Call for papers

Consumption and consumerism:
Conceptual and empirical sociological challenges

Research Network of Sociology of Consumption
European Sociological Association
Mid-term Conference
Department of Sociology, University of Copenhagen
Copenhagen, Denmark
29.8 – 1.9. 2018

Consumption is omnipresent in society to such a degree that it is increasingly difficult to imagine social relations, communities and institutions that are not saturated by consumer relations. Consumption is entangled in the most ordinary and intimate social contexts, activities and relations, yet, simultaneously, consumption is more often than not enacted as part of globally stretching chains of markets and media-representations.

‘Consumerism’ has often been used to categorise and sociologically critique this dominant societal arrangement, which combines mass-production and mass-consumption with the implied ideological discourse of the freedom of individual consumer choice. However, the term consumerism is also being used to conceptualise alternative forms of consumption, which attempt to use consumption processes to transform production practices, provisioning, appropriation and waste – such as political, ethical, sustainable and circular forms of consumerism.

Contemporary sociological accounts of consumption cover both analyses of the more ordinary, routine, mundane aspects of consumption, as well as the more explicitly reflected upon, normative, societal aspects of it. Yet, these two bodies of consumption analysis tend to remain separate in terms of focus and perspective. Bringing the two types of consumption analysis together to a larger degree in conceptual, methodological and empirical dialogues holds potential for conceptual sophistication, empirical inspiration and societal contribution.

Thus, this mid-term conference encourages participants to reflect upon the relations, overlaps, ambivalences and paradoxes between mundane and deliberate forms of consumption. How do patterns of consumption become socially and materially reproduced and changed? Which social dynamics are involved in the normalisation and normative legitimation of different kinds of consumption activities? In which ways are consumer and citizen positions related, and with which consequences? What are the implications for power relations in society from institutionalised consumption arrangements? How to account for questions of scale, and what are the methodological implications?
We invite papers that address various aspects of the sociology of consumption. Possible themes include but are not limited to:

- Collaborative consumption and sharing economies
- Communication campaigns and marketing strategies to motivate sustainable lifestyle
- Compulsive consumption
- Consumption and the body
- Consumption and social capital
- Consumption inequalities and exclusions
- Cultural stratification
- Digitalisation and consumption
- Ethical and political consumption
- Food and consumption
- Gender and consumption
- Generations and consumer culture
- Leisure and consumption
- Markets of consumption
- Material culture and immaterial consumption
- Politics of distinction/identity by consumption
- Prosumption: Production and consumption reunified
- Sociology of taste: Cultures of consumption
- Spaces of urban and excess consumption
- Sustainable consumers/consumption
- Sustainable tourism/mobility
- Theories of consumers/consumption

Please see the conference website, [http://www.conferencemanager.dk/Sociology-of-Consumption-2018](http://www.conferencemanager.dk/Sociology-of-Consumption-2018)

The venue
The Department of Sociology at University of Copenhagen hosts the mid-term conference. However, the conference venue is at one of the other campuses of University of Copenhagen. This is the campus housing the humanities, theology and law. It is situated in the southern end of Copenhagen at Karen Blixens Plads 8, 2300 København S. The campus has its own metro-station, and the metro ride is less than 10 minutes from the centre of Copenhagen city.

For details, please see the conference website [http://www.conferencemanager.dk/Sociology-of-Consumption-2018](http://www.conferencemanager.dk/Sociology-of-Consumption-2018)

Deadlines
Abstracts of 250 words should be uploaded via the submission form at the conference website by February 15, 2018.

Guidelines for abstracts
- Provide a title
- Length should be between 150-300 words
- Indicate the sociological background of the research (theoretical/research/policy problem...)
• Clarify research questions and methodology (where contribution is empirical)
• Refer to key findings, if research is completed. If research is in progress you can state it.
• Reflect on the implications and significance of the study/findings

Letters of acceptance and preliminary programme will be sent to participants by March 15, 2018. Registration and payment of conference fee should be made by July 1, 2018.

**Conference fee and registration**
The conference fees are:
-120 € for the members of the Research Network of Sociology of Consumption (RN5) of European Sociological Association.
-140 € for the non-members
-80 € for PhD students and for those who are not employed (e.g. on grants or between jobs) as well as those whose institution will not pay for the participation fee or other costs.

Please check your RN membership on the ESA website and renew it, if needed, or become a new member by paying the network membership fee. If you are entitled to the reduced fee, please send a signed proof of your study/employment position to va@samf.ku.dk when registering. The conference fee should be paid by July 1st 2018 to the conference account at the University of Copenhagen. The details will be specified soon. The fee includes conference documents and catering during the two and half days (evening entertainment and dinners are not included).

**Local organizing committee**
Bente Halkier and Vicki Antosz

**RN5 organizing committee**
Emma Casey, Arne Dulsrud, Piergiorgio Degli Esposti, Adrian Leguina, Marie Plessz, Marlyne Sahakian, Stefan Wahlen, Terhi-Anna Wilska and Luke Yates

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