

Newsletter



Welcome to the second edition of the ESA RN5 newsletter. In this newsletter we would like to point out recent and upcoming events, share a fair amount of recent publications by our prolific network members, as well as news on projects and teaching related to the sociology of consumption – all towards stimulating great discussions among those of you who will be joining us in Copenhagen next week!

Issue 2

August 2018

Upcoming events

Consumption and consumerism: Conceptual and empirical sociological challenges.

Please join us for the ESA RN5 Midterm Conference Copenhagen, Denmark
Preceded by an early career workshop.
29 August to 1 September, 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?

Keynote speaker: [Prof David Evans \(University of Sheffield\)](#) Wednesday 29, 16-18:
After practice: Where next for the Sociology of Consumption?

A full programme can be found online:

<http://www.conferencemanager.dk/Sociology-of-Consumption-2018>

Upcoming events

Scientific challenges in social feeding studies: conflicts over healthy diet

The Third Spanish Conference on the Sociology of Food will take place in Gijón (Asturias) on the 27 and 28 September 2018. The event is part of the activities of the Research Committees (CI) of the Spanish Federation of Sociology (FES), which includes the Sociology of Food Research Committee. This group brings together researchers into food and eating at the intersection of health, culture, consumption, policy, and agricultural systems.

Food habits as a field of research and debate in the social sciences—and in sociology in particular—have been explored in national sociology conferences organized by the FES since 2007. The Research Committee has also had two inter-conference meetings and two specialized scientific seminars which have demonstrated the dynamism of this working group.

On this occasion, we are looking for new approaches to the social problems that affect and will affect the food and eating habits of the future. We aim to continue with investigation into the changes that globalization and the modernization of society are bringing to ways of eating and of food production, into the meaning of food, into dietary and health policies, and into the relationships between agents in the agricultural food system.

The conference will have an international flavour, with presentations in Spanish, Portuguese, and English, and is aimed at people from a wide variety of academic backgrounds—such as sociology, anthropology, health sciences, social work, economics, law, political science, and marketing—who may have concerns about the social aspects of food and eating. It further aims to be an international and interdisciplinary meeting point for individual researchers and professionals, for those working on projects in research groups focused on the study of food habits, and for students starting out in the field.

A full programme can be found online:
<http://www.congreso-fes-socialimen-2018.com/>

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Recent workshop

'Household Sustainability and Social Inequalities: An appraisal of themes, methods, debates, and future directions'

One-day workshop organised by Tally Katz-Gerro, Sherilyn MacGregor and Catherine Walker at the Sustainable Consumption Institute, University of Manchester
17 May, 2018.

In recent years, social science researchers have done much to advance understandings of the social, economic, institutional and cultural factors that constrain household members in their attempts to consume in sustainable ways. Yet little research has considered how such constraints vary along intersecting axes of social difference including ethnicity, socio-economic class and gender. This one-day interdisciplinary workshop was designed to progress thinking on how research and policy communities can be more sensitive to the needs and constraints of various social groups, through an appraisal of current research on household sustainability.

The workshop brought together invited speakers from eight different UK universities, along with SCI staff members, representing disciplinary perspectives from sociology, environmental politics, human geography, engineering and sustainability studies. Participants discussed a series of questions about how patterns of social inequality (gender, race/ ethnicity, age, income and ability) shape and/or constrain the performance of sustainability practices in households/ families through three further discussions. Whilst there was considerable overlap, these discussions centred in turn

on the theoretical, methodological and policy possibilities for future research to advance an integrated social and environmental justice agenda. Amidst lively debates, participants discussed the enduring relevance of established theoretical resources (such as intersectionality, feminist theory, theories of personal communities and networks and life course theory) in combination with methodological and conceptual innovations (such as new materialisms, multi-modal interviewing and temporal justice) to tackle intersecting forms of social, spatial and environmental injustices.

More information about the workshop can be found here: <https://www.sci.manchester.ac.uk/research/working-groups/gender-and-sustainability/household-sustainability-workshop/>

Information about a related research project is available here: <https://www.sci.manchester.ac.uk/research/projects/household-sustainability/>

If you are working on a project that discusses some of these issues do let us know as we are planning an edited book devoted to the subject of household sustainability and social inequalities (please email tally.katz-gerro@manchester.ac.uk).

Teaching

Innovative teaching sociology of consumption

The Sustainable Consumption Research and Action Initiative (SCORAI) recently hosted its third International Conference in Copenhagen (June 27–30, 2018), bringing together an interdisciplinary group of scholars, including researchers in the sociology of consumption. A session around innovative teaching methods was a resounding success, organized by Gill Seyfang and involving speed-talks on teaching methods and a world café discussion around hot topics. Marlyne Sahakian (University of Geneva) presented her approach to theoretical theatre, through the personification of different conceptual approaches to consumption. Emily Huddard Kennedy (University of British Columbia) explained her techniques for getting students to think about citizen engagement towards sustainable consumption at different scales. This special session is part of an effort to share experiences in teaching sustainable consumption, including approaches from sociology, and has resulted in a recent review of teaching offers.

We plan to host a workshop on teaching the sociology of consumption at Copenhagen, to exchange novel approaches and share experiences; please contact marlyne.sahakian@unige.ch if you are interested in attending.

Course offerings are promoted via <http://scorai.org/teaching>

Sahakian, M. and G. Seyfang (2018). "A sustainable consumption teaching review: From building competencies to transformative learning." *Journal of Cleaner Production* 198: 231-241.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652618318948>

New online program in the sociology of food in Spanish:

The Research Group in Sociology of Food at the University of Oviedo is preparing an online M.Sc. program in Spanish for students and professionals interested in training in the field of sociology of food and food policies.

If you want to receive more information about this new programme, please send a message to: gsociologiaali@uniovi.es

Recent Publications

Articles and Book Chapters

Ariztia Tomas, Nurjk Agloni & Léna Pellandini-Simányi (2018): Beyond ethical consumption choices: Relinking ethics and consumption through care in Chile and Brazil, *British Journal of Sociology*. 69 (2): 391-411.

<http://doi.org/10.1111/1468-4446.12265>

Corvo, Paolo and Raffaele Matakacena (2017) Slow Food in Slow Tourism, in M. Clancy (editor), *Slow Tourism, Food and Cities, Pace and the Search for the "Good life"*, 2017, Routledge, Abingdon, pp 95-109. <https://www.crcpress.com/Slow-Tourism-Food-and-Cities-Pace-and-the-Search-for-the-Good-Life/Clancy/p/book/9781138920910>

Corvo, Paolo and Raffaele Matakacena (forthcoming) The new 'online' alternative food networks as a socio-technical innovation in the local food economy: two cases from Milan. In A. Scupola e L. Fuglsang (editors), *Integrated Crossroads of Service, Innovation and Experience Research-Emerging and Established Trends*, Edward Elgar.

Corvo, Paolo (forthcoming) Food Waste and Quality of life, in Adele Bianco, Paola Conigliano, Michela Gnaldi (editors) *Italian Studies of Quality of life*, Springer.

Degli Esposti, Piergiorgio (2017) The Prosumer in the Digital Society, in: *Creative Economy and Management*, Shanghai, Donghua University Press, 2017, pp. 23 - 31

<https://cris.unibo.it/handle/11585/623138>

Evans, David (2018) What is consumption, where has it been going, and does it still matter? *The Sociological Review*, First Published March 7, 2018 Research Article

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0038026118764028>

Evans, David, Daniel Welch and Joanne Swaffield (2018) "Supermarkets, 'the Consumer' and Responsibilities for Sustainable Food" In T. Marsden et al. (eds.) *The Sage Handbook of Nature*. London: Sage

Gojard, Severine and Bérangère Véron (2018) Shopping and cooking: the organization of food practices, at the crossing of access to food stores and household properties in France, *Review of Agricultural, Food and Environmental Studies*, June 2018, Volume 99, Issue 1, pp 97–119. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s41130-018-0068-7>

Jackson, Peter, David M. Evans, Mónica Truninger, Angela Meah, João Afonso Baptista (2018) The multiple ontologies of freshness in the UK and Portuguese agri-food sectors. *Transaction of the Institute of British Geographers*.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/tran.12260>

Marfia, Gustavo, Piergiorgio Degli Esposti (2017) Blockchain and Sensor-Based Reputation Enforcement for the Support of the Reshoring of Business Activities, in: *Reshoring of Manufacturing - Drivers, Opportunities, and Challenges*, Basel, Springer International Publishing, 2017, pp. 125 – 139.

https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-319-58883-4_6

Nuccio, Massimiliano, Marco Guerzoni and Tally Katz-Gerro (2018) Beyond Class Stratification: The Rise of the Eclectic Music Consumer in the Modern Age. *Cultural Sociology*, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1749975518786039>

Pellandini-Simányi Léna and Emese Gulyás (2019) Political consumerism in Central and Eastern Europe. In: M. Boström, Micheletti, M. and P. Oosterveer (eds.) *Oxford Handbook of Political Consumerism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<http://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190629038.013.22>

Pellandini-Simányi, Léna (2017): How do friends manage income differences? The role of lay concepts of justice in the erosion of income-bridging friendships and social segregation. *Sociology*, 51 (3): 592-607.

<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0038038515594975>

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Reckinger, Rachel (forthcoming) Social Change for Sustainable Localised Food Sovereignty: Convergence between Prosumers and Ethical Entrepreneurs. *Sociologia del Lavoro*, (4/2018), special issue « Pro-sumers on the move: overcoming the line between labour and consumption ». <http://orbilu.uni.lu/handle/10993/35744>

Reckinger, Rachel (forthcoming) Constructions contestées et contrastées de la notion de terroir. *Symbolique Politique, Savoir Scientifique, Typicité Culturelle et Culturelle*. In: Yengué, Louis / Stengel, Kilien (eds.) *Terroir viticole. Espace et figures de qualité*. Tours, Presses Universitaires François Rabelais. <http://orbilu.uni.lu/handle/10993/33927>

Reckinger, Rachel (forthcoming) Pas de fraises pour Noël. Le rôle de la régionalité dans la (re)prise de conscience de la saisonnalité des aliments. In: Adamiec, Camille / Julien, Marie-Pierre / Régnier, Faustine (eds.): *L'alimentation au fil des saisons. La saisonnalité des pratiques alimentaires*. Rennes, Presses Universitaires de Rennes. <http://orbilu.uni.lu/handle/10993/33925>

Reckinger, Rachel (forthcoming) The Metonymical Institutionnalisation of Wine Production and Consumption in Luxembourg. Convergence of Terroir Typicity, Political Symbolism, Regulations and Scientific Knowledge. In: Tedeschi, Paolo et al. (eds.): *The Evolution of the Viticulture and Winemaking in Europe: Production, Retail System, Oenological Techniques, Terroir and Local Culture (19th-20th Centuries)*. New York, Palgrave Macmillan. <http://orbilu.uni.lu/handle/10993/33924>

Sahakian, Marlyne and Gill Seyfang (2018) A sustainable consumption teaching review: From building competencies to transformative learning. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, Volume 198, 10 October 2018, Pages 231-241 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2018.06.238>

Sahakian, Marlyne and Béatrice Bertho (2018) Exploring emotions and norms around Swiss household energy usage: when methods inform understandings of the social. *Energy Research & Social Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.erss.2018.06.017>

Sahakian, Marlyne, Czarina Saloma and Sunayana Ganguly (2018) Exploring the role of taste in middle-class household practices: implications for sustainable food consumption in Metro Manila and Bangalore. *Asian Journal of Social Science*, Volume 46, Issue 3, pages 304 – 329. <https://doi.org/10.1163/15685314-04603005>

Strzyczkowski, Konstanty (2018) *Praca konsumentów. Teorie, praktyki, uwarunkowania*, 2018, Dom Wydawniczy Elipsa (Consumer Work. Theories, practices and preconditions, Elipsa) <http://elipsa.pl/pl/p/Praca-konsumentow.-Teorie%2C-praktyki-i-uwarunkowania-Konstanty-Strzyczkowski/1038>

Strzyczkowski, Konstanty (forthcoming) The Hybrid Nature on Online Facilitated Offline Sharing, (in) *Handbook of the Sharing Economy*, ed. R.Belk, G.Eckhardt, F.Bardhi

Swaffield, Joanne, David Evans and Daniel Welch (2018) Profit, reputation and 'doing the right thing': convention theory and the problem of food waste in the UK retail sector" *Geoforum*. 80: 43-51. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2018.01.002>

Welch, Daniel and Luke Yates (forthcoming) The practices of collective action: Practice theory, sustainability transitions and social change. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* (forthcoming) <https://doi.org/10.1111/jtsb.12168>

Welch, Daniel, Joanne Swaffield and David Evans (2018) "Who's Responsible for Food Waste? Consumers, Retailers and the Food Waste Discourse Coalition in the UK" *The Journal of Consumer Culture*. Online ahead of print publication 17/05/18 <http://www.doi.org/10.1177/1469540518773801>

Southerton, Dale and Daniel Welch (2018) Transitions for Sustainable Consumption after the Paris Agreement. 'Policy Analysis Brief' commissioned by the Stanley Foundation. Available at <https://www.stanleyfoundation.org/policyanalysis.cfm> (a version of this will appear in the journal Sustainability: Science, Practice and Policy in the forthcoming Special Issue on Innovative Perspectives on Systems of Sustainable Consumption and Production.

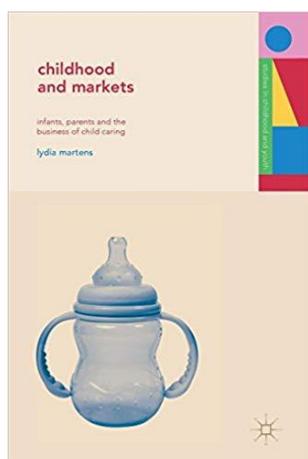
Wahlen, Stefan and Sophie Dubuisson-Quellier (2018) Consumption governance toward more sustainable consumption. *Journal of Family and Consumer Science*, 110 (1): 7-12. <https://doi.org/10.14307/JFCS110.1.7>

Woermann, Niklas (2017) "Back to the Roots! Methodological Situationalism and the Postmodern Lesson for Studying Tribes, Practices, and Assemblages," *Marketing Theory*, 17(2), 149–63. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1470593116679869>

Woermann, Niklas (2018) "Focusing Ethnography: Theory and Recommendations for Effectively Combining Video and Ethnographic Research," *Journal of Marketing Management*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0267257X.2018.1441174>

Recent Publications

Monograph



Childhood and Markets: Infants, Parents and the Business of Child Caring By Lydia Martens

How are the value of young children and monetary value in markets realized together? And how are young children and new parents located in the consumer world of affluent societies? The analysis I present in this book is that the co-realisation of the value of the young child and pecuniary value is achieved in the interactional practices and spaces of markets, in and through performances of the practice of child caring. This book examines how the meanings of childhood are enacted in the practices, narratives, materialities, and the organisation of contemporary markets. These meanings formulate the importance of the care of young children, and how young children should be cared for, creating practice moralities that impact not only on new parents, but also circumscribe the possibilities for pecuniary value creation. In the first part of the book, I examine strategies for the upvaluing of young children through enactments and entanglements of three key understandings of early childhood - those of loveable, vulnerable and pure. The mundane stuff of early childhood, including food, feeding tools, nappies, travel systems and toys, is used as illustrative examples. In the second part of the book, I consider how these key ways of knowing 'the young child' organizes interactions between commercial practitioners and parents, and how their practices and interactions are moralized. The book concludes by re-examining the relationship between childhood and markets, and by summing up what this study on young children and the business of child caring adds to the understanding of children, childhood and consumer culture.

Palgrave Macmillan 2018: <https://www.palgrave.com/gb/book/9780230284258>

Edited Books



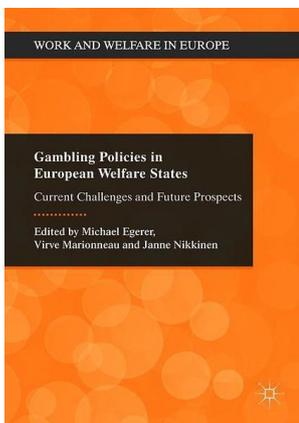
Reframing Convenience Food

Edited by Peter Jackson, Helene Brembeck, Jonathan Everts, Maria Fuentes, Bente Halkier, Frej Daniel Hertz, Angela Meah, Valerie Viehoff and Christine Wenzl

This book questions the simplistic view that convenience food is unhealthy and environmentally unsustainable. By exploring how various types of convenience food have become embedded in consumers' lives, it considers what lessons can be learnt from the commercial success of convenience food for those who seek to promote healthier and more sustainable diets. The project draws on original findings from comparative research in the UK, Denmark, Germany and Sweden (funded through the ERA-Net Sustainable Food programme). Reframing Convenience Food avoids moral judgments about convenience food, and instead provides a refreshingly novel perspective guided by an understanding of everyday consumer practice. It will appeal to those with an interest in the sociology and politics behind health, consumerism, sustainability and society.

Palgrave Macmillan 2018: <https://www.palgrave.com/gp/book/9783319781501>

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Gambling Policies in European Welfare States - Current Challenges and Future Prospects

Edited by: Michael Egerer, Virve Marionneau, Janne Nikkinen

This edited book draws on a cross-cultural and historical lens to theoretically and practically analyse gambling regulations and the use of gambling revenue. It takes on a broad spectrum of perspectives, from the origin of the money, to the regulators, operators and beneficiaries of gambling, and looks at the interests, networks and power relations involved. This multidisciplinary collection elicits a shift in analysis, shedding light on a broader societal, historical and economic view of gambling and gambling policies, by its attention to implicit networks of power, influential legislation, gambling provision and infrastructure. Gambling Policies in European Welfare States will be of interest to students and scholars alike who are seeking cross-national and interdisciplinary analyses of welfare, politics, sociology and economics.

Palgrave Macmillan 2018: <https://www.palgrave.com/gp/book/9783319906195>

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Contemporary Collaborative Consumption – Trust and Reciprocity revisited

Edited by Isabel Cruz, Rafaela Ganga and Stefan Wahlen

This book provides critical perspectives on contemporary collaborative consumption, a recent societal phenomenon shaking up previously fixed socio-economic categories such as the producer and the consumer. The contributors discuss the role of trust and reciprocity in collaborative consumption through seven case studies. The chapters advance debates on the contradictions of positioning collaborative consumption as possible solutions for a more sustainable development and exacerbating new forms of inequalities and injustice. The book contributes a nuanced appraisal of social and economic activity for reflecting socio-technological changes in contemporary societies.

Springer 2018: <https://www.springer.com/de/book/9783658213459>

Call for reviews

Niklas Woermann is book review editor at *Consumption, Markets, and Culture* (impact factor 2.23) and always looking for inspiring reviews that help works from sociology of consumption reach a broad audience in consumer research, anthropology, and sociology. Please email him at woermann@sam.sdu.dk if you have a great book and are looking for a reviewer.

New project: Imagined Futures of Consumption

Daniel Welch from the University of Manchester will be starting a new research project entitled '**Imagined Futures of Consumption**'. The project is funded by the UK's Economic and Social Research Council. This two-year research project will analyse how the future of the consumption of goods and services is imagined by both the general public and by professional practitioners of futures or foresight techniques, in the context of the contemporary crisis of political and economic imagination.

The sociology of consumption has not adequately addressed questions around the role played by imagined futures of consumption in processes of legitimation and contestation of economic and political imaginaries. In the wake of the global financial crisis expectations of continuously rising levels of consumption have been substantially undermined in the USA and Western Europe, challenging the promise of prosperity for all upon which twentieth century consumer society was built. It is within this social context that the project will explore the significance of imagined futures of consumption. This two-year research project will analyse how the future of the consumption is imagined by both the general public and by professional practitioners of futures or foresight techniques. The project will:

- Investigate the role played by think tanks, NGOs and futures consultancies in producing and circulating imagined futures of consumption and how such imagined futures shape, and are shaped by, social processes (Mische 2009). Such imagined futures range from visions of future consumer (or post-consumer) societies to scenarios of specific economic sectors and play an important role in framing political and economic understandings of future consumption.
- Explore individuals' expectations of their own future consumption, and that of future generations, through a Mass Observation Archive directive.
- Engage in knowledge exchange between social scientists and futures practitioners through a workshop programme. The potential contribution of insights from the sociology of consumption to professional futures practices is unrealised; equally the sociology of consumption has much to learn from futures techniques.

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About ESA RN5

The research network addresses consumption in its social, cultural, symbolic, economic, political and material dimensions. It welcomes theoretical, methodological and empirical contributions to the study of consumption in a large range of areas: sustainability, political consumption, fashion, food and eating, tourism, culture, bodies, technology etc. In doing so, it intersects with other sociological fields, such as economic sociology, sociology of health, the family, gender, age and generations, the study of space and cities, or social stratification. Thereby the research network contributes to societal debates on contested and challenged aspects of consumption and assists in advancing associated policy measures and societal developments.

See you at our midterm conference in Copenhagen next week!

On behalf of the RN5 Board Members:

Terhi-Anna Wilska, Coordinator, Finland, University of Jyväskylä
Arne Dulsrud, Co-coordinator, Norway, SIFO - Consumption Research Norway
Stefan Wahlen, Co-coordinator, the Netherlands, Wageningen University
Emma Casey, United Kingdom, Northumbria University
Piergiorgio Degli Esposti, Italy, University of Bologna
Adrian Leguina Ruzzi, United Kingdom, Loughborough University
Marlyne Sahakian, Switzerland, University of Geneva
Marie Plessz, France, French National Institute for Agricultural Research
Luke Yates, United Kingdom, University of Manchester

<https://www.europeansociology.org/research-networks/rn05-sociology-consumption>