

# The Normative Around Us. Notes for a Genealogy of Contemporary Consumer Society<sup>1</sup>

Roberta Sassatelli<sup>2</sup>

*(C)ritique only becomes meaningful with respect to the order that it puts in crisis, but also, reciprocally,... the systems which ensure something like the preservation of an order only become fully meaningful when one realizes that they are based on the constant threat, albeit unequally depending on epochs and societies, represented by the possibility of critique*

Luc Boltanski, *On Critique: A Sociology of Emancipation*.

A consumer is a person who buys and uses commodities, and a consumer society is a society that encourages people to act as consumers. In contemporary society we consume differently and yet we are all consumers. In fact, we not only recur to the market for everyday needs, we are also both increasingly called into question as consumer and we increasingly think of ourselves as consumers. Still this simple reality often escapes us. In this contribution I shall sketch some elements for a genealogy of contemporary consumer society, for what in a Foucauldian format could be called the "problematization of the historical conditions of our present" (Foucault 1980a; 1983; 1984a: 1984b). To undertake a genealogical study of "consumer society" entails a substantial shift in focus. A genealogy of contemporary consumer society, understood as an ideal type of social organization (Sassatelli 2007), demands first and foremost a problematization of the notion of the subject-consumer that we deal with and that we most often presuppose. Indeed, the very object calls for this as it clearly personalizes the type of society we live in as a society of consumers. Unseen and in plain sight, as Eviatar Zerubavel would say (Zerubavel 2015), the consumer is a moral battleground dressed up quietly or pompously in ordinary practices. Therefore, the subject-consumer shall become the focus of the analysis, rather than an entity behind the scenes of consumption as it often is in contemporary research and theory on consumption, or the culprit of all sins of contemporary societies as it often figures in polemical essays against modernity and late modernity.

This may entail an analysis of the "practices by which individuals were led to focus their attention on themselves, to decipher, recognize, and acknowledge themselves as subjects of desire, bringing into play between each other a certain relationship that allows them to discover, in desire, the truth of their being, be it natural or fallen" (Foucault 1984a: 5). As many have observed, the importance of consumption practices and discourses for the constitution of the subject-consumer has been growing, singling itself out as a discrete element of the truth game by which we constitute ourselves as subjects. The subject not only expresses him or herself and reveals his or her desires in consumption, he or she also constitutes him or herself through consumption practices and through the discourses that are built around the notion of the subject as a "consumer". This means "analyzing not behaviour or ideas, nor societies and their "ideologies", but the problematizations through which being offers itself to be, necessarily, thought and the practices through

---

<sup>1</sup> This paper draws on thoughts and ideas which were initially developed in Sassatelli, R. (1996) *Fragments for a Genealogy of the Consumer Society: History in Perspective*, Discussion Papers in Public Choice and Social Theory, Discussion Paper N. 25, University of East Anglia, April, pp. 1-36. This paper has been translated into Greek and published as a chapter in the collective volume: Lallas, D. (ed.) (2022). *Consumption, consumers, and Consumerism: Politics of Representations and Practices of Governance in Times of Crisis*. Athens: EKKE-Papazisis.

<sup>2</sup> University of Bologna, Department of History and Cultures, Piazza San Giovanni in Monte, 2, 40124 Bologna, Italy.

which these problematizations are formed" (Ibid: 11). This clearly goes beyond a simple sociology of morality concerned with processes of individualization and commercialization (Giddens 1991; Bauman 1993) to find a middle terrain where practices and discourses meet and shape the normative (both ethical and cognitive) background of our understanding of ourselves. The moral discourses and reasons consumers give of their behaviour and attitudes is important (see Nielsen and McGregor 2013), but they need to be analyzed in the context of the normative injunctions related to subjectivity which underscore people practices, self-understanding and justifications. Expert and public discourse (from marketing to advertising to political rhetorics) is crucial to understand such normative injunctions.

Normative injunctions often take the shape of descriptive statements embedded in ordinary practices. They accompany the daily routines of people of different sorts and may appear quite taken-for-granted in their matter-of-factness. Genealogy is a form of historically informed interpretation, one that is addressed to pragmatic analysis. In this sense, it is meant to be a critical ontology of ourselves, a self-reflective political and ethical enterprise rather than Heideggerian aestheticizing endless interpretation. As Rabinow and Dreyfuss wrote, commenting on Foucault's genealogy: "the genealogist, having destroyed the project of writing a 'true' history of the past, cannot resort to the advantages that traditional historical research may offer. The theory of reality correspondence is dead ... For this reason, Foucault knows he cannot offer a true history of the past, true in the sense of a history which is fully adequate to the past, which represents it exactly as a complete picture" (1983: 132). For genealogy is a post-humanistic and yet reflexive enterprise which asks the actor to take a stance. It is an enterprise for which, as Foucault maintains in *Verité et pouvoir*, "it is necessary, getting rid of the constituting subject, to get rid of the subject itself, namely, to arrive to an analysis which could account for the constitution of the subject in the historical framework" (1980a: 11).

To study the genesis of contemporary consumer society and of the consumer as a social actor, different approaches have focused on the distinctive or communicative functions of goods, on the production and commercialization technologies, on forms of discourse and ideology (Sassatelli 2007). They all need to come to terms with notions such as fashion, novelty, market exchange, preference formation, choice, and value. Before even dealing with these notions, though, it is important to consider what kind of notion of consumption we may want to deploy or, alternatively, how we were brought to adopt certain notions and definitions in the first place.

When we ask the question "How was consumption, and modern consumption, brought about?", we unavoidably work with some definition of what modern consumption and "consumer society" is. There are different definitional levels to take into consideration though; on the one hand, heuristic concepts - those that social scientists and historians deploy; on the other, phenomenological definitions - those used by people to define their practices and themselves. The importance of the latter is often underestimated, yet it is fundamental within a genealogical perspective which considers people as constituting themselves through practices, discursive practices included. So rather than offering an analytical definition of consumption (see Warde 2017), it is phenomenological – or folk – definitions which we shall fundamentally consider, considering furthermore the politics of their fashioning through a variety of discourses.

Discourses are themselves articulated at different levels. Within a genealogical perspective, the task of the social scientist is that of discovering the historical, social, and cultural conditions that make certain normative models more effective than others. Parallel to models of the consumer which have been adopted as methodological tools for the analysis of consumption practices, there are models that actually work as means of reconstructing, making sense of and evaluating one's own practices of consumption and more broadly of one's own subjectivity. In this light, the "ideological" discourse of consumption is itself a means of constructing what consumption means to us. As Raymond Williams has noticed, "to define the typical member of the modern capitalistic society the use of the word "consumer" is spreading more and more rapidly, and it is now used by common people to describe themselves" (1976: 78).

Behind discourses of and on consumption lurks a subject. In social scientific enterprises this has typically been indexed under the rubric of motivations or desires, on the control of those desires, on their channeling through instrumental rationality (or irrational desires in dystopic portrayals of contemporary market capitalism). Genealogy would try to bring the implicit or explicit anthropology we are using and that which lies behind normative discourse at the core of the analysis.

The latter amounts to a critical ontology of ourselves as consumers. The very definition of the consumer is a highly contested and ambivalent terrain of subjectivity construction. In such terrain questions such as "Whence are we going?" and "Which alternative have we?", normative notions of what the consumer ought to be for himself and the others, utopian and dystopian notions of whence and where consumer society shall be going are all fundamental. Reflexive, normative, and utopian (or dystopian) notions do play a substantive role in shaping what we are as consumers, what consumption means to us and shall become a focus of analysis. Both dominant – such as neoliberal views (Bauman 2007) - and alternative views of the consumer – such as those promoted by critical consumption and sustainability initiatives (Sassatelli 2006; 2015; Spaargaren 2003) - are to be taken into consideration as they typically, as Luc Boltanski would say (2011), feed on each other, in a dialectical movement which defines the contours of reality.

In this sense, a focus on the alternatives available to us for the conduct of our practices within and without the consumer society is part of a genealogical enterprise. "From what place are we going on?". "Is there elsewhere?". Such questions often lurk beneath the social scientific study of consumption harboring nowhere explicitly, yet they are central for a critical ontology of ourselves. They entail an acknowledgement of the fact that we know and do not know the position from which we carry out our observations. They do not entail going beyond the social sciences and reaching political and moral philosophy proposing a normative model of society which is thought to preserve and enhance certain subjective characteristics normatively assigned to the individual. But they do entail acknowledging the importance of our normative models for the constitution of ourselves, they entail bringing back into the analysis politics and ethics as part of the enquiry into the constitution of the subject as a consumer.

Sticking to the idea of a genealogical investigation, consumption can hardly be defined per se in meta-historical terms. Analytical definitions often aim to solve matters in universalistic terms, yet the inevitable historicity of our analytical enterprises jeopardizes our capacity to arrive to definitive definitions. However, I reckon that issues related to the definition of consumption may still be relevant, not only for synchronic studies, but also for enterprises dealing with the historical genesis of consumption.

The first issue to consider refers to the different possible levels at which notions of consumption may be cast. Consumption has become relevant as a rhetorical device both within the individualistic persuasive discourse of advertising and within normative discourses dealing with notions of social order and the common good. Within the social sciences and humanities, consumption is becoming relevant as an analytical device indicating practices which are widespread in everyday life.

As an analytical device "consumption" seems to comprehend a number of different social relationships and processes. Definitions of consumption seem to require appreciation of the different moments through which the production-exchange-consumption cycle is organized. They may be classified accordingly to the emphasis they bestow on different practices in a sequence of consumption: the moment of purchasing - i.e. consumer behaviour and marketing but also post-modernist theories of shopping as leisure; the distribution or servicing then performed within the household - i.e. anthropological and feminist perspectives on resource distribution; and the final use – i.e. the varieties of studies within the cultural studies tradition in relation to subcultures and their creative appropriation of commodities. They may be classified according to the type of object which is consumed because of particular conditions of production, exchange and consumption: goods as opposed to services, private as opposed to public provision; private as opposed to public use; durable as opposed to soft goods; etc.

As I have suggested, rather than try and complicate the definitional framework which may be deduced from studies about consumption, it is important to consider phenomenological – folk and mundane - definitions of consumption. We should focus on what people of different sorts call consumption; and compare these definitions with the analytical tools offered by the social sciences as humanities. This may help us to consider how the normative and descriptive dimensions may be interlaced and to understand better how the consumer came to be such a prominent figure.

So for example, the anthropological definition of consumption - i.e. consumption as the "use of goods" - appears a little too general to specify what consumption has become to be for the majority of us in everyday life in the Global West. In everyday life, we do not call consumption the use of our personal computer, nor do we indicate as consumption the use of fine pottery that we received as a gift. Typically, it is not so much the moment of the "use" of "objects", but rather the moment of the "exchange" of "objects" that seems to be decisive for a phenomenological definition of consumption. The commodity form is dominant in contemporary consumer societies and the frontier of the commodity is ever enlarging (Hochschild 2003). It is the purchasing of goods and services - our engaging with the marketplace and the commodity form - that, although not always indicated as part of consumption practices themselves, lies at the foundation of phenomenological definitions. And it is the process of commercialization, with its continuous expansion into domains that were previously outside the market sphere, which certainly we have in mind when talking of consumption and the consumer.

On the other hand, however, the simple purchase of a good – the cash nexus – does not identify completely the complexity, in terms of meanings, spatiality, temporality, relations, emotions and manners, which mundane discourses associate to consumption. Consumers are not simply buyers, consumption entails a different temporality and different, more complex relations than simply the act of purchase, be it rational or not. Besides, not every purchase will do. The determination of those who will and those who will not, however, is linked to fairly specific circumstances which we may trace back to the cultural and historical context, to the institutional setting of purchase and use of goods and services and to its links with the wider context, to locally specific arrangements of interaction and to the social status of the participants. Objects and services of all sorts may be priced and exchanged in the market, thereby becoming an object of consumption, a commodity. Whether this happens and whether our use of such goods is then conceptualized as consumption or not relates to the value - ethical and political - we attach to consumption; it relates to the compatibility - in terms of cognitive categories and power structures - among the consumption sphere and other spheres of life, such as art, sport or care, which it cuts across.

Speaking of “commodities” is not just like speaking in neutral descriptive voice: the definition of practices and objects as practices and objects of consumption is an ongoing political process which reflexive research cannot avoid. In this sense, it is clear that the battle over the definition of consumption in everyday life as part of the construction of phenomenological notions of consumption is no less important for a genealogical enterprise than the search for the analytical sophistication of our heuristic tools.

Particular notions of consumption are linked to notions of social order and personal order. Consumption certainly may and has been conceived differently within different normative perspectives aiming at promoting visions of the social order. Consumption may also be portrayed differently under different persuasive discourses dealing with the conduct of individual, daily or extraordinary practices. In order to address these issues, I believe it is useful to consider those actors - individuals and collective - who participate in the construction of the consumer as a social actor promoting persuasive discourses which typically have normative force, implying specific visions of subjectivity, what it is to consume and how it should make us feel.

Such a perspective presupposes the process of abstraction, individualization and institutionalization of the figure of the consumer. Consumption has progressively become detached from traditional, institutionally

bounded groups (i.e. guilds) which fixed the terms of the game of self-constitution in relationship to particular and collective consumption practices. Consumers as individuals are called forth to construct themselves through lifestyles. Lifestyle has been defined as a "more or less integrated set of practices which an individual embraces ... because they give material form to a particular narrative of self-identity" (Giddens 1991: 81). As traditional, embedded patterns of consumption lose their authority, the subject is called to constitute itself as the engineer of cumulative choices. Individual projects – of happiness, satisfaction, morality or simply emotional release – are often implied in the retrospective look subjects afford to their choices. Such projects are often indexed to other deeper values and frames, such as "nature" (Sassatelli 2010) or the "past" (Boltanski and Esquerre 2020).

These circumstances may be seen as fostering the demand for meaning bestowing agencies or mechanisms such as the fashion system and the advertising industry but also, increasingly political discourses which call into being a "consumer" to discuss the national traditions, environmental issues, health issues (including the pandemic), the market and of course the State (or the EU). Indeed, besides individual consumers themselves, the commercialization system but also other collective actors such as the consumer movements and the state apparatus, are to be considered fundamental as sources of expert discourse, advice and broadly speaking "normality". Indeed, these actors speak persuasive and normative discourses which contribute to the constitution of the notion of the actor as a consumer.

It is thereby not surprising that collective actors such as green movements and consumer movements, but also the state, supranational agencies such as the EU as well as political parties have tried to put forward a normative vision of consumption. The persuasive discourse of advertising, which individualizes consumers is challenged through normative and "educational" discourses which often address a (more or less) rational and community-oriented consumer. Normative discourse appears to challenge the apparent monopoly over the definition of consumption practices that the commercial system allegedly enjoys. The pandemic as well as the growing initiatives against global warming have indeed called forth images of the consumer which are quite squarely harnessed to collective values and issues, linking different generations, present, past and future and internalizing environmental and social impact in the classical, self-interested economic equation.

To grasp the force of normative injunctions we need to consider closely what is understood as the act of consumption and how it is related to subjectivity. A focus on phenomenological notions of consumption entails the adoption and development of the idea of the consumer as the agent of consumption. In social scientific thought this is typically indexed under the rubric of motivation. "Why do people want, buy and use commodities?". A similar question is excluded from neoclassical mainstream micro-economic theory which assumes a self-interested actor as a black box of individual preferences and focuses on the instrumentally rational pursuit of such preferences. As it is well known, Mary Douglas and Baron Isherwood in their seminal *The World of Goods* (Douglas and Isherwood 1979) just like Pierre Bourdieu in his celebrated *Distinction* (Bourdieu 1984) have offered a different answer. In line with the anthropological tradition, they pinpoint the communicative function which goods universally perform. In effect, anthropology has typically shown that material goods have constantly managed to convey meanings about rank and roles, that they have always provided the basis for marking social relationships and social distinctions. Within anthropology it is established that people construct themselves through goods (consumption) as well as goods through themselves (production), and that these two kinds of practices are often intermeshed. The subject-consumer is a cultural agent who uses goods as symbolic tools to testify to its place in the world, to find its place in the world.

The importance of communicative approaches to consumption lies in the opportunity to avoid any return to a biologicistic foundation. This is relevant in so far as, within the social sciences, there is a whole literature that relies on a distinction between natural - thereby true - as opposed to manipulated - thereby false - needs. Similar positions tend to dismiss as a mere product of manipulation or as aberrant expression of irrationality

the historical and cultural dimension of needs and scarcity that anthropology has underlined (Sahlins 1974; Douglas 1992a). Anthropological approaches, on the contrary, have shown that it is precisely this historical and cultural dimension which is "by nature" inscribed in the genesis of human needs and satisfaction. I do not intend to deny the material dimension of human life, but I reckon that it cannot be understood as separated from social interaction and thus from interpretation and "discourse". It follows that, the context in which to place motivations is first and foremost a cultural context.

Asking "why do people consume goods?" within a radical cultural perspective requires a measure of historical depth, attention to agency and yet the capacity to consider the cultural embeddedness of consumer practices. To such question genealogy may offer an answer. The lack of a genealogical perspective may, instead, be considered a major shortcoming of communicative perspectives. The specificity of today consumer society cannot be detected in the symbolic character of goods, in their symbolic function or their distinction capacity. Setting out to compare cross-culturally different symbolic functions as instances of particular social arrangements, the anthropological tradition is at odds with the specific discontinuities which makes consumers what they are today. It runs the risk of formalism: in establishing what the function of goods is, to which a form of association pertains, the anthropologist is freed to explore the nuanced peculiar content of such invariable forms. To think of consumption motivations - whether in terms of a universal and oppositional law of identity expression, or in terms of a distinctive and reproductive logic of social position - does not capture the uniqueness of today's consumption patterns and their cultural and political significance.

A genealogical approach, centered on the constitution of consumers as social and political actors, on their interpellation as actors within normative discourses as well as on their features in lay discourse of everyday life, tackle directly the nature of such uniqueness. At stake there is not only the genesis of desires, of both needs and wants and of their relationships conceived as an historically situated process contributing to the constitution of the subject as a consumer, but also the genesis of the consumer as a subject of desires – in direct relation with visions of normality and deviance, happiness, and dejection (Sassatelli 2007).

At the socio-political level, consumption practices appear strongly interwoven with the liberal value of freedom. Intellectual history has shown that consumption defined as those phenomena which can be associated with the demand side of market economy have emerged as linked to liberal individualism. Consumer practices, conceived as the purchasing of goods in a competitive market are built on the notion of free choice as exit, i.e. market choice is conceived as the possibility of not buying those products which are less suitable to one's own wants on the basis of a rational calculation and on the assumption that alternatives, or rather close substitutes, are available. Consumption therefore represents a controversial terrain where the ambivalence of individual choice becomes evident, especially when factors – such as the environment or collective welfare and public health – are factored in.

If consumption is central to the process of not only re-creation, but also creation of the self as well as the creation of meaning, then it is a territory whose control is of vital importance to all sorts of interests, including that of the consumer him or herself. Just as in the Eighteenth-Century tremendous attention was paid to what was called "the luxury debate", so our attention is drawn in the modern debate to consumption because it also raises fundamental questions about the contemporary personal, social, and political order. Social sciences and social theory in particular have a role to play in such a debate and may even find new energy to rethink about worn-out concepts and approaches.

Precisely to accomplish what appears a mutually required bridge between social theory and the study of consumption a radical, genealogical perspective may be useful. It entails taking seriously the idea that economic freedom needs a political grounding, while acknowledging that the political implies a struggle without an end, and yet a worthwhile struggle. It is hard to see how choice, even the proceduralist market choice of neoclassical economics, can be freed of the political element: no choice seems to be just a rational

pursuit where power unbalance is banned, where foundational values play no role and collective negotiations implicit or explicit are useless formulas facing rational evidence.

This amounts to stating that the sign of the value judgement of consumption has to be problematized, i.e. consumption practices are not good nor bad as such, they may or may not be linked to different sorts of freedom, etc. It also means that the connotation of consumption as an end, as a telos, must be questioned. It could appear as such in societies of scarcity like the early modern one, but in today societies of the Global West we are faced with simultaneously with abundance and exclusion, waste and frugality – all of which call into question fundamentally our ways of consuming. On the contrary the connotation of consumption as a finality had typically meant that consumption could be seen as a taken-for-granted activity, somehow secondary for explaining historical processes with respect to its "counterpart", production. But when consumption is seen as actively participating in the socio-economic process, including process of distinction, innovation, and creativity, its relevance cannot be written out through a (often value laden) concern for production and its structures.

Furthermore, awareness of the political dimension in the constitution of the subject-consumer amounts to an emphasis on the importance that the categories we deploy to understand the world have for the very structure of such a world. Social action is a meaningful action, an action thickened with understanding and classification processes - even if we may not be fully aware of it. Thus, applying research to the model of the consumer employed to understand consumption practices means to bring into the analysis - and into question - the fundamental categories that we use, trying to find out what and how reality become as such for us. For Foucault was also an inquiry into those elements which we tend to feel are without history (Foucault 1980b), and the consumer is often universalized as an ideal persona, when in fact its specifications are continuously constituted and fought about in everyday life as much as discourse.

In this context, setting out to expose the notion of pure choice exercised through a sovereign act of the will in the market while accounting for its appeal, genealogy has a twofold task. Genealogy not only recalls the social conditions of the formation of individual consumer choices, but equally problematizes the institutional, discursive, and practical conditions of the constitution of the ideal, hegemonic model of choice to which such activity is supposed to conform. And alerts us to the many alternative models which might have been discarded or are still put forward by peripheral discourses and actors. The notions of motivation, desire, or rationality as well as consumer choice, far from having the status of pure concepts used as formal theoretical devices, exist as normative claims. They function both as coordinates for the construction of social reality and as programs for social and personal order. Like the notion of the citizen, the notion of consumer is part of those normative concepts by which certain individualities operate as the universal terrain where the battle for our own practical and political understanding is fought. A genealogy of contemporary consumer society reflexively addresses this battle and the normative, cognitive and emotional, investment a variety of actors and their discourses deploy to go about it in manners which are as pungent as they are taken-for-granted.

## References

Baudrillard, J.

1968 *Le système des objets*, Gallimard, Paris.

1970 *La société de consommation. Ses mythes, ses structures*, Denoel, Paris.

1981 *Simulacres et simulations*, Galilée, Paris.

Bauman, Z.

1993 Postmodern Ethics, Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell.

2007 Consuming life. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Boltanski, L.

2011 On Critique. A sociology of emancipation, Polity, Cambridge.

Boltanski, L. and A. Esquerre

2020 Enrichment: A Critique of Commodities, Wiley, Hoboken.

Douglas, M.

1992a Wants, in M. Douglas, Risk and Blame: Essays in Cultural Theory, Routledge, London.

1992b In Defence of Shopping, in R. Eisendle and E. Miklantz (eds.) Product Kulturen, Campus.

Douglas, M. and Isherwood, B.

1979 The World of Goods. Towards and Anthropology of Consumption, Basic Books, New York.

Dreyfus H.L. and Rabinow P.

1983 Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Foucault, M.

1976 La volonté de savoir, Gallimard, Paris.

1980a Power\Knowledge Foucault, Michel (1980). Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

1980b Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-77, Harvester, New York.

1983 "The Subject and Power", in H. Dreyfus and P. Rabinow, Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics, quoted.

1984a L'usage des plaisirs, Gallimard, Paris.

1984b Le souci de soi, Gallimard, Paris.

1984c "What is Enlightenment?", in P. Rabinow, ed. The Foucault Reader, London, Penguin.

1988 Techniques of the Self, in L. H. Martin et Als. (eds.), Technologies of the Self. A Seminar with Michel Foucault, Tavistock, London.



1993 "About the Beginning of the Hermeneutics of the Self", *Political Theory*, XXI, 2, pp. 198-227.

Giddens, A.

1990 *The Consequences of Modernity*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

1991 *Modernity and Self-Identity*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Hochschild, A. R.

2003 *The Commercialization of Intimate Life*, University of California Press, Berkeley.

Miller, D.

1987 *Material Culture and Mass Consumption*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.

Nielsen, L. and McGregor, S. L.T.

2013 Consumer morality and moral norms, *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 37(5), pp. 473–480.

Sassatelli, R.

2006 Virtue, Responsibility and Consumer Choice. Framing Critical Consumerism, J. Brewer e F. Trentmann (eds) *Consuming Cultures, Global Perspectives*, Berg, Oxford, pp. 219-50

2007 *Consumer Culture. History, Theory and Politics*, Sage, London.

2010 *Fitness Culture. Gyms and the Commercialisation of Discipline and Fun*, Palgrave, Basingstoke.

2015 (2015d) Consumer Culture, Sustainability and A New Vision of Consumer Sovereignty, *Sociologia Ruralis*, 55, pp. 483-96

Spaargaren, G.

2003 Sustainable Consumption: A Theoretical and Environmental Policy Perspective, *Society and Natural Resources*, 16, pp. 687–701.

Warde, A.

2017 *Consumption*, Palgrave MacMillan, London.

Zerubavel, E.

2015 *Hidden in Plain Sight: The Social Structure of Irrelevance*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.