

## **Mixed-feelings: Creativity festivals and the ambivalence of merit**

### **Abstract**

This qualitative study delves into the evaluations of advertising creatives regarding Cannes Lions, the pinnacle of industry recognition. Employing attitudinal ambivalence theory, the research examines dualistic viewpoints expressed by participants. Thematic analysis was conducted on eighteen in-depth interviews with award-winning creatives from Brazil, a top winner. The emergent theme of 'ambivalence of merit' arises, as creatives praise the festival for its educational platforms, networking opportunities, and talent validation, yet express concerns about its susceptibility to scam work, proliferation of awards, political dynamics, and commercialization. This study offers insight into the nuanced perspectives surrounding the festival's prestige and challenges.

**Keywords:** Creativity festivals, advertising awards, attitudinal ambivalence theory, advertising creativity, advertising creatives