendants, for instance, are expected to 'wear a smile' and be 'happy to help' regardless of how they feel about passengers, managing their emotions so that customers feel cared for and valued (Hochschild, 1983). The extent to which emotions are actually felt by the employee may vary, however Diefendorff and Gosserand (2003) argue that emotional labour involves the monitoring and self-regulation of emotions that may be deeply felt and not simply for display. Thus, emotional labour is not merely a mask to maintain happy customers, but the regulation and experience of emotion for profit.

The emotional labour of tribal entrepreneurship has not been studied. However tribal entrepreneurs' existing emotional bonds to the tribe introduce an interesting moral dimension. Prior research indicates that tribal entrepreneurship, which aims to capitalise on existing tribal bonds, may be seen as morally transgressive by the tribe (e.g. Kozinets et al., 2010; Langer, 2007). In order to better understand the moral dimension of emotional labour we also draw from Haidt's (2003) theory of moral emotions. In contrast to Hochschild's (1983) own classification of emotions, Haidt's work specifically considers the moral aspects of emotions directed toward others. According to Haidt (2001, 2003, 2007) moral emotions are instinctively felt when something is perceived as good or bad, indicating when acts violate accepted norms, or are worthy of praise and emulation. We perceive value in uniting Hochschild's (1983) concept of emotional labour with Haidt's (2003) theory of moral emotions in order to better understand how moral emotions are laboured upon in the context of tribal entrepreneurship, where deep emotional bonds are coupled with moral tensions surrounding commercialisation.

Haidt (2003) discusses four families of moral emotions: the other-condemning family, the self-conscious family, the other-suffering family, and the other-praising family, each containing closely related emotions (summarised in Table 1). *Anger*, *disgust* and *contempt* are *other-condemning* emotions, involving negative feelings about the actions or character of others who violate moral codes. *Shame*, *embarrassment*, and *guilt* - the *self-conscious* emotions - are an adaptive response to other-condemning emotions and stem from a need to fit within a social group, provoking individuals to hide/escape, change their behaviours, or apologise and make amends. *Compassion* and *sympathy* are *other-suffering* emotions, related to humans' tendency to feel bad when others suffer and their desire to alleviate that suffering. Finally, *gratitude*, *awe* and *elevation*, the *other-praising* emotions, drive pro-social behaviour; observing good deeds encourages emulation and reciprocation.

As illustrated by Table 1, moral emotions have been explored in a range of business contexts (e.g. Choi & Lin, 2009; Grappi et al., 2013; Lwin & Phau, 2014; Romani et al., 2013). However, these studies typically focus on the measurement of one or a small number of discrete emotions, and the correlation of these emotions with specific outcomes. In contrast, we explore the *interrelation* of moral emotions in order to identify recurring emotional dynamics surrounding the commercial activity of tribal entrepreneurs. Since we are concerned with the emotional labour surrounding tribal entrepreneurship our interest is the way in which the expression of certain moral emotions may elicit moral emotions in others, and the implications of these emotional dynamics for entrepreneurs' commercial ventures. How do tribal entrepreneurs, and the broader tribe, labour upon moral emotions in ways that influence the success of tribal entrepreneurship?

## 3. Research context: YouTube Beauty Gurus & the BeautyTube tribe

To address this question we draw from a netnographic study of the BeautyTube tribe, an online consumer tribe centering around beauty-related YouTube vlogs. Some BeautyTube tribe members produce and upload regular vlogs (typically reviews and tutorials), whilst a larger

**Table 1**  
Summary of Haidt's (2003) moral emotions, with illustrations from business practice.

	Moral emotion	Elicitors	Action tendencies	Examples from business practice
Other-condemning family	Anger	Frustration, betrayal, insults and injustice. Can be triggered on behalf of others.	Attack, humiliate or get revenge.	Concerns that consumers or other stakeholders are being treated unfairly result in anger at irresponsible business practice (Choi & Lin, 2009). Common action tendencies include negative word of mouth, protest behaviour (Grappi, Romani, & Bagozzi, 2013), and activism (Waldron, Navis, & Fisher, 2013). E.g. <i>protests at Starbucks' tax avoidance in the UK, with demands for justice (Escobales &amp; McVeigh, 2012)</i> Disgust when business practices break cultural taboos (Kallio, 2007) resulting in boycott. E.g. <i>Disgust at Tesco's horsemeat scandal, in a culture where eating horse is considered taboo, resulted in a boycott of the retailer (Tse, Zhang, Doherty, Chappell, &amp; Garnett, 2016).</i> Managers' contempt for stakeholders (Choi & Lin, 2009) may result in a lack of consideration. E.g. <i>Philip Green's lack of respect toward BHS workers, whereby money was removed from their pension funds for personal gain, putting thousands of workers' and pensioners' pension payments at risk (Butler, 2017).</i> Managers and employees may feel embarrassed as a result of publicity surrounding corporate wrongdoing, sometimes resulting in resignation (Cohan, 2002; Lange & Washburn, 2012). E.g. <i>A collective sense of embarrassment following the collapse of Enron, leading to attempts at reparation via the (temporary) suspension of bonuses and acceptance of policy of stricter control (Cohan, 2002)</i> Consumer's guilt at the recognition of suffering in others as driver of cause-related marketing campaigns or philanthropic activities (Lwin & Phau, 2014), or admission of guilt over corporate scandals resulting in attempts to 'make good'. E.g. <i>Six executives from VW admit guilt and company pays \$4.3bn emissions scandal penalty (Lynch, 2017).</i> Compassion and empathy in corporate philanthropy decision-making (Muller, Plarier, & Little, 2014), resulting in CSR and related activity. E.g. <i>Tesco's long-term support and compassion for cancer patients, which raised millions to fund Cancer Research's lifesaving research (Tesco, 2017).</i> Charities and vulnerable groups, or other stakeholders' perception of corporate philanthropy or other societal initiatives as doing good leads to gratitude (Romani, Grappi, & Bagozzi, 2013) that results in positive word of mouth. E.g. <i>Stakeholders' gratitude toward Unilever's Sustainable Living Plan that aims to reduce negative environmental impact (Confino, 2013).</i> Awe/elevation as a response to inspirational figures in corporations (Sosik, Chun, & Zhu, 2014) or at positive impact of a business (e.g. protecting environment), resulting in increased support and loyalty. E.g. <i>Awe and elevation at Apple products and especially the creation of Steve Jobs as technology guru (Robinson, 2013).</i>
	Disgust	Objects that revolt the senses. People who violate local, cultural rules for how to use their bodies.	Avoid contact with the offending entity. Wash and purify.	
	Contempt	Perceptions of moral superiority.	Mockery, disregard, treatment with lack of respect or consideration.	
Self-conscious family	Shame	Perception that your core self is defective since you have failed to meet standards of morality, aesthetics or competence.	Hide or withdraw, signaling recognition of violation (thus reducing likelihood of attack by others). Attempts at reparation.	
	Embarrassment	Perception that you have violated a norm in an observable way within a social interaction.		
	Guilt	Perception that you have caused harm, loss or distress to another, particularly where this threatens your relationship with this person.	Apologise, confess, or make-up for transgression.	
Other-suffering family	Compassion and sympathy	Perception of sorrow or suffering in another, particularly for those with whom one has a close, communal relationship.	Help, comfort, or otherwise alleviate the suffering of the other.	
Other-praising family	Gratitude	Perception that someone has done a good deed that benefits you, both intentionally and of their own volition	Expressions of thanks, reciprocation toward benefactor, and engagement in more pro-social behaviours in general	
	Awe and elevation	Acts of kindness, generosity, loyalty and self-sacrifice.	Bettering of oneself, following the example of the moral exemplar (e.g. helping others)	

portion of the tribe view and comment upon them. Although YouTube is the tribe's primary anchoring space, the tribe also gathers on social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, on Beauty Gurus' blogs, on online forums, and at offline YouTube conventions such as VidCon and BeautyCon. Despite its dispersed nature, the tribe is distinguishable from other fluid social formations on social media, such as brand publics (Arvidsson & Caliendo, 2016), because of the direct interaction between tribe members and the active discussion of the focal topic of beauty.

A number of Beauty Gurus have emerged within the BeautyTube tribe; beauty vloggers who have risen in prominence, and whose YouTube channels now attract hundreds of thousands, even millions, of subscribers. These Beauty Gurus are increasingly recognised as 'micro-celebrities' (Marwick, 2013) in their own right (Cocker & Cronin, 2017). They sign autographs, hold 'meet and greets' and regularly feature in the mainstream media. For these Beauty Gurus, YouTube has become a full-time career. Beauty Gurus initially earned the respect and adoration of the tribe by offering impartial, often critical, reviews of beauty products, however as their popularity has grown they have proceeded to commercialise their tribal bonds via advertisements and sponsored content on their YouTube channels, blogs and social media profiles, as well as own-brand beauty and non-beauty (e.g. books, stationary, clothing) merchandise directly targeting tribe members. The challenge facing Beauty Gurus, and tribal entrepreneurs more broadly, is the need to commercialise their existing emotional bonds with the tribe whilst simultaneously maintaining them.

Beauty Gurus present a relevant context for our exploration of emotional labour for several reasons. First, unlike the niche, often anti-mainstream tribes that have been the focus of previous studies (e.g. Goulding & Saren, 2007; Langer, 2007), the BeautyTube tribe focuses upon purchasing, reviewing, using and discussing mass-produced beauty products, enabling us to explore tensions and emotions surrounding commercialisation in a more mainstream consumer tribe that we might anticipate would be more receptive. Second, tribal entrepreneurship within the BeautyTube tribe is not a one-off occurrence, but a widespread phenomenon, enabling us to explore the emotional dynamics surrounding a range of tribal entrepreneurs and to identify recurring patterns. Finally, since many Beauty Gurus appear to have succeeded in commercialising their emotional bonds (leading UK Beauty Gurus reportedly earn upward of £50,000 per month from their various commercialisation strategies [Forrester, 2016; Lumsden, 2016]) this research context may present useful insights into the techniques of emotion management that aid the successful transition from tribe member to tribal entrepreneur. Below we detail and justify the procedures of data collection and analysis implemented in our study.

#### 4. Method

We employed non-participatory netnographic methods, involving the interpretation of archival data (data pre-existing online) and produced data (reflexive researcher field notes), as opposed to the generation of elicited or co-created data through direct interaction with tribe members. Netnography involves the naturalistic qualitative analysis of online communities, gaining insight into a cultural group through observation of their social interactions in situ (see Kozinets, 2015). Whilst earlier netnographies often studied bounded online locations such as specific forums (e.g. Cova & Pace, 2006; Nelson & Otnes, 2005), defining the research field by platform is increasingly problematic as online communities and tribes become fragmented and delocalised, interacting across multiple online spaces (see Kozinets, 2015; Weijo, Heitanen, & Mattila, 2014). Consequently, in line with more recent netnographic studies (e.g. Kozinets, Patterson, & Ashman, 2017; Seregina & Weijo, 2017), we avoided confining our netnography to a single platform (e.g. YouTube) and instead extended our enquiry to a range of online spaces where the tribe gather and interact.

Our analysis of the BeautyTube tribe occurred in two phases. In the

first phase the lead author engaged in extensive netnographic fieldwork (September 2012–December 2015), exploring Beauty Gurus' emerging celebrity status, their evolving commercialisation strategies, and the response of the tribe. During this exploratory phase the researcher watched a total of 5989 YouTube videos by UK Beauty Gurus (over 949 h of video footage), taking detailed fieldnotes. Prolonged immersion within the tribe facilitated a rich understanding of its structure, norms and terminology, as well as sensitivity to shifts in tribal relations over time as Beauty Gurus negotiated their transition from tribe members to tribal entrepreneurs. Furthermore, this immersion familiarised the researcher with leading UK Beauty Gurus and central tribal gathering spaces beyond the YouTube platform, including Beauty Gurus' blogs, social media profiles, and gossip forums.

During this initial phase it became apparent that interactions within the tribe contained frequent expressions of emotions, particularly surrounding Beauty Gurus' commercialisation strategies. Whilst emotions such as anger and contempt were easily visible in the heated discussions surrounding early shifts in commercialisation strategies, closer inspection of the data indicated further complex emotional exchanges. The importance of these emotional dynamics to the tribe's ongoing cohesion in the face of Beauty Gurus' entrepreneurial activities became apparent, and we therefore sought to better understand these emotional dynamics. Iteration between our existing data and literature on emotions, specifically Hochschild's (1983) articulation of emotional labour and Haidt's (2003) work on moral emotions, facilitated the formation of more focused research questions that guided a second phase of data collection and analysis: What moral emotions are expressed by the tribe in response to tribal entrepreneurship? What moral emotions are expressed by the tribal entrepreneur in relation to their own commercial activities? Does the expression of certain moral emotions surrounding tribal entrepreneurship appear to elicit or suppress other moral emotions within the tribe? And, finally, what are the implications of these emotional dynamics for the success of tribal entrepreneurship?

In 2016 all authors embarked on a second phase of netnography. We narrowed our focus to 25 of the UK's leading Beauty Gurus (see Table 2), selected based on the number of subscribers to their primary YouTube channel (many run additional YouTube channels, typically broader lifestyle channels, that were also included in our analysis). We focused our analysis on the emotional interplays surrounding these tribal entrepreneurs in the tribal gathering spaces identified in the immersive phase of the study. We analysed those videos, blog posts and social media posts by our 25 focal Beauty Gurus that involved, or included reference to, commercialisation (e.g. sponsored videos, promotion of merchandise, inclusion of PR samples, attending PR events, reflections on commercial success or struggles). For each Beauty Guru we ensured to represent their full range of commercialisation strategies, and to encompass changes in commercialisation strategies throughout their career. The number of videos/blog posts/social media posts analysed varied between Beauty Gurus, depending upon how long the Beauty Guru had been posting, how frequently they posted, and the range of commercialisation strategies that they employed.

In order to capture the tribe's response to tribal entrepreneurship, we also analysed vlog, blog, and social media comments or replies that related to the tribal entrepreneur's commercial activities or responded directly to the tribal entrepreneur's expression of moral emotions. Additionally, the immersive phase of data collection identified two forums dedicated to discussing Beauty Gurus, with a significant focus on UK Beauty Gurus – [gurugossip.com](http://gurugossip.com) (which boasts over 2.5 million posts from 120,000 users) and [youtalktrash.com](http://youtalktrash.com) (a newer, smaller forum with 280,000 posts from over 18,000 users). Within these forums we selected threads dedicated to discussing our focal Beauty Gurus, and within these threads we focused our analysis on posts relating to their commercial activities or responding to their expression of moral emotions. All online social interactions observed were archived, publically available messages, and any private forums or social media accounts were avoided. Our dataset from this second, more focused phase of data



**Table 2**  
Focal Beauty Guru details, correct as of February 2018.

	Beauty Guru	YouTube channel(/s)	YouTube subscribers	Personal website/blog	Instagram profile	Twitter profile	Facebook page (public)
1	Zoe Sugg	zoella morezoella	12.0m 4.7m	<a href="http://zoella.co.uk">zoella.co.uk</a>	@zoella	@zoella	@zoe.zoella
2	Tanya Burr	tanyaburr	3.7m	<a href="http://tanyaburr.co.uk">tanyaburr.co.uk</a>	@tanyaburr	@tanyaburr	@officialtanyaburr
3	Lindy Tsang	bubzbeauty bubzvlogz	3.0m 1.0m	<a href="http://bubzbeauty.com">bubzbeauty.com</a>	@itsbubz	@bubzbeauty	@itsbubz
4	Wayne Goss	gossmakeupartist gossmakeupchat	2.8m 0.5m	<a href="http://gossmakeupartist.com">gossmakeupartist.com</a>	@gossmakeupartist	@gossmakeupartis	@officialgossmakeupartist
5	Louise Pentland	sprinkleofglitter sprinkleofchatter	2.6m 1.2m	<a href="http://sprinkleofglitter.blogspot.co.uk">sprinkleofglitter.blogspot.co.uk</a>	@louisepentland	@louisepentland	@louisepentland
6	Samantha & Nicola Chapman	pixiwoo pixiwoomadness realtechniques	2.1m 0.3m 0.3m	<a href="http://pixiwoo.com">pixiwoo.com</a>	@pixiwoo (Nic) @pixiwoos (Sam)	@pixiwoo (Nic) @pixiwoos (Sam)	@officialpixiwoo
7	Samantha Maria	samanthamaria thesammimariashow	1.8m 0.5m	<a href="http://samanthamariaofficial.com">samanthamariaofficial.com</a>	@samanthamaria	@samanthamaria	@sammimaria
8	Niom Smart	niomismart	1.7m	<a href="http://niomismart.com">niomismart.com</a>	@niomismart	@niomismart	@niomismart
9	Kaushal Beauty	kaushalbeauty	1.8m	<a href="http://kaushalbeauty.com">kaushalbeauty.com</a>	@kaushalbeauty	@kaushalbeauty	@kaushalbeauty
10	Lisa Eldridge	lisaeldridge	1.7m	<a href="http://lisaeldridge.com">lisaeldridge.com</a>	@lisaeldridgemakeup	@Lisa_Eldridge	@lisaeldridgedotcom
11	Fleur De Force	fleurdeforce fleurdevlog bridedeforce	1.4m 0.6m 0.1m	<a href="http://fleurdeforce.com">fleurdeforce.com</a>	@fleurdeforce	@fleurdeforce	@fleurdeforce
12	Patricia Bright	britpopprincess britpoplife	1.4m 0.4m	<a href="http://patriciabright.co.uk">patriciabright.co.uk</a>	@thepatriciabright	@pattylovesu	–
13	Estee Lalonde	esteelalonde everydayestee	1.2m 0.4m	<a href="http://esteelalonde.com">esteelalonde.com</a>	@esteelalonde	@esteelalonde	@estee.lalonde
14	Gabriella Lindley	velvetgh0st planetgabb	0.9m 0.5m	<a href="http://gabulous.co.uk">gabulous.co.uk</a>	@velvetgh0st	@velvetgh0st	–
15	Klaire de Lys	klairedelysart klairedelysdotcom	0.9m 0.2m	<a href="http://klairedelys.com">klairedelys.com</a>	@klairedelys	@klairedelys	@klaire-de-lys-128984429746
16	Shirley Eniang	shirleybeniang	0.7m	<a href="http://shirleyswardrobe.com">shirleyswardrobe.com</a>	@shirleybeniang	@shirleybeniang	@shirley.beniang
17	Dina Torkia	dinatokio sidndina	0.7m 0.3m	<a href="http://dinatorkia.co.uk">dinatorkia.co.uk</a>	@dinatokio	@dinatokio	@dinatokio
18	Emma Pickles	euphoricreation	0.6m	<a href="http://emmapi ckles.uk">emmapi ckles.uk</a>	@emmapi ckles	@emma_pickles	@euphoricCreation
19	Jennie Jenkins	beautybyjj	0.6m	<a href="http://jenniejenkins.co.uk">jenniejenkins.co.uk</a>	@thejenniejenkins	@thebeautybyjj	@beautybyjj-184104001613332
20	Victoria Magrath	inthefrow	0.6m	<a href="http://inthefrow.com">inthefrow.com</a>	@inthefrow	@inthefrow	@inthefrow
21	Freddy Cousin-Brown	freddymylove	0.6m	<a href="http://freddymylove.co.uk">freddymylove.co.uk</a>	freddycousinbrown	@freddymylovee	@freddycousinbrown
22	Lauren Luke	panacea81	0.5m	–	@panacea81	@panacea81	@panacea81
23	Anna Gardner	theannaedit	0.4m	<a href="http://theannaedit.com">theannaedit.com</a>	@theannaedit	@theannaedit	@theannaedit
24	SunbeamsJess	sunbeamsjess extrasunbeamsjess	0.4m 0.1m	–	sunbeamsjess	sunbeamsjess	–
25	Lily Pebbles	lilypebbles	0.4m	<a href="http://lilypebbles.co.uk">lilypebbles.co.uk</a>	@lilypebbles	@lilypebbles	@lilypebbles

**Table 3**  
Summary of data sources.

Source	Collected data
Beauty Guru YouTube channels	974 videos (153 h of footage) with 7652 video comments
Beauty Guru blogs	642 blog posts with 1720 blog comments
Beauty Guru social media profiles	654 Instagram posts with 1354 comments 856 Twitter posts, with 1760 replies 324 Facebook posts, with 632 comments
Beauty Guru discussion forums	436 <a href="http://gurugossip.com">gurugossip.com</a> threads 26 <a href="http://youtalktrash.com">youtalktrash.com</a> threads

collection is summarised in Table 3.

Consistent with interpretive approaches we aimed to understand and represent the emotional dynamics surrounding tribal entrepreneurship, rather than to measure the degree of emotion felt. All authors engaged in established techniques of hermeneutic analysis (Arnould & Fischer, 1994; Belk, Fischer, & Kozinets, 2013; Thompson, Pollio, & Locander, 1994), following in particular the guidance of Thompson (1997). Hermeneutic analysis involves “an iterative [process] in which a ‘part’ of the qualitative data (or text) is interpreted and re-interpreted in relation to the developing sense of the ‘whole’” (Thompson et al., 1994:433), with repeated iterations required in order for a holistic understanding to be developed over time. First, we conducted an intratextual analysis, treating each piece of collected content

(a video, a blog post, a comment, etc.) independently, establishing which, if any, of Haidt's moral emotions were expressed. We considered what may have elicited the expressed emotion, and, where relevant, identified any moral emotions expressed in direct response (e.g. YouTube video comments, replies to comments on social media, or forum-based discussions of a YouTube video). We then conducted an intertextual analysis looking for recurring emotional dynamics surrounding each Beauty Guru, and then within our dataset as a whole. Moving from part to whole in this way enabled the identification of recurring emotional dynamics. Specifically, we identified ways in which certain moral emotions appeared to suppress or elicit others within the tribe, and explored the implications of these emotional exchanges for tribal entrepreneurs' commercial activities. The research team repeatedly discussed and compared their independent interpretations until a sufficient level of interpretive convergence and theoretical saturation was achieved (Belk et al., 2013), eventually arriving at an interpretation that all researchers accepted as an authentic representation of the emotional dynamics surrounding tribal entrepreneurship within the BeautyTube tribe.

We shall now present our theorisation of these emotional dynamics, presenting recurring emotional interplays that emerged within our dataset as a whole, and providing illustrative examples. We have followed the guidance of Kozinets (2015) regarding the anonymity of the online posters studied. Our focal Beauty Gurus as public figures are subject to an uncloaked representation in the presentation of our

findings, using their online pseudonym and/or real name (where widely known). Other tribe members, however, are subject to a cloaked representation, whereby the site of their contribution is mentioned but the individual's name, online pseudonym and other identifying information is excluded. Since our data is perceived to be of low risk to participants (Kozinets, 2015), quotes are edited only for length to ensure the emotions expressed are not obscured or distorted.

## 5. Findings

Our analysis documents the moral emotions surrounding tribal entrepreneurship, and demonstrates the role of emotional labour in securing entrepreneurial success. We begin by identifying technology-enabled emotional censorship, as Beauty Gurus silence the expression of other-condemning emotions. We then observe instances where tribe members' other-suffering emotions prompt them to defend the entrepreneur. Finally, we document tribal entrepreneurs' expression of self-conscious and other-praising emotions as novel forms of emotional labour that stimulate positive moral emotions within the tribe and consequently strengthen tribal bonds.

### 5.1. Moral betrayals, other-condemning emotions and emotional censorship

Loyalty is a fundamental moral foundation (Haidt, 2012), particularly within communities or tribes (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001), and Beauty Gurus were perceived to betray their fellow tribe members where they appeared to prioritise their own financial interests over the interests of the tribe. Recurring moral betrayals included a lack of transparency surrounding sponsorship, the production of sub-standard content or merchandise, and declining interaction with non-Guru tribe members. Such moral betrayals often elicited the other-condemning emotions of anger and contempt amongst tribe members.

For example, in December 2016 Beauty Guru Tanya Burr posted a 'daily vlog' (a common vlog format that provides insights into Beauty Gurus' daily lives) showing her shopping for a Christmas gift for her sister:

*You know how much I love my Clinique Sonic Brush, it's amazing, it's basically a real skin changer, you'll see instant results. It just makes your skin really clean and clear and glowing. So I really want to get one for my sister. [...] I thought it would be fun to vlog it and give you guys ideas of what to get for your friends and family as well. So, yeah! I hope they have one, I hope they haven't sold out!*

Tanya proceeds to film her exchange with a Clinique sales assistant, who is apparently oblivious to Tanya's Beauty Guru status, as she chooses and purchases her gift, extolling its virtues.

*Maybe this is what I should get my sister. £79, which is usually how much just the brush is on its own, but here you get a free travel case, which would be SO useful, and extra skincare! I think that's really good value, and a really gorgeous gift as well. Also the lady [Clinique sales assistant] has just told me this is limited edition, so I think that makes it even cooler!*

There is no indication within the video itself that this footage is sponsored by a brand, however the video thumbnail features the word 'AD' in the bottom right corner (see Fig. 1), whilst the phrase "This video contains a paid for advertorial by Clinique" is included in the information box below the video. Both are required by the Advertising Standards Authority in the UK (ASA, 2015), however despite Tanya's self-regulatory compliance, some tribe members felt she had not done enough to make the company's involvement clear to her fellow tribe members.

Clinique later shared Tanya's video on its own Facebook page, and comments on this post indicated a moral judgment of betrayal amongst tribe members. For example:



## FAMILY DO NOT WATCH THIS | VLOGMAS DAY 3

Fig. 1. Thumbnail of Tanya Burr's vlog, sponsored by Clinique.

*How can anyone trust Tanya's reviews anymore when she is quite OBVIOUSLY being paid by Clinique for this video. Really sad*

*Her video on YouTube made it look like she bought it ... But this shows it was just another advert!*

*She's the last person I'd rely on for a true review she says anything you like while they're paying her to!*

Similar criticism emerged on Beauty Guru gossip forums. For example, one poster on [gurugossip.com](http://gurugossip.com) stated "I see her [Tanya's] 3rd vlog was a sponsored ad for Clinique!! And she never put 'ad' in the title. It's such a sneaky thing to do. And pretending it was just about a present for her sister!". Tribe members expressed the other-condemning emotion of contempt, with commenters adopting a stance of moral superiority and questioning Tanya's morality. Furthermore, anger is exhibited in commenters' attempts to expose Tanya's betrayal to the tribe and to the wider public. Notably, these other-condemning emotions are not directed at Clinique, the brand, but at Tanya as a fellow tribe member who is bound by the moral rules of the tribe.

Important here are the locations in which other-condemning emotions are expressed. Despite criticism in other online locations, the comments on this video on Tanya Burr's own YouTube channel remain wholly positive. Indeed, over the course of our study comments on some of our focal Beauty Gurus' videos became increasingly positive – on many recent videos we could not find a single critical comment, despite criticism emerging in other online spaces. For these Beauty Gurus we also observed a decreasing ratio of video comments to views. For instance, whilst the video discussed above has to date received over 450 thousand views, only 317 comments had been posted (all immediately following the video's upload). This indicates a high level of moderation beyond the simple removal of spam and abuse. Indeed, in addition to removing, reporting or hiding posted comments, YouTube now enables vloggers to 'hold comments for approval', with only approved comments becoming publically visible. Many (though not all) Beauty Gurus now routinely employ this practice. Here technology aids new forms of emotional censorship, enabling Beauty Gurus to silence the expression of other-condemning emotions such as anger and contempt rather than responding to them using traditional forms of emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983).

These emotions do not disappear entirely, however. Some tribe members have shifted to alternative platforms to express their other-wise silenced emotions. Online forums have emerged that are dedicated to discussing Beauty Gurus, with an emphasis on the expression of negative emotions that are censored elsewhere. Within such spaces, observed emotional censorship by Beauty Gurus is highlighted as a

further moral betrayal, and other-condemning emotions are renewed:

*Setting her comments to approval was madness to me. [...] Youtubers have such humongous egos, that they think they should be excused from any criticism"*

(post on [gurugossip.com](#))

*They can shut down all the negative attention [...] hire someone, put the comments on approval, and let that poor soul select all the kiss ass comments and delete everything else*

(post on [youtalktrash.com](#))

Thus, emotional censorship does not entirely suppress other-condemning emotions but simply distances their expression from the Beauty Guru's commercial activity.

## 5.2. Other-suffering emotions and tribal defense

Beauty Gurus are not the only tribe members to suppress other-condemning emotions surrounding tribal entrepreneurship. Where individuals both within and outside of the tribe expressed other-condemning emotions toward Beauty Gurus this elicited compassion within the tribe and motivated a form of tribal defense.

For instance, in June 2016 Beauty Guru Samantha Maria uploaded a video titled 'My Hygiene Routine', sponsored by toothbrush brand Oral-B. The statement "Thank you to Oral B for sponsoring this video :)" was included at the very bottom of the video's information box (although the video's comments indicate that this was initially omitted). However unlike Tanya's video above, neither the video thumbnail nor its title disclosed this sponsorship. Instead '#ad' appeared in the bottom right hand corner of the screen during Samantha's discussion of the Oral-B Genius toothbrush. Again, some tribe members interpreted this as a deliberate attempt to obscure the video's commercial nature. This perceived lack of transparency elicited anger and contempt, manifested in video comments that questioned the Beauty Guru's morality:

*I clicked to see your hygiene routine, I ended up watching an ad. It's getting annoying how beauty gurus are just uploading videos to promote stuff all the time.*

*No mention of it being sponsored anywhere even in the description box, are you kidding me?!! [...] The rules in the UK are that it [sponsorship] has to be [disclosed] in the title (not sure if that's changed) AND the description box. It's not in either, it's incredibly insincere because it's like fooling people into watching the video for money because generally AD videos get fewer views. It's not hard to disclose it but choosing not to is very cheeky.*

However other tribe members expressed the other-suffering emotion of compassion, responding directly to this criticism in the video comments:

*I honestly can't comprehend why it matters to so many people that this video had one bit of it as an ad. This is how Sam earns a living. You go out every day and go to your job to get money, and nobody complains about it to you. So why should Sam earning money matter to everyone? This is her job. She has a baby on the way. If she enjoys a product why fucking not get paid to use it! I would love if I got paid to talk about products I loved! Everyone would. And that is the problem here. Everyone is jealous and rude. There is no need to comment hate about a few minutes of an ad. FAST FORWARD!!*

*She literally wrote "#ad" from 1:38 to 4:00 in the video, but you were too blinded by your negativity to notice that. Additionally, why should it matter? It was an interesting video to a lot of people and if you had the opportunity to be paid by a well-known company for advertising their products I can guarantee that you would do it. :)*

Here tribe members' compassion for Samantha prompted them to actively work to defend the Beauty Guru, acknowledging and

appreciating her need to profit from her YouTube channel. In many of these comments the expression of other-condemning emotions toward Samantha was itself condemned, with critics deemed unnecessarily negative and their comments dismissed as 'hate'.

A similar instance of tribal defense can be observed on Beauty Guru Lauren Luke's 2014 video titled 'Contour & Define Look with Seventeen Falsifyeye HD Mascara'. There is no disclosure that the video is sponsored, however every product used in the video is produced by the makeup brand Seventeen. Some tribe members commenting on the video concluded that it was therefore an undisclosed sponsored video. For example:

*Lauren, if Seventeen are paying you to advertise them, at least be honest about it. It's really sad to see you doing the hard sell on us. I hate the way it looks so very nearly like a normal video but is clearly an advert. Can't believe you would try to trick your viewers like this, very disappointing. Even if you genuinely like the mascara, it's not ok to pretend that you're not being paid to promote Seventeen.*

However, again, the tribe defends the Beauty Guru. For instance, one commenter responded:

*Lauren has always been extremely upfront about anything that she's promoted. She's always very truthful with her opinions and suggestions. She would NEVER purposely trick or mislead her viewers. If she is being paid by them, I don't think she purposely left that information out. Seventeen might have very well just sent her these products and she liked them and decided to do a video about them. Lauren is an extremely sensitive and sweet person. I've been watching her for seven years. I've never known her to behave like that. Until you know for sure, please don't judge her in that way.*

This tribal defense stems from an acknowledgement of both the Beauty Guru's humanity and her established relationship with the tribe. Lauren may be an entrepreneur and a profitable brand, however she is also acknowledged as a fellow tribe member with real feelings that may be hurt by the expression of other-condemning emotions.

Similarly to the tribal entrepreneurs' more direct practices of emotional censorship, here the broader tribe also works to suppress negative emotions surrounding tribal entrepreneurship. Notably it is in instances where Beauty Gurus do not engage in emotional censorship, and enable other-condemning emotions to be expressed, that such tribal defense can occur. Unlike emotional censorship, which simply removes other-condemning emotions from certain online locations, tribal defense can serve to manage emotions in a more enduring way as criticism or 'hate' is met with condemnation and therefore discouraged.

## 5.3. Tribal entrepreneurs' self-conscious and other-praising emotional labour

Beauty Gurus, in turn, encouraged and fostered tribal compassion and subsequent defense by engaging in novel forms of emotional labour, expressing both self-conscious and other-praising moral emotions in ways that elicited positive emotions within the tribe (compassion, awe and elevation) and thus strengthened emotional bonds.

First, we observed Beauty Gurus' open expression of the self-conscious moral emotions of guilt and embarrassment in relation to potential moral betrayals. For example, in 2014 leading UK Beauty Guru Zoe Sugg, also known as Zoella, uploaded a video titled 'Sometimes It All Gets A Bit Too Much,' in which she openly expressed her guilt at not producing the high-quality video content she felt her viewers deserved (Fig. 2). Her face red from crying, mascara smudged, she sobbed:

*I'm not too sure why I'm filming this [sobs] I think maybe because [sobs] this is part of my day and I want you guys to know that [sobs, wipes away tear] I'm a real person, my life isn't perfect, and sometimes this all gets too much [...] I don't cope with it very well because I'm, I don't know, a sensitive soul [sighs] I now feel bad that this is my vlog for the*



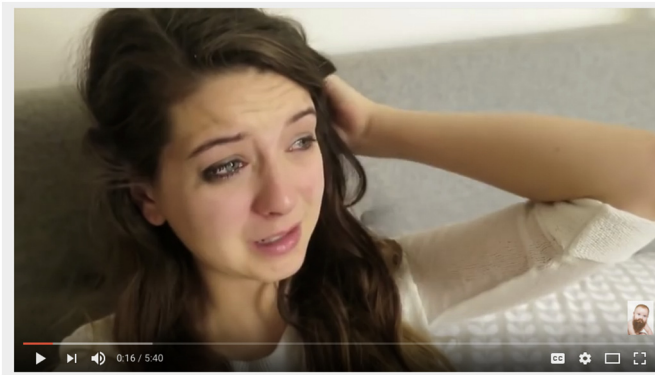


Fig. 2. Screenshot from Zoella's YouTube video 'Sometimes It All Gets A Bit Too Much'.

*day, [...]. I just feel like a failure today, a big old failure [...] But I love you and I'm going to try really hard to get my shit together because I don't want to disappoint people.*

Here Zoe labours on the self-conscious emotion of guilt. Whilst neglect of one's YouTube channel can be seen as moral betrayal by the tribe, particularly where Beauty Gurus are perceived to prioritise other commercial projects over the satisfaction of their viewers, Zoe's emotional outpouring was met with tribal compassion. For instance, one beauty blogger responded with an acknowledgement of the challenges involved in Zoe's YouTube career.

*I think it's sad how little recognition that YouTubers get for the amount of work they put into their videos and in Zoe's case her own blog. It's often seen as an easy job but in reality, a lot of effort time and creativity goes into making even one video. Anyone who has ever made a YouTube video can tell you that. Just remember we're all human, and no matter our situation or our lifestyle, we all get upset sometimes. It's what makes us human.*

Here, the self-conscious emotional labour of the Beauty Guru and the resultant compassion elicited amongst tribe members enables the tribal entrepreneur to pursue commercial opportunities whilst maintaining existing emotional bonds. By highlighting her human and emotional side Zoe elicits other-suffering emotions in other tribe members as they jump to defend their favourite Beauty Guru in the same way that they might defend rather than condemn the transgressions of a friend or family member. This contrasts starkly with the emotional labour presented by [Hochschild \(1983\)](#), where employees are prohibited from such emotional outbursts. Yet, we have seen that the elicited outcome of tribal compassion serves to not only discourage compassionate tribe members from expressing other-condemning emotions toward the tribal entrepreneur, but also motivates them to discourage others by condemning the expression of 'hate' toward Beauty Gurus.

In addition to guilt, we also observed instances of Beauty Gurus expressing the self-conscious emotion of embarrassment in the context of commercial activity. For example, Samantha Chapman, who runs the YouTube channel *pixiwoo* with her sister Nicola Chapman, launched her own brand of makeup brushes, 'Real Techniques', in 2011. In a makeup tutorial uploaded by Samantha shortly following the launch of her brush range, she commented candidly on the use of her own merchandise within her makeup tutorials:

*This one [brush] is a Real Techniques [her brand] base shadow brush. I feel like I probably shouldn't- You know when I'm gonna use the Real Technique ones 'cause you know colours of them, right? Um...so I don't know if I always need to mention that it's my brush 'cause...um...I feel a little embarrassed. I don't know why. [Pause] That probably sounds silly, but...I don't want it to seem like I'm like trying to sell them to you.*

*Because I do think they are good brushes, I think they speak for themselves, but...I feel uncomfortable.*

Here Samantha recognises that she may be violating a norm in her videos, eliciting embarrassment. The way in which embarrassment is managed and openly expressed constitutes a form of emotional labour. Embarrassment motivates reparation ([Haidt, 2003](#)), which in this instance involves vocalising this moral emotion to the tribe. Such expressions of embarrassment are uncommon within corporate communications, or in customer service, and therefore in tribal entrepreneurship we see distinct forms of emotional labour emerging based on the expression self-conscious moral emotions. From the comments on this video it is evident that Samantha's expression of embarrassment elicits not only compassion, but also the other-praising emotions of awe and elevation:

*Of course mention your brush every time, same as others [other brands]. What if you have a new viewer? You should not be embarrassed but PROUD!*

*You can mention your brushes whenever you want, because we know that you mean what you say and, as you said, the brushes DO speak for themselves. Do NOT feel uncomfortable or embarrassed, you have so much talent and the right to be a little promotional about your awesome products.*

*I like how you are so humble about your Real Techniques collection, especially since all I have seen are rave reviews! Thank you for being concerned that you are "selling" to us, it shows you care about the integrity of your videos.*

The tribe acknowledged and accepted Samantha's expression of embarrassment, and in response showed compassion, attempting to reduce the Beauty Guru's suffering by offering reassurance. Tribe members expressed the other-praising emotions of awe and elevation, praising Samantha's candidness and integrity. Here emotional labour accompanying commercial behaviours that might be perceived as moral betrayals serves to maintain the emotional bonds that are under threat.

In addition to self-conscious emotional labour involving expressions of guilt and embarrassment, Beauty Gurus also performed other-praising emotional labour by repeatedly expressing their gratitude to the tribe for their commercial success. For instance, in September 2016 Beauty Guru Fleur De Force published a blog post entitled '7 Years Online'. In the post, she shared highlights from her YouTube career, and concluded by emphasising her gratitude to the broader tribe:

*I wanted to thank you all. If you're reading this, you've had such a huge impact on my life. In teaching me all the things I've mentioned above, in allowing me to pursue what I love doing as a career and also just being a great support and positive force in my life.*

The tribe's role in the Beauty Guru's success is explicitly recognised in this expression of gratitude, whilst Fleur also expresses awe and elevation by highlighting the tribe's positive qualities. Other-praising emotions encourage emulation and reciprocation ([Haidt, 2003](#)), and the tribe reciprocated within the blog comments, and the YouTube comments on the corresponding '7 Years on YouTube' vlog, with the expression of the other-praising emotions of awe and elevation toward Fleur:

*Your success is a true testament to how hard you've worked and your true passion for what you do. An inspiration.*

(Blog comment)

*Congratulations Fleur! I hope you feel really proud of yourself for everything you've achieved. Don't forget you've probably changed loads of people's lives too in so many ways!*

(Blog comment)

*I respect you so much in the way that you've navigated your career throughout these changes. You are a great role model for young girls*



*watching and I wish you all the best in the future!!*

(Video comment)

This gratitude isn't reserved only for these occasional reflective and detailed celebratory posts. Indeed, Beauty Gurus' social media feeds are punctuated with expressions of gratitude toward the tribe, for instance:

*Reading the comments on my last vlogmas vlog and feeling so very, very thankful to have such a supportive, loving community < 3 :)*

(Louise Pentland, Twitter post, 2014)

*2016 has been quite the year! 🎉 So many incredible things have happened to me because of your support and I am so thankful for everything. From publishing my first book #BloomBook 📖, to reaching 1 million subscribers on YouTube 📺 it really has been humbling. Here's to another year of reaching goals and growing together. ❤️*

(Estee Lalonde, Facebook Post, 2016)

*The biggest thank you to all of you for following and supporting my crazy journey this year with so much love! I can't tell you how much your supportive comments and heart button likes do for my inspiration to carry on creating content. I just want to be even more creative and inspired in 2017 and I have you guys to thank for the motivation! You're all seriously awesome! Thank you so much*

(Victoria McGrath, Instagram Post, 2016)

By regularly vocalising the other-praising emotion of gratitude toward the tribe, Beauty Gurus strengthen emotional bonds and elicit in return the other-praising emotions of awe and elevation. In strengthening these emotional bonds compassion is further increased (Haidt, 2003), enhancing the likelihood of the positive reception of their entrepreneurial activities.

## 6. Discussion and conclusions

Our research extends theories of tribal entrepreneurship in several ways. Tribal entrepreneurship is distinct from conventional entrepreneurship since it involves managing and commercialising existing emotional bonds. This is the first study that explicitly considers the emotional dimension of tribal entrepreneurship and our findings highlight the role of emotions in shaping its success. Building upon prior work that explores the tensions between communities/subcultures/tribes and brands (e.g. Cova & White, 2010; Langer, 2007), we highlight the tensions that develop when commercialisation relates not to an external brand but to a tribal entrepreneur that has emerged from within the consumer tribe. Our findings demonstrate that pre-existing emotional bonds introduce a moral dimension to tribal entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs must carefully balance their tribal bonds with their commercial interests in order to avoid perceptions of betrayal, which may prompt other-condemning tribal emotions that – if improperly managed – may be detrimental to the entrepreneur's commercial ventures. Prior work has explored negative responses to commercialisation within more niche, often anti-mainstream tribes (Goulding & Saren, 2007; Langer, 2007), however we demonstrate that even within the BeautyTube tribe, with its mainstream, highly commercial focus, tribal entrepreneurship may elicit negative moral emotions. Our research demonstrates that the tribe's emotional response to commercial activities can be managed, highlighting the significant and ongoing emotional labour required by tribe members and tribal entrepreneurs in order to co-produce successful instances of tribal entrepreneurship (summarised in Fig. 3).

We observed novel forms of emotional labour performed by tribal entrepreneurs themselves, which differ from both established marketing and entrepreneurship practices, and from emotional labour by service professionals in other fields. These Beauty Gurus do not work in an organisation with established 'feeling rules' by which they must abide (Hochschild, 1983). The moral and emotional rules to which the entrepreneur must respond emerge within the tribe itself in response to

tribal entrepreneurship. Where tribal entrepreneurship is perceived to present a moral transgression that elicits other-condemning emotions, the tribal entrepreneur must find ways to manage the tribe's emotions. We have documented three strategies employed by tribal entrepreneurs in order to do this: emotional censorship, self-conscious emotional labour, and other-praising emotional labour.

The first of these strategies attempts to suppress negative emotions. New practices of technology-enabled emotional censorship can silence other-condemning tribal emotions within online spaces controlled by the entrepreneur. This method of dealing with consumer emotions was absent in Hochschild's (1983) original work and has been enabled by subsequent technological developments. Such emotional censorship does not entirely manage away other-condemning emotions. Although negative emotions are distanced from commercial activity, they often resurface on other, less moderated platforms. Indeed, new and increasingly popular tribal gathering spaces in the form of gossip forums emerged as outlets for emotions suppressed elsewhere. Furthermore, emotional censorship may be seen as a further betrayal, eliciting renewed condemnation. The implications of emotional censorship for the tribe may be significant. According to Haidt (2003:859) "only anger motivates direct action to repair the moral order and to make the violators mend their ways". Where tribe members are unable to express and act on anger due to emotional censorship, this may create obstacles to addressing injustices. Emotional censorship therefore holds implications for power distribution within the tribe. Where conversations within the BeautyTube tribe take place in online spaces controlled by tribal entrepreneurs, they are able to shape the emotional dimension of conversations in new ways that are not recognised in the consumer tribes literature. Thus whilst Goulding et al. (2013) propose that tribal entrepreneurship re-balances power in favour of consumers, we see the potential for emotional censorship by tribal entrepreneurs to again re-balance power in ways that benefit the entrepreneur but may have negative consequences for the broader tribe.

In addition to emotional censorship, we identified two new forms of emotional labour at the heart of Beauty Gurus' entrepreneurial activity: self-conscious and other-praising emotional labour. Rather than suppressing negative emotions, these strategies elicit positive moral emotions surrounding commercial activity, thus protecting established emotional bonds. Self-conscious emotional labour involves vocalising feelings of embarrassment and guilt surrounding tribal entrepreneurship and is typically met with compassion as tribe members empathise with, reassure, and defend the entrepreneur, and also by expressions of awe and elevation as the tribe praise their candour and integrity. Tribal entrepreneurs' other-praising emotional labour involves expressions of gratitude, awe and elevation toward the tribe, and is typically met with reciprocal expressions of awe and elevation by tribe members. Emotional labour typically aims to produce feelings of contentment and security (e.g. flight attendants, healthcare professionals, customer service staff) (Cho, Rutherford, & Park, 2013; Hochschild, 1983), rather than compassion, awe and elevation. However, in the context of tribal entrepreneurship labouring to elicit these positive moral emotions deepens tribal bonds, strengthening the tribe's compassion for the entrepreneur in ways that motivate tribe members to also labour on emotions in ways that contribute to the success of tribal entrepreneurship.

Indeed, emotional labour is not only performed by the tribal entrepreneur. Our analysis highlights the blurring of emotion work and emotional labour as defined by Hochschild (1983) as tribe members' work on their moral emotions may too become a form of emotional labour that produces exchange value. In contrast to prior research on brand/tribe tensions (e.g. Cova & White, 2010), we found that tribe members exhibited compassion for the entrepreneur as a fellow tribe member. This compassion not only reduces the likelihood of tribe members expressing other-condemning emotions themselves, but also motivates tribe members to defend and justify the entrepreneur's actions, and to express other-condemning emotions toward those

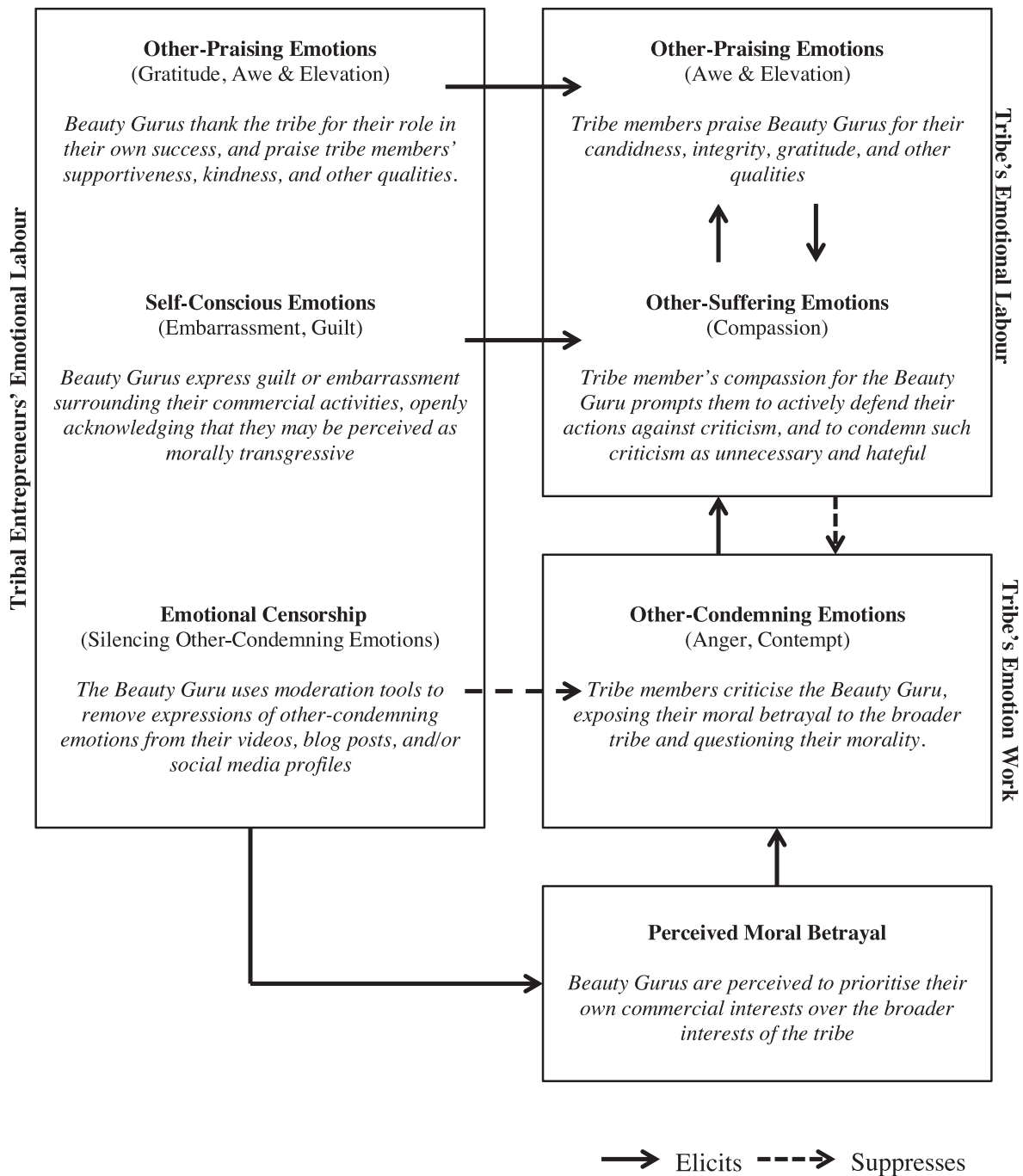


Fig. 3. The emotional labour of tribal entrepreneurship.

criticising the entrepreneur. As with emotional censorship, negative emotions are suppressed. Thus, the tribe labours to maintain tribal bonds in ways that contribute to the commercial success of tribal entrepreneurship ventures. Consequently, whilst the expression of other-condemning emotions toward the tribal entrepreneur can unproblematically be understood as emotion work, since it is directed against commercial activity, in contrast tribal compassion for, and resulting defense of, the tribal entrepreneur presents a form of emotional labour since it results in exchange value for the entrepreneur. Indeed, the success of tribal entrepreneurship largely hinges upon maintaining tribal bonds in a way that will stimulate this form of emotional labour. The tribal entrepreneur's emotional labour alone is not sufficient – successful tribal entrepreneurship ventures are co-produced in the joint emotional labours of both tribal entrepreneurs and the broader tribe.

Whilst prior work emphasises the *intellectual* labour involved in tribal entrepreneurship, as tribal *knowledge* is translated into commercial ventures (Goulding & Saren, 2007; Guercini & Cova, 2015; Langer, 2007; Martin & Schouten, 2014), we emphasise the importance of *emotional* labour as tribe members carefully balance their existing emotional bonds with the tribe and their own commercial interests. Our analysis demonstrates the importance of an understanding of, and sensitivity to, emotional exchanges surrounding tribal entrepreneurship, and presents useful insights for entrepreneurs operating within tribal markets. In particular, our findings suggest that whilst new techniques of emotional censorship facilitated by online moderation tools may be appealing to entrepreneurial tribe members, they have limitations. Not only do these techniques stimulate further condemnation amongst silenced tribe members, but they also fail to effectively

manage other-condemning emotions, which simply resurface elsewhere. Furthermore, the expression of other-condemning emotions toward the tribal entrepreneurs may not always be problematic since such expressions of contempt and anger may elicit tribal compassion and subsequent tribal defense that can suppress and manage negative emotions in a more enduring way. Rather than employing emotional censorship techniques, tribal entrepreneurs might therefore concentrate their efforts on self-conscious and other-praising emotional labour that serves to strengthen the tribal bonds that underpin the tribe's compassionate defense of the entrepreneur.

Beyond the consumer tribes literature, our analysis also draws from and extends theories of emotions in commercial contexts. Work on emotional labour typically explores the expression and emphasis of certain emotions by employees in their daily roles, typically in retail and service environments (e.g. Diefendorff & Gosserand, 2003; Hochschild, 1983). We extend literature on emotional labour by exploring new forms that involve the expression of Haidt's (2003) moral emotions. Our analysis provides insight into the distinct forms of moral emotional labour performed by tribal entrepreneurs – specifically self-conscious and other-praising emotional labour. Exploring the capacity for moral emotions to elicit or suppress moral emotions in others enabled us to map out the broader emotional dynamics surrounding tribal entrepreneurship. In uniting Hochschild's (1983) concept of emotional labour with Haidt's (2003) families of moral emotions we provide a fruitful lens for understanding the emotional dynamics that emerge in a range of contexts where business activities might be seen as morally transgressive. Studies of moral emotions within business research primarily correlate business practices with elicited consumer emotions, and/or correlate consumers' moral emotions with consumer actions (e.g. Grappi et al., 2013; Romani et al., 2013). Such research helps to explain consumer behaviours. However, our approach provides insight into the ways in businesses and their representatives can themselves labour upon moral emotions in ways that shape the emotional responses, and thus the actions, of stakeholders.

Finally, we contribute to broader discussions of immaterial labour (Hardt & Negri, 2000; Lazzarato, 1996) in online environments. Scholars have previously acknowledged the blurring of intellectual work and labour in digital spaces as consumers work on online content and platforms in ways that produce financial revenue for companies (e.g. Bonsu & Darmody, 2008; Ritzer & Jurgenson, 2010; Terranova, 2000). However, literature exploring immaterial labour in online environments has typically explored cognitive labour, at the expense of affective labour. The potential for consumers to work on emotions in ways that contribute to corporate profits has not been acknowledged or explored, and indeed theories of emotional labour as proposed by Hochschild (1983) are constrained to firm employees. However our study demonstrates that tribe members' emotion work may too become a form of emotional labour that produces exchange value. Thus we extend discussions of immaterial labour within business research by exploring the often-overlooked role of affective labour (Hardt & Negri, 2000), highlighting its important role in sustaining tribal markets in instances of tribal entrepreneurship.

## 7. Limitations & future research

Whilst our study provides insights into recurring emotional interplays surrounding tribal entrepreneurship, we also observed practices of emotional censorship. Whilst some tribe members found alternative outlets for the expression of other-condemning emotions, not all will have been able or motivated to do so. Our non-participatory netnographic approach did not capture the potential for other-condemning emotions to prompt tribe members to quietly and inconspicuously leave the tribe or distance themselves from the tribal entrepreneur. Emotions that were felt but not expressed within public online spaces were not captured by our method and call for direct interaction with tribe members. Participatory netnographic research or interview methods

may therefore provide additional insight into the moral emotions surrounding tribal entrepreneurship.

Our study opens up new avenues for further research. The focus of our paper was the emotional dynamics surrounding commercialisation, and thus we have centered our analysis on the moral emotions elicited by moral transgressions, rather than the transgressions themselves. There is potential for a more complete exploration of those circumstances where tribal entrepreneurs' commercial activities are perceived as a moral betrayal of the tribe, and this may provide useful insights into the 'moral codes' within the tribe by which entrepreneurs are bound. Furthermore, future research might examine the ways in which tribal entrepreneurs negotiate these moral codes, attempting to influence them over time in order to legitimise their commercial activities and gain tribal acceptance. Such research would be useful in guiding tribal entrepreneurs and may also provide new insights into the emergence and legitimisation of these markets.

Tribal entrepreneurship practices present new ethical dilemmas and consequently there is a need for public policy research, specifically relating to issues of advertising literacy in the rapidly evolving digital media landscape. Despite increased guidance offered to vloggers and bloggers (by the Advertising Standards Authority in the UK, and equivalent bodies elsewhere), little is known about the extent to which consumers are able to identify sponsored YouTube content as marketing communications. Our findings indicate that even where established guidance surrounding the disclosure of sponsored vlog content is followed issues of transparency persist. Furthermore, tribal entrepreneurs' promotion of their own merchandise to their viewers falls outside of advertising guidelines and is therefore not disclosed as sponsored content. This is particularly concerning given that many YouTube users are under 18 and may have a lower level of advertising literacy (Nairn & Hang, 2012). We therefore call for research exploring advertising literacy in the context of tribal entrepreneurship, where existing tribal bonds may potentially obscure the entrepreneur's commercial interests. In particular, future research should focus on digital contexts where advertising literacy may be lower and where regulations are continually evolving.

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