

Competing orders of worth in extraordinary consumption community

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Abstract

This article argues that tension and conflicts during consumption can be analysed through the lens of convention theory, which is preoccupied with justification of action under the condition of fragmented institutional environments. Central to the perspective is the co-presence of consumption regimes with incompatible orders of worth which result in disagreements about the legitimacy of modes of justification in consumption communities. Whereas prior research tends to focus on protagonist-antagonist tensions or disputes over how to consume, our results from studying an extraordinary consumption community contributes to an understanding of how heterogeneity emerges when consumers dispute over multiple criteria for justification. We discuss how the orders of worth perspective contributes with mundane controversies to a research field that tends to focus on ‘grand’ conflicts and, as such, extends what it might mean to understand consumption communities and their tensions and conflicts.

Introduction

In consumer research, much attention has been paid to how consumption under a postmodern condition of flux tends to forge people together into communities of collective belonging. Consumers are expected to be actively and enthusiastically involved in consumption while (re)producing identities, practices, rituals and meanings (Cova, Kozinets, and Shankar 2007). Research on consumption communities, such as subcultures of consumption and consumer tribes (Schouten and McAlexander 1995; Cova 1997), holds that consumers seek social bonds in communities that represent a connecting way of life. However, research has discovered the heterogeneity of communities that question ‘the authority of the hegemonic perspective’ (Schouten, Martin, and McAlexander 2007, 74), and contributions show that consumption can be characterised by fragility and contestation, interpersonal conflicts, competition, and positional struggles (Canniford and Shankar 2013). Despite this, there is lack of research covering heterogeneity, consumption-mediated social conflicts (Husemann and Luedicke 2013) and the implications of such heterogeneity (Thomas, Price, and Schau 2013). The purpose of this study is to contribute to this stream of research aiming ‘to generate new constructs and theoretical insights and to extend existing theoretical formulations’ (Arnould and Thompson 2005, 869).

Several contributions within consumer culture theory (CCT) rely on ideology and power imbalance for understanding heterogeneity (e.g., Kozinets 2002; Thompson and Coskuner-Balli 2007; Kozinets and Handelman 2004; Giesler 2008; Luedicke, Thompson, and Giesler 2010). We suggest an alternative perspective which focuses on consumption regimes, i.e. the orders of worth, or general moral principles, that engagement within the world aims at (Thévenot 2007), which coordinates sociality within a consumption community. As an alternative lens, it is expected that consumption regimes and their varying orders of worth ‘make visible the rules that coordinate individuals’ actions’ (Boltanski, 2009 in Benmecheddal and Özçaglar-Toulouse 2015, 112). Our attention is thus directed towards disputes over legitimacy of worth and how one may understand the nature and implications of different regimes present in consumption communities.

To study consumption regimes we employed the perspective of Boltanski and Thévenot ([1991] 2006) who claims that social ‘worlds’ comprise multiple principles of evaluation. At its most basic level, experiences are (re)constructed when there are principled disagreements about what is valuable, what is worthy, and what counts (Stark 2009). Consumers would mobilise orders of worth to make judgments about the ‘quality’ of a person, an idea, an experience, etc., during consumption that would coordinate social

engagement. The orders of worth perspective (OoW) turns an individual's consumption into a dynamic engagement in the midst of 'the way her environment responds to her and the way she takes into account these responses.' (Thévenot 2001, 58), which reflects an ontology where the world consists of resistance, change and transformation.

In this paper we ask the following question: How do consumption regimes influence heterogeneity in a community? The subject of our study is a traditional climbing community comprising international and domestic tourists who have been travelling to a mountain climbing destination (Lofoten Island, Norway), expectedly aiming for extraordinary experiences distinguished by the communion of shared liminality and sacredness (Arnould and Price 1993; Celsi, Rose, and Leigh 1993). However, research shows that three consumption regimes co-exist within the community. Each of these regimes consists of principle worths that distinguish conventions, goals and qualifying practices. We demonstrate that consumers draw on the orders of worth of their respective regime to justify experiences and how conflicting orders both within and outside the community cause social tensions when they evoke tests of justification in practice. This article contributes with a novel framework to understanding consumption heterogeneity, the dynamics of consumption mediated conflicts, and the role of compromises as the consequence of tensions and conflicts.

Heterogeneity in community

The dynamics of consumption have been well documented in consumer research. Neo-tribes can be unstable and shifting, with hybrid characteristics (Cova, Kozinets, and Shankar 2007) which call attention to intergroup dynamics and conflict as the norm. Husemann and Luedicke define consumption-mediated social conflict as 'an interaction relationship between two or more (groups of) market participants that have mutually exclusive or incompatible goals regarding certain consumption resources and ideologies.' (Husemann and Luedicke 2013, 356). Their review reveals three patterns of conflicts: emancipatory, ideology-advocating, and authenticity-protecting conflicts.

First, emancipatory conflicts involve situations where consumers seek ideological and cultural change (e.g., Kozinets 2002; Kozinets and Handelman 2004) or where they strive to regain power (e.g., Giesler 2008; Thompson and Coskuner-Balli 2007). For example, in the study of the community-supported agriculture (CSA) community, Thompson and Coskuner-Balli (2007) found evidence for social conflicts when consumers reacted toward the corporate co-optation of the organic food movement. These studies point at how emancipation from existing logics and ideologies of the marketplace may cause consumer resistance and result in

social reproduction (Arnould and Thompson 2007). Second, previous research shows how social conflicts arise due to ideology-advocating incompatibilities between consumers. Luedicke et al.'s study of the protagonist and antagonist's worldview surrounding the Hummer brand is an example of tensions caused by the ideologically based 'moral protagonist myth that consumers draw from in the course of performing moralistic identity work.' (Luedicke, Thompson, and Giesler 2010, 1029). Studying the moral legitimacy of brands within a gay community, Kates discovered that brands were held accountable to 'legitimate standards' with consequence for how community members faced tensions as 'these brands are heavily interwoven with the social interests, concerns, and life of the gay community' (Kates 2004, 462).

Third, authenticity-protecting conflicts, according to Husemann and Luedicke (2013), involve tensions originating in how objects, practices or experiences are/are not 'supposed' to be consumed. In practice, these conflicts tend to unfold when 'consumers lay opposing claims to ownership on the same consumption object or practice or when community members use different criteria for evaluating the appropriateness of consumption within the community.' (Husemann and Luedicke 2013, 357). Arsel and Thompson (2011) show how some community members may 'insulate' a field of consumption by rejecting marketplace myths and, thus, protect their social and cultural capital from being devalued. Tumbat and Belk (2011) argue that social conflicts may originate with consumers asserting their boundaries in which money versus personal skill and previous experiences compete within discourses of deservingness. Such conflicts are enacted by the co-presence of multiple collective identities, such as self-referential identities where core members focus on focal activities' flow, and social identities where non-core members focus on iconic imagery of kinship (Beverland, Farrelly, and Quester 2010, 713).

Research on intergroup dynamics within brand communities shows how mimicry may threaten brands' symbolic distinctiveness (White and Argo 2011), and consumers may avoid consumption that is associated with dissimilar or dissociative others because core users become misrecognised (Berger and Heath 2007). Bellezza and Keinan (2014) extend the understanding of such conflicts by distinguishing between different types of non-core consumers. Based on political and social psychology, they propose a framework enhancing the importance of community members being 'citizens' (core; claim in-group status by virtue of possessing the consumptive marquee), 'immigrants' (non-core; claim in-group status without consumptive virtue), or 'tourists' (non-core; without virtue but do not claim any membership status) in which group dynamics depend on whether or not the non-core users

claim membership status to the community or not. Their main finding shows that in communities perceived as selective and that require effort to gain membership, ‘immigrants’ may pose a threat to the image and distinctiveness of the community, while ‘tourists’ can reinforce and enhance the brand’s desirability and value in the eyes of core users (Bellezza and Keinan 2014, 413).

Recent contributions have expanded the social conflict focus with emphasis on the role and consequences of social conflicts. Some contributions point at the destructive forces of mainstreaming (i.e. when exclusivity is threatened), which can lead to community withdrawal, reorientation (Thompson and Coskuner-Balli 2007) or meaning refinement (Arsel and Thompson 2011). In their study of surfers, Canniford and Shankar (2013) found that mismatch of assemblage of nature; i.e. between technologies, discourses and geographic resources, often leads to betrayals and social tensions among consumers. To cope with this situation, they engage in purifying practices to retain a romantic (and successful) consumption of nature. For example, communities may engage in ideological masking in which it is forbidden to address contradictory topics, or purging practices, in which sub-groups try to territorialise surfing locations because they ‘coassemble nature in different manners.’ (Canniford and Shankar 2013, 1065-66).

Thomas, Price, and Schau (2013), studying a distance running community, argue that communities may preserve continuity at the same time as they operate under destabilising forces. Thomas et al. point at frame alignment practices: i.e. through language, structure, and role, that ‘enable the community to (re)stabilise, reproduce, and reform over time’ (Thomas, Price, and Schau 2013, 1010). Alongside Giesler’s (2008) marketplace drama and Canniford and Shankar’s purifying practices, Thomas et al. expand the role and consequence of social conflicts, arguing that community continuation is possible if tension co-occurs with economic and social resource dependency. On the basis of the actor-structure interplay implicit in their perspectives, Canniford and Shankar (2013) and Thomas et al. (2013) point at the possibility of continual interplay of heterogeneity and more ‘traditional community values such as belonging and stability’ (Thomas, Price, and Schau 2013, 1027).

The review shows that existing research tends to resolve around the tension between incumbents and challengers which presupposes the presence of a dominant logic of communities that might end in divergent views about aspects such as authenticity, membership, and consumption. An institutional perspective, which several contributions rely on, has been criticised for treating social order as segmented in stable institutional fields in

which ‘legitimacy is discursively maintained through stakeholders’ compliance with a dominant logic’ (Patriotta, Gond, and Schultz 2011, 1806). We think an alternative is to view community consumption as on-going negotiations of social order where actors relate to and confront multiple cultural-based justifications throughout experiences.

Heterogeneity as competing orders of worth

Introducing the regime concept to consumer research, Arsel and Bean rely on the Foucauldian regime of practice, referring to ‘discursive systems that generate their own regularities, prescriptions, reason, and self-evidence’ (Arsel and Bean 2013, 899-900). Whereas Arsel and Bean are preoccupied with how taste regime shapes practices, Corvellec and Hultman are interested in how multiple regimes rely on different criteria, referents and procedures and, as such, argue for how regimes would ‘succeed each other, complement one another, or compete.’ (Corvellec and Hultman 2014, 12). As a consequence, principled disagreement about what is valuable, what is worthy, and what counts (Stark 2009) has been introduced providing increased focus on marketing phenomena which are potentially contradictory, and onto conflicting interests and concerns.

We rely on the convention theory for interpreting consumption heterogeneity, and more specifically the orders of worth perspective (OoW) (Boltanski and Thévenot [1991] 2006) which acknowledges the existence of a plurality of orders, i.e. justification principles of regimes, within social worlds such as consumption communities. The theory, which belongs to (French) pragmatic sociology, is also labelled sociology of critical capacity because actors are viewed as equipped with critical sensibility which becomes visible in the daily occurrence of disputes over criteria for justification (Boltanski and Thévenot 1999). The OoW approach thus complements institutional perspectives through an explicit focus on plural logics of practice and how consumers cope with tensions when justifying action.

Conducting theoretical analysis of political philosophy and empirical studies, the central thesis of Boltanski and Thévenot ([1991] 2006) is that social arrangements consist of common worlds, or orders of worth, that are understood as higher order principles which actors rely on when justifying their engagement. In studies of French society they were able to identify six orders, with principle worth in brackets; (1) inspired order (grace, nonconformity, creativeness), (2) domestic order (esteem, reputation), (3) order of fame (renown), (4) civic order (collective interest), (5) market order (monetary wealth, competition), and (6) industrial order (productivity, efficiency) (Boltanski and Thévenot [1991] 2006). Later, a seventh order of worth, (7) green order (environmental friendliness), was suggested as relevant for some

contexts (Thévenot, Moody, and Lafaye 2000). For example, principle worth within the market order is monetary wealth and competition which resume as criteria for evaluation (or test) related to the value of action, symbols, and people. While qualified object and subjects might be brands and sellers/customers of the market order, the emotional body and artistic equipment might be central to an artist who strives for grace and creativity within the inspired order. The relevant proof of success within the respective orders could be profitable trade (market order), or if the artist is able to live as emotional immersed (inspired order).

Benmecheddal and Özçaglar-Toulouse (2015), studying consumer activism, show how actors navigate the intersection between multiple orders of worth, including an activist order, when engaging and (re)constructing reality. Thus, the proposed orders are not regarded as structures that determine practice but, rather, as potential co-existing resources in a context that consumers more or less reflectively draw on during debates, action and discourses of communities. Implicit in this understanding is the ontological precondition that institutional environments are fragmented in a plurality of orders of worth, and that the social order is negotiated on an ongoing basis (Boltanski and Thévenot [1991] 2006). Inspired by Thévenot (2007), we refer to consumption regimes as the orders of worth that engagement within the consumption world aims for. A regime would consist of principle worth(s) and intersecting orders of worth, the latter which we refer to as ‘adjacent orders’ and ‘conflicting orders’. ‘Engagement’ involves consumption conventions, goals and the qualifying practices that justify the orders of worth of the regime. A regime then points to the valuable, the worthy, and what counts for informing negotiations of reality during consumption (Stark 2009).

A central topic in Boltanski and Thévenot’s work is to understand how tension and conflicts distinguish social arenas, and how compromises are negotiated. Since consumption communities are considered as fragmented contexts based on conflicting regimes, the logic for evaluating worth during experiences might not be clear. Instead, multiple and changing criteria may create ambivalence and uncertainty, both within a regime and between multiple regimes. Experiences within a given consumption regime can accommodate conflicting measures of worth in which contention will ‘originate in a challenge to the view according to which the prevailing situation is well ordered, and in a demand for a readjustment of worths.’ (Boltanski and Thévenot [1991] 2006, 133). This constitutes legitimacy tests that can be defined as ‘moments of critical questioning in which the worth of particular arrangements needs to be justified.’ (Patriotta, Gond, and Schultz 2011, 1805). Such justification processes, or tests of worth, are performed through argumentative moves in practice where the ‘quality of things’ are determined in a way that is consistent with the worth invoked (Boltanski and

Thévenot [1991] 2006, 130). Consumers bring into play different forms of justifications based on a variety of worths when members of a consumption community ‘criticize, challenge institutions, argue with one another, or converge toward agreement.’ (Boltanski and Thévenot [1991] 2006, 15). The variation of worth will then bring plural forms of legitimacy into circulation in which situations of discord may arise and a ‘particular form of return to agreement’, i.e. compromise, may take place between actors (Boltanski and Thévenot [1991] 2006, 215). Although consumers may avoid a test, challenge a test’s validity, or reverse the situation by claiming that a test is valid in a different world, they also facilitate negotiation of compromise that combines several forms of justification. Within marketing, compromises have been documented by Benmecheddal and Özçaglar-Toulouse (2015) who shows how engagement in community-supported agriculture (CSA) is a compromise between an activist order and a market order, and by Finch, Geiger, and Harkness (2017) who show how service companies supporting the petroleum industry balance between several conflicting orders of worth without needing to converge on an overriding institutional logic.

Another issue which Boltanski and Thévenot refer to as a ‘clash between worlds’ (p. 223), may occur when the regime exhibited during consumption experiences is called into question. Then, the consumers would not agree on how to set up a valid test of worth which may lead to social conflicts between two or more regimes. Such a ‘clash’ is accounted for in Cova, Pace, and Skålen’s (2015) study of brand volunteering in which the consumers are stuck in a conflict between a brand (Alfa Romeo) that they love (i.e. inspired order) and the company (Fiat) that had destroyed it (i.e. market order). A compromise is developed through the composite object ‘Alfisti.com’ platform which brings together elements from the two orders of worth for the service of a common good. However, such a compromise is fragile because it depends on the goodwill of the involved parties that can question if the appropriateness of a given arrangement favours the other involved order. Then one risks reactivating the clash because actors ‘denouncing the compromise as dishonourable’ (Boltanski and Thévenot [1991] 2006, 278), and a new social conflict may emerge as critique of the compromise initially established.

Method

The staging of climbing in Lofoten

In contrast to packaged mountain climbing tours (Tumbat and Belk 2011), we have chosen domestic and international tourists who travel to join traditional climbing in Lofoten, Norway. Thus, we have selected to study a consumption community that is not staged by a provider.

Today, an increasing number of tourists create their own active holiday through online resources and special interest groups. Adventure travelling is easy in a Nordic context because everybody, including tourists, have equal rights to nature; e.g. to camp, hike, use public cabins and fish. Nevertheless, the rise of adventure travel is closely linked to the commoditisation of tourism (Cloke and Perkins 2002), and magical mountains around the world are turned into climbing destinations that many adventurers long to visit (Beedie and Hudson 2003). While the nature landscape is an important reason to go to such destinations, i.e. the rocks become a stage, the staging is also framed by commercial interests through guide books, tourism communication, online resources, and infrastructure (e.g. climbing store, cafe, pub, club). Today, popular climbing destinations are globally promoted as adventure spectacles that embrace the activity of mountain climbing as a fashion niche (Bogardus 2012).

The Lofoten Islands is promoted as one of the most spectacular and beautiful destinations in Europe because the mountain range rises from the sea (e.g. Mountain-Spirit-Guides.com; Climb-Europe.com). During the summer months, the midnight sun provides the opportunity to climb at any hour. Slogans like ‘climber’s paradise’ and ‘world class climbing’ are forwarded by destination marketing organisations and guiding firms (Nordnorskklattreskole.no; Alpineguides.no; Lofoten.info), and these signify romantic connotations regarding ‘Lofoten climbing’. A sign in the ‘Climber’s cafe’ states that ‘Sport climbing is like eating at MacDonald’s, you know what you get!’, which connotes that the owners prefer alpinism or traditional rock climbing (non-bolted pitches). Lofoten climbing is varied and extensive with both short and long multi-pitch routes and many tourists climb long routes (up to 500 m). Our informants refer to the guidebook as the ‘bible’ in the climbing community because it contains details about the pitches, the grades, how to access climbing areas, sun/shade, route type and information of those who did the first ascent (referred to as ‘heroes’). Routes are continually discovered and refined, and details about pitches and grading are discussed at sites online, such as Rockfax.com (world-wide climbing information), as well as among the climbers at climbing locations.

Data collection and participants in practice

The study of consumption heterogeneity is difficult to observe empirically due to tacit characteristics. It can be argued that both meso and macro-level explanations become possible to identify and comprehend through the study of common and shared practices (Giddens 1984); first through a review of the larger cultural context in which consumers are embedded (Giesler 2008) and, second, through actual consumption practices (Holt and Thompson 2004).

Although we cannot claim a practice perspective we were nevertheless inspired from Schatzki (1996) and Warde (2005) focusing onto three co-ordinating elements of (a) understanding, aiming for shared collective knowing of how to do the adventure; (b) procedures through explicit rules, principles, and instructions; and (c) ‘teleoaffective’ structures embracing ends, projects, purposes, beliefs, emotions, and moods. We think that the work of justification related to consumption regimes can be identified by focusing on performances, as well as the three interrelated co-ordinating elements during empirical investigations. Thus, what the climbers do during their vacation has been equally important compared to their interpretations of what happens.

The major portion of our data was collected over a two week period contacting climbers at the campsite, interviewing and observing them. In-depth interviews were carried out on-site where informants were asked to share stories of practice from their climbing career and from their Lofoten climbing, sequentially describing practices from preparations at home to their return. Follow up questions (what, how, why) and active listening techniques were applied during the interviews. Later they were asked to tell stories from other activities, such as from the camp site, and of their motivations, goals, preferences, the community milieu, lifestyle issues, in addition to valuable and less valuable experiences.

Of the 20 informants, 12 were international and 8 were Norwegians. The informants claim that the ‘Lofoten Rock’ guidebook has made the destination available to many international climbers. All climbers stayed at least one week at a camp site (15 tents) close to the climbing areas. Three criteria were applied when selecting participants: they should be (1) active climbers who (2) stayed in Lofoten as tourists (not residents) from a (3) variety of nationalities. The researcher chose participants by visiting various groups at camp and asking people to participate in the study. The climbers varied in terms of age, years of experience, and commitment. The youngest was 18 and the oldest was 36; half of the participants had a few years of experience with traditional climbing (1-5 years, except one with 7 years), and the other half had many years of experience (more than 10 years, see table 1; we use pseudonyms for all climber names).

The climbers attended non-bolted routes together with co-climbers, and the climbing area featured multi-pitch climbs where the first climber followed natural cracks for the placement of temporary protective gear—i.e. cams and nuts—which is removed as the second (or third) climber ascended.

** Table 1 insert here **

Research phases, engagement, and descriptions

Hermeneutic interpretations were applied (Thompson 1997), which means that an iterative interpretive process was attended in order to achieve as much understanding related to our topic as possible. The concept of the hermeneutic circle implies that the researchers develop an ‘initial frame of reference’ (Thompson 1997, 441), or a pre-understanding (Alvesson and Sköldbberg 2009), of the cultural and meso context which turns interpretation/understanding intelligible. None of us are climbers, so we needed to develop our pre-understanding regarding the logic, language, and the cultural-historical dimensions of the traditional climbing milieu. We visited El Chorro, Spain—which is a pre-bolted destination—with an expert who aided us in climbing and to ‘live’ the culture itself. One of the researchers repeated visits to a climbing destination on the west coast of Sweden, conducting informal interviews/discussions and observations. In Lofoten, we visited the camp site, the local village, and climbing venues (cafe, pub, store) trying to understand the milieu and the logic of Lofoten climbing (see table 2).

**** Table 2 insert here ****

Because aspects of consumption regimes cannot be directly accessed, we attained an analytic scrutiny through a spiral interplay between the rich empirical text, the cultural meaning of traditional climbing, and the social practice of the groups (Shove and Pantzar 2005). It was important to follow the emergence and development of practices trying to identify a variety of justification processes throughout the consumption process. The data has been analysed by moving back and forth between the data sources, data types and the analytical levels, searching for varying orders of worth at play, and the conventions and justifications involved (Boltanski and Thévenot [1991] 2006). The evidence for our claims has been illuminated through meaning condensations (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009).

Findings

The findings section is organised as follows: First, we present the climbing culture characteristics. Second, we identify the regimes of the community—lifestyle, recreational and sport regimes. Third, we present the orders of worth that are in play within each regime, and their justification processes and tensions. Finally, we answer the research question focussing on how the various consumption regimes influence heterogeneity in the community by

emphasizing the worth of each regime, and conflicting orders and compromises in-between the three regimes. These procedures enable us to investigate the relationship between consumption regimes, legitimate/illegitimate justification processes, and clashes of orders of worth within the community.

Climbing culture characteristics

Traditional (alpine) climbing has changed from being a special interest activity of dedicated climbers to becoming part of a contemporary consumer culture in the last 25 years (Schöffl et al. 2010). Rock climbing is accessible to all ages, and many of our participants stated that they spend a lot of money on climbing adventures at various international venues. In camps, they form communities of dedicated people who not only share immersive experiences of climbing, but also share experiences of the camaraderie and identity when they meet around the bonfire or at various venues.

Cohen (2011), studying lifestyle travellers, argues that practices and ideologies of the consumption culture tend to blend into self-identities and value systems over time. Within the adventure sports niche, cultures exist with highly dedicated individuals who are linked together through their embodied focus, aesthetics, equipment, stories, heroes, guidebooks, special interest media, and digital networks (Cloke and Perkins 2002). For example, discovering new routes yields status in the climbing milieu, and the first climbers of a new route are able to decide name of the route. Such stories show that membership, identity, and status in the culture are closely linked to symbolic markers of commitment.

‘You read magazines, watch climbing films, join a climbing milieu, and discover what climbing means to others, and you may eventually find out what it means to yourself [...] the climbing milieu is different from other communities I’ve been in. It is all about camaraderie and storytelling.’ (Eric, male, 26, Norway, pp. 6-7).

Today it seems that the cultural ‘lens’, through which climbers receive ideas, norms, and conventions, is composed of online resources. For example, ‘doctor of climbology’ (climbing.com) claims to be a shortcut for becoming acculturated to climbing, suggesting ‘13 must-follow climbing websites, blogs, and podcasts’. Dirtbagdiaries.com is another site which tells outdoor stories of climbers and others committed to a given, often extreme, lifestyle outside mainstream social norms. Such adventurers are hypermobile and maintain a minimalist mode of living, and some even give up their permanent residence and instead live

a full-time existence devoted to their sport (Rickly-Boyd 2012). These committed lifestyle climbers use a series of terms that denote their collective identity. For example, ‘dirtbag’, which historically links them to niche cultures dedicated to the sport, or ‘lifer’ and ‘full-timer’, which refer to the degree of commitment of the climber (Rickly-Boyd 2012, 86). Others focus on a balance between climbing and life outside of climbing, which was true of most of our participants. The Brooklyn-based blogger Kathy Karlo (kathykarlo.wordpress.com) tells the story of being a ‘part-timer’; i.e. having a job, an apartment and work, but spending all her spare time and money on climbing. Thus, she argues that you do not need to be a full-timer to share the lifestyle and dedication of a climber.

Socio-historic tensions exist among climbers, such as those related to the ‘bolt war’ and the traditional masculine ethos (Bogardus 2012; Kiewa 2001), which have impacted conventions among rock climbers. While many have traditionally shared a highly masculine ethos of individualism, prowess, hedonism, and creativity (Bogardus 2012), increased commercialisation has attracted people that do not value the risk that accompanies such an ethos. Thus, the reduction of risk has resulted in the proliferation of pre-bolted routes with secure chipping hand and foot holds in the rock, for example. In the last few decades, many traditional climbers have been critical toward pre-bolted (and retro-bolted) routes and athleticism, whereas sport climbers tend to view traditional climbing as old fashioned struggling up mountains in all kinds of weather (Loynes 1998). Many of the Lofoten climbers idealise alpinism, traditional climbing, and climbing heroes. Stories from the community may cover ‘what happens in camp’ (Leander, p. 18), remarkable experiences on the wall (e.g. ‘climbing in stormy weather’, Espen, p. 15), and experiences from international climbing destinations (e.g. told by professional climbers).

The orders of worth in play

Although climbers in the Lofoten camp seemingly belong to a homogeneous community of climbers, our analysis reveals tensions and disputes that appear across multiple worths in the climbing community. Figure 1 presents an overview of our findings and shows how orders of worth conventions and, particularly, three distinct competing principle orders of worth constitute the discovery of three consumption regimes that we (metaphorically) label the ‘recreational regime’, ‘sport regime’, and ‘lifestyle regime’. We show how tensions and disputes—both within a regime and between the regimes—distinguish the heterogeneity of the community. Furthermore, our analysis shows that although the co-existence of multiple

regimes results in disputes over justified belonging, the degree of versatility of a regime will result in either clashes or fragile compromises that temporarily reconcile tensions.

*** insert figure 1: Findings overview

Our findings align the historical-cultural dispute between traditional versus sport climbing values and the legitimacy of full-timer versus part-timer commitment. The full-timers practice traditional climbing as a lifestyle (7 participants). People of this group are sponsored (e.g. by brands), write articles (e.g. magazines, blog), work as instructors and/or work part time (e.g. two months a year) to finance their lifestyle. These are hard core committed practitioners who are familiar with the lifestyle, skills, jargon, and climbing culture. The rest of the informants practice climbing as part-timers (13 participants), i.e. they have a fulltime job or are studying, and have permanent residence. Eight out of the thirteen climbers use most of their spare time on various types of climbing, i.e. sport, bouldering, and traditional climbing. The adventure literature refers to these as ‘sport activists’ who dedicate large amount of time, money and effort to their lifestyle and social identity (Wheaton 2004, 9). Four climbers have many years of experience (10+ years) and prefer traditional climbing, which they practice during vacations and occasional week-ends.

Through observations we find that the climbers: look the same (e.g. clothing, thin athletic builds), follow the same procedures, drink beer together, and share stories around the camp fire. As theorised previously (Celsi, Rose, and Leigh 1993), the climbers seem linked by a shared passion for climbing, the wall, and camaraderie. All participants describe practices indicating unique social connections, for example, how people help each other with equipment, share valuable guidebooks and stories of routes, and share tricks for proper ascent.

The lifestyle regime: Humans and nature in sustainable co-existence (principle worth)

One could assume that the main basis of legitimacy for a mountain climbing community is providing its members with rituals, identity, and belonging so that they may enjoy the spectacular emotional experience of embodying the wall while heading for the peak. In this respect, the Lofoten Islands is a suitable and effective place to vacation because the camp site is located close to town, and in close proximity of the climbing routes. However, such rationale is not the main justification for the lifestyle climbers. Instead, they emphasize values such as lifestyle, the meaning of nature, social bonding, sustainability, and criticism toward the organisation of ‘ordinary’ life.

‘It has changed from being a bit of a hobby into pretty much a lifestyle. In Europe, the climbing communities are all very close and a lot of people share the interest of outdoor life, caring about the conservation of the environment [...] When you start climbing you really feel like you are part of this community and you end up spending most of your time with climbers. We have a lot in common, not pursuing the normal life - finding job, wife, house, car [...] Ordinary life is silly, ordinary people are silly, and we laugh about it [...] Climbers have no concern for money at all. I wouldn’t spend money on new clothes or fashion or anything like that.’ (Calvin, male 23, Australia, pp. 2, 4).

‘Climbing is part of my lifestyle. [...] It builds bonds with other people, and I have learned a lot in how to be a better person in my life through climbing. I think it builds a lot of confidence, and skills around managing risk and a pretty big impact on what kind of priorities I have in my life [...] It has made life a bit more simple for me. It has become much more important to be around good people and to spend time outside and living off of less money. And just valuing the things that the rest of society tells you are less important’ (Danny, male, 26, USA, p. 4)

These quotes show that several orders of worth are brought into play among the lifestyle consumers. What they criticise is the legitimacy of the criteria of everyday life and the values that ‘ordinary people’ take for granted. Calvin basically ‘hates’ the normal urban life. Along with the other lifestyle consumers he is justifying a worth of primitiveness and life in nature. Calvin and Danny are critical toward the worths that signify material wealth, rules and regulations, efficiency and the rationality of (mainstream) everyday living. Such worths are justified in the *market order*, with global consumption as qualifying practices, and the *industrial order*, in which effective production is a central worth (Boltanski and Thévenot [1991] 2006). The lifestyle climbers’ solution is to create a countercultural order where they try to establish new qualifying resources and rules that respect the ecosystem. One rule is to change the habits of living in the capitalist society, in which they feel alienated. They refuse to become entangled into an ‘A4-existence’ of efficiency, production, consumption, and so on. To overcome this challenge, they try to create new spaces for their existence. For example, Leander and Jennifer explain how they spend more time in nature than in the city and Leander regards his climbing friends as his ‘family’. Being in Lofoten, therefore, is valued as a lifestyle activity because it assumes immaterial wealth and environmentalist worth in contrast to the capitalist model of the civilized and ‘conformist mainstream’. As a

consequence, they refuse to speak about ‘everyday life’ in the community which refers to their critique of the worth of other orders (Danny, Leander and Jennifer).

The recreational regime: Humans need nature as antistructure to recuperate (principle worth)

These climbers account for being in Lofoten for recreation, and most attend other activities (e.g. hiking, fishing) while climbing is the primary activity.

‘I find that when I have been on a climbing trip I am way more relaxed at work. It really helps me cope with stress [...] society nowadays is so safe. Climbing is a good way to experience this kind of very natural kind of fear in complete safety [...] Earlier it was much more important for my self-image [...] I was hard core because I was a lifestyle climber [...] Now I’m more relaxed because there are other things in my life. It is not the most important thing anymore.’ (Mikkel, 34, Finland, pp. 2, 3, 7).

Mikkel and the other recreational climbers criticise the justifications of everyday life existence with its focus on efficiency, rationality, professionalism, and consumption, central tenets of the *industrial and market order*. Whereas the hierarchical rule of productive performance may have negative consequences for human relations, these climbers engage the emotional body in the ‘landscape’, among ‘nice people’ and experiencing ‘fear’ safely as a frame for a new order of worth in Lofoten. Although these climbers value their primitive living in camp alongside the lifestyle climbers, their travel in space/time as tourists is a readjustment based on the critical questioning of legitimacy of everyday ‘way of living’. The difference is that they accept belonging to (capitalist) society during their ordinary life. As experienced climbers, however, their organic emotional body or ‘climbing body’ (Lewis 2000) exists as a dualist contrast to the urban body which is inorganic and passive. They acknowledge that entering a completely new world is necessary for coping with the ‘stressful’ tensions they face normally, and they know they will return from Lofoten as renewed and ‘relaxed’ people. Their performance on the wall is a way to point out the flaws and shortcomings of the conflicting orders (*industrial, market*). To recreate alternative living they must engage in ritual transformations in which they dress according to the norms, bring the right equipment, follow procedural understanding, and exhibit skills, humility and enthusiasm. This is how they enter the social world of the traditional climbing ethos and thus ‘completes’ their escape to the recreational regime for a while.

‘Friendship is very important. A certain social climate develops in these subgroups. Within the outdoor community and climbing, or climbing especially, I think that [the milieu] is relaxing and non-prestigious. It is not a gathering of big-shots or a macho atmosphere. Instead one may sit here and muddle about anything and with anybody, and only later you may find out that the one you just talked to could do any peaks!’ (Albert, male, 30, Sweden, pp. 4-5)

‘Zapffe [Norw. philosopher] said that life itself is without meaning and that it’s a waste of time to ponder too deeply about this, and that is why [I like] climbing, as movements and nature experience, a certain risk [...] My work is quite stressful which I think a lot about normally. Here the mental focus and intense body work relieve [stress]. And here I meet people, some that I have met before, it’s nice to meet friends and new ones [...] It is not about conquering the mountain, which I was preoccupied with [10 years ago] when the mountain was big and [I had] an imperialist mindset.’ (Asgeir, male, 28, Norway, pp. 2-3)

The recreational regime is adjacent to the *inspired order*; i.e. what is worthy ‘is what cannot be controlled’ and what cannot be measured in the industrial forms (Boltanski and Thévenot [1991] 2006, 159). These climbers need a break from everyday orders, not unlike the (Turnerian) structure-antistructure thesis in consumer research (Tumbat and Belk 2011). In this context, they are able to temporarily escape because the emotional body/mind union in the wall is a creative engagement (Asgeir). However, the traditional climbing ethos (Bogardus 2012; Breivik 2010), which both the lifestyle and the recreational climbers adhere to, hold equality and solidarity as central virtues which resemble the *civic worth*. They simply despise ‘bragging behaviour’ and the ‘I know everything attitude’ (Albert, Leander), and a ‘wall’ is constructed towards those that show egoistic behaviour (Danny, Birger). What they criticise is hierarchical power relationships between humans in society (*domestic order*).

Lifestyle climbers, who do not speak about ‘heroes’, describe the atmosphere as marked by close camaraderie where the tone is ‘very open’ among ‘family’ members that read a lot and are ‘awesome, brilliant and with amazing skills’ (Leander). The recreationalists are tourists who value close connections to experienced climbers (e.g. route explorers) (Albert, Asgeir). Thus, they reveal that hierarchy matters (‘local gurus have high status,’ Mikkel) in the climbing culture (*domestic worth*) which distinguish stories. The lifestyle climbers justify their (egalitarian) civic practices by referring to the lack of equality and solidarity in society while, in camp, they criticise the community’s focus on heroism. The recreationalists, desiring

embodied creative renewal (*inspired*), on the other hand, are inspired from the co-existing worth of both communion in camp (*civic*) and heroism throughout storytelling (*domestic*).

The sport regime: Humans need to engage in athletic competition (principle worth)

The eight sport climbers justify their order of worth differently than the lifestyle climbers and the recreationalists. These climbers legitimise their commitment and practices within the sports climbing traditions and are ambitious and competitive in their style.

‘Climbing is all about fun. Tenting and camping is something necessary, as when we are bored. Yes, it is fun to go with buddies and make new stories [...] We have unofficial competition, to climb hard routes, to climb the hardest route. But it is not serious stuff – like ‘I made the route!’, and then the others ‘yea-yea, sure!’ [...] It is the mastering of various and new techniques that is fun. There are always different levels of difficulties that require different techniques. For example, how to swing to one side or placing the foot higher up, and stuff like that.’ (Thor, male, 18, Norway, pp. 3-4)

‘I climb because it is fun. It is the feeling of mastering, to develop [skills], that you are able to climb harder and harder and that you master new routes, and that you climb peaks that you know very few have done [...] So, we compete, it is a little bit like ‘young boys against old boys’ although it may not be articulated. Like if we are leading a route or if I am the one doing [hard] pitches’ (Erik, male, 18, Norway, p. 3)

Thor and Erik do mostly indoor sport climbing during everyday life, and in Lofoten they focus on mastering techniques for becoming able to do increasingly harder routes, which is ‘fun’ (Thor). Athleticism is a central worth and they train hard to become fit for their sport. Whereas the lifestyle and recreational climbers adopt a more or less radical escape from the routines of society, the sport climbers can be viewed as a ‘pure expression of the central institutional and cultural imperatives of the emerging social order’ (Lyng 2004, 5). Such edgeworks are different in that the sport climbers resist and transcend the traditional climbing culture by relying on different rules and worths. Both Erik and Thor are committed to rules of sportsmanship, fun, fitness, and competition, and they criticise the (*domestic*) orders of worth of traditional climbing: egalitarian values, relationships and community, re-association with place, humility, disregard of grades, and long-term commitment (Loynes 1998; Kiewa 2002). Introducing a sport regime is an attempt to justify worth that signifies a radical shift from the

higher order principles of the community; i.e. they receive their worth in contrast to the established orders.

‘[To me climbing is] like a choreograph dance almost. Yea, I think the process is very creative. To kind of understand the movement, how to climb something [...] the reason it stuck with me is that I kind of just like the movement [...] but most people climb way below their limits, just because of they are fighting against their fair.’ (Andreas, male, Sweden, p. 4, 6)

The sport climbers introduce a focus on style (e.g. ‘technique’, ‘dance’), extrinsic values (e.g. goal of ‘mastering’ the mountain), ‘competition’ (e.g. ‘young boys against old boys’), and ‘storytelling’ (e.g. through social media). They seem to fit well within a postmodern ethos of superficial, nihilistic and materialistic actors, without ever demonstrating allegiance to any of the lifestyle sports they enjoy (Wheaton 2004). Thus, the sport climbers refute the unitary linking values of the community by criticising the egalitarian equality and solidarity rules (*civic order*) centrally held by the other regimes of the camp.

‘The younger [sport] climbers you meet, quite implicitly they are testing how hard you climb, and checking like who is the more ‘bad ass’ climber. And it is done discretely talking a little bit about what you have been doing and stories of being really high in a mountain. And in camp the hard core [heroes] will sit in and the newer climbers will be there, like maybe hoping to be noticed [...] You are not supposed to make a number of yourself. There is actually a very strict code [...] I guess it is because nobody wants to admit that [competition] is so important to them, the approval and the showing off. But it is a very central component [...] Climbers are supposed to act very humble and cool and chill. It is a taboo to admit [the hierarchical dynamics].’ (Mikkel, 34, Finland, recreationalist, p. 4-5)

The sport regime encourages respect for sporting rules, resembling worth of the *inspired world* (i.e. creative individualism) and the *market world* (i.e. competition, rivalry), introducing centrally held values from the bolted tradition into the camp. The practice of competition as ‘unofficial’ (Thor), not ‘articulated’ publicly (Erik), and the ‘necessity of camping’ (Thor), is a compromise between the *market order* and the *civic order* because the egalitarian-competitive conflict is highly controversial and must be restrained by the sport climbers if they want to stay in camp. In challenging, negotiating, and seeking social legitimacy the sport regime draws on the intersecting and segmenting worth which arises in the collective discourse on the value of adventure (Bogardus 2012). In so doing, they criticise

the conventions of the traditional world of climbing and ultimately, the status hierarchy (*domestic order*) of the climbing regime in Lofoten. The reactions towards the worth of the sports regime are quite clear among the lifestyle climbers.

‘You have got those young guys, they climb grade 8+ and they are super strong and they are cool, they are hanging out with their iPhones. I mean they are very proud all the time, they are hanging out of the cliff. Come on guys, give us a break. They just - yea!’ (Leander, male, 27, lifestyle, Australia, p. 5)

Heterogeneity in-between consumption regimes

The results show that the Lofoten camp is not a single consumption community but rather an interweaving of three regimes in which tensions, disputes and conflicts, related to society and community, are an integral part of sociality.

*** insert table 3: Heterogeneity in-between regimes of the climbing community

Table 3 shows how these three consumption regimes consist of conventions and goals, principle worth, adjacent orders, conflicting orders, compromises, and qualifying practices. The principle worths of the three regimes are different. The lifestyle regime calls attention to countercultural liberating commitments and its worth depends on conflicts towards the central orders of society. Its principle worth—‘humans and nature in sustainable co-existence’—indicates the convention of countercultural liberation which manifest practices of embodying primitiveness among the ‘family’, adhering to the institutional frame of the traditional climbing style. The countercultural and anti-materialist ‘hipness’ reflect conflicts towards market and industrial orders of society, and the market, inspired and fame orders of the community. Adjacent orders are civic (‘solidarity’), domestic (‘minimalist climbing traditions’), and green (‘nature conversations’) orders of worth. They do not suspend their principle worth and can only compromise by engaging in social activities that do not require this. The principle worth of the recreational regime is: ‘humans need nature as antistructure to recuperate’. Adjacent orders of worth are the civic (‘equality and friendship’), domestic (‘climbing traditions’), and inspired (‘embodied creativeness’) which call attention to the convention of magical communion and self-renewal with qualifying practices of adjusting an

emotional body to the traditional climbing style for receiving sublime and magical experiences. Conflicting orders of worth are industrial and market orders of everyday life, and they show versatility by compromising with both the sport climbers (accepting competition and individualism) and the lifestyle climbers (accepting sustainable solidarity). The sport regime is inspired by the competitive ethos of sport climbing and the principle worth is that ‘humans need to engage in athletic competition’. Its adjacent orders are inspired (individual achievement), fame (hard core status) and market orders (competition), which are in conflict with the lifestyle regime, and also partly with the recreational regime. The sport climbers compromise when they set aside the principle worth to make their position socially relevant in camp.

The main conflict line of the community is that between the lifestyle regime and the sport regime because the confrontation is an ongoing clash. While the sport climbers engage in ‘unofficial competition’ aiming for ‘the hardest route’ (Thor), and are ‘just interested in the moves’ (Andreas), the lifestyle climbers hate ‘show off personalities’ (Jennifer) and bragging behaviour. The effectiveness of the lifestyle regime’s justification, according to Boltanski and Thévenot ([1991] 2006), depends of their rationale and power in the field of traditional climbing, which is pervasive in the context of climbing Lofoten. The recreationalists, on the other hand, have been lifestyle climbers (Mikkel) and/or sport climbers (Asgeir) in earlier years, and they do not refer to the community as a ‘gathering of big-shots or a macho atmosphere’ (Albert). Pursuing the principle worth of antistructure recuperation, e.g. ‘wanting to climb a nice route, to be cosy and snugly’ (Albert), knowingly aware of the controversy in the community, they elaborate compromises by combining several forms of justification which reflect a versatile approach to reality. Mikkel, with many years of experience, reveals that he accepts the institutional dispute between sport versus traditional culture in the global climbing community.

Our data shows that the climbers compromise through balancing between several conflicting orders of worth, without the need to converge to either of the respective logics (Finch, Geiger, and Harkness 2017). However, such compromises are fragile and depend on the goodwill of the involved parties (Cova, Pace, and Skálén 2015). For example, compromise is not possible when climbers manifest ‘bragging behaviour’ which is regarded as a ‘taboo’ in the camp (Mikkel).

The data shows that the logic for evaluating worth in institutional settings can be unclear (Stark 2009). All the climbers face ambivalence and uncertainty as a consequence of the dynamics of criteria when they face varying social settings of the community. For

example, the sport climbers face ambivalence when they face restrictions as practicing their athletic worth in camp or the café, and the recreational climbers react when sport climbers demonstrate competitive behaviour ‘rushing’ past them in the wall. In the process of handling these conflicting situations the actors show flexibility (re)aligning their worth in a given situation. The paradoxes the climbers face in such situations show the capacity actors have juxtaposing between forms of justification, while being constrained by the imperative of remaining ‘true’ to a consistent set of requirements (Patriotta, Gond, and Schultz 2011). The recreationalist who is stuck in the wall with the ambitious sport climber makes a temporary compromise of letting the co-partner take the lead; i.e. accepting athletic worth while reducing antistructure worth. Another example are the sport climbers in camp who compromise because they want to listen to the stories of their ‘heroes’ around the camp fire; i.e. accepting the domestic and civic order while temporarily setting aside their sport worth. When the climbers face a different social context, however, they retain the worths of their respective regimes. A compromise is not possible, however, when climbers openly disrespect nature (e.g. littering) or argue for the advantages of bolted pitches. Consequently, lifestyle climbers would build arguments based on the lifestyle worth of demanding qualifying practices relevant for how to embody nature sustainably.

Discussion

This article establishes a novel framework for understanding consumption heterogeneity, the dynamics of consumption mediated conflicts and the role of compromises as the consequence of tension and conflicts. From the study of the Lofoten climbers we discuss how these three main contributions impact on consumer research.

Heterogeneity as intersection between consumption regimes

Prior research on consumption communities portrays the heterogeneous nature of consumption communities but largely omits the focus on within-community heterogeneity (Thomas, Price, and Schau 2013). The OoW-framework allows us to identify multiple regimes at play within community, and focus on the heterogeneity of orders of worth that engagement within the consumption world aims at. Existing theories on consumption heterogeneity tend to resolve around the tension between incumbents and challengers

(Thompson and Coskuner-Balli 2007; Giesler 2008; Luedicke, Thompson, and Giesler 2010; Tumbat and Belk 2011), i.e. presupposing legitimacy as discursively maintained through stakeholder compliance with a dominant logic (Patriotta, Gond, and Schultz 2011), or between stakeholders that have multiple and divergent views on authenticity, membership, and consumption (Beverland, Farrelly, and Quester 2010; Thomas, Price, and Schau 2013). This contrasts with the OoW perspective that heterogeneity is not structured by a single or dominant logic (e.g. ideology, myth), or caused by a micro-social variation in how actors ‘orient toward the community, in how they enact their community roles, and in the meanings they construct.’ (Thomas, Price, and Schau 2013, 1011). Instead, actors draw on multiple cultural-based justifications throughout consumption which contribute to multi-faceted and dynamic understandings of heterogeneity in which social order is negotiated in an ongoing basis (Boltanski and Thévenot [1991] 2006). In other words, the convention approach of Boltanski and Thevenot enables an interpretation of how actors relate to and confront a variety of structures throughout experiences while previous studies mostly have been preoccupied with how ‘grand’ structures explain heterogeneity.

The co-presence of the lifestyle, sport, and recreational regimes provide a new understanding of extraordinary community heterogeneity. We have investigated the main conflicts of the climbing community, identified the connection to underlying orders and, thus, interpreted the underlying regimes at play during disputes. For example, the principle worth of the lifestyle regime—humans and nature in sustainable co-existence—turn consumption action into a countercultural liberating endeavour, manifesting primitiveness and eco-concern in conflict with the market and industrial orders.

Recent research reports heterogeneity in extraordinary communities. Lindberg and Eide (2016) detail how practices create conflicts, tensions and negative emotions among community members visiting the extraordinary Arctic (Svalbard). While they identify four areas of conflicts across three experiential cases and argue for ‘power struggle between various cultural meaning regimes’ (Lindberg and Eide 2016, 25), they do not theorise the nature of the ‘regimes’ involved in consumption. An OoW reinterpretation of their findings could imply tensions between the lifestyle regime, i.e. constituted by the ‘hard-core’ stakeholders involved, and the recreational regime, i.e. what they refer to as ‘passive gazing tourists’. Such theorising would also apply to the study of the extraordinary ‘Tough Mudder’ experiences reported by Scott, Cayla, and Cova (2017, 39) because the role of painful experiences, i.e. as ‘escape from self’, ‘relief from self-awareness’ or ‘story of a fulfilled life’, indicates variation across consumption regimes, e.g. recreation regime (‘escape the self’) or

lifestyle regime ('practices of self-representation', 'story of a fulfilled life'). We think that 'the meaning of pain' would become more intelligible if the individualistic interpretations are supplemented with regime structures.

**** Insert figure 2 ****

Figure 2 shows how social orders during consumption (micro-social) are dynamically negotiated through the intersection between the regimes co-present (meso) and the structuring orders of society (macro). Consumers are thus always distinguished by power relationships towards other structures (Thompson 2004). When consumers face intersection between regimes, they also face intersection with orders of society because these are part of regimes. Whereas there is scant research on the multi-faceted structures related to studies of consumption (Benmecheddal and Özçaglar-Toulouse 2015), it is in-between the orders of worth present in a community, or the negotiation between them, that consumers rely on when they co-create reality during consumption. According to Boltanski and Thévenot's framework, it is not actor heterogeneity (i.e., role, meaning) or mismatch of assemblage of resources that constitute community heterogeneity (Thomas, Price, and Schau 2013; Canniford and Shankar 2013) but, rather, how the intersection between orders at play influences the relevance of resources.

The dynamics of multiple orders in consumption-mediated conflicts

Our data shows that the complex negotiations between regimes lead to consumption mediated conflicts based on multiple orders of worth that are specific for the consumption context, but which originate from a variety of conflicting order structures on a macro level. Consequently, an understanding of conflicts cannot rely on the regime's principle worth only, but must resonate the adjacent and conflicting orders to become intelligible. Our second contribution is related to the nature of consumption-mediated conflicts based on the three-level understanding of heterogeneity (see Figure 2). While the dynamics of macro and meso structures are not new as related to consumption-mediated conflicts (Husemann and Luedicke 2013), the OoW perspective focusses on the intersection of multiple orders on these levels which extends what can be regarded as the heart of consumption-mediated conflicts. The consumer's dispute about what is regarded 'worthy' during consumption relates to how the

social order of the community faces disruption of legitimacy due to the presence of competing orders.

Whereas previous studies on consumption-mediated conflicts (e.g., Kozinets 2002; Belk and Costa 1998; Beverland, Farrelly, and Quester 2010; Healy and Beverland 2016) point to the contested nature of ‘authenticity’ in consumption communities, often between core-members who strive to protect their identity investments against undesirable associations of others (Arsel and Thompson 2011), our findings expand this stream of research. What is contested among the climbers is not only based on the ‘being’ versus ‘doing’ frame or legitimate ‘authentic’ practices. Instead, what is contested is the underlying worth of the (same) consumption practices. The climbers use the same equipment, outfits, in-wall techniques, and value the same crags; but their moral, or the greater good (Boltanski and Thévenot [1991] 2006), for doing this is different. For example, Mikkel expresses a need to escape everyday life, Erik states that the athletic competition is important, while Jennifer emphasises in-nature co-existence. While previous studies emphasize conflicts originating in broader cultural issues (Kozinets and Handelman 2004; Luedicke, Thompson, and Giesler 2010), the OoW lens turns attention to tensions when principle worths are emerging and negotiated through practices. One example is when the ‘show off’ behaviour and competitive attitudes become apparent practice which creates more or less an incompatibility of worths. Whereas Jennifer, Leander, and Mikkel interpret the conflicts as one between broader institutionalised logics of the climbing culture (i.e., sport vs. traditional climbing), an OoW interpretation would call attention to the intersecting clashes between order structures (e.g., market/fame vs. civic/domestic).

Our study offers new insights to the significance of moralizing disputes of communities. Whereas Kozinets and Handelman (2004) discovered how anti-consumption activists justified their critique of mainstream consumers as morally superior, Luedicke et al. offer a rich understanding of how ‘moral polemics and adversarial conflicts are structural features of the moral protagonist myth that consumers draw from in the course of performing moralistic identity work.’ (Luedicke, Thompson, and Giesler 2010, 1029). They highlight the dualistic intersection between Hummer-enthusiasts and anti-Hummer adversaries which is caused by mythic resources and, on a macro level, ideological structures. From their perspective, consumption becomes ‘moralistic identity work’ where the enthusiasts justify their worth as “defenders of American values” while the activists justify their worth as “defenders of the collective good” (p. 1029). In contrast, our analysis calls attention to processes of justification in which legitimacy is based on the socio-history of regimes, but is

in essence a dispute between multiple orders of society. Rather than theorising consumption-mediated enactment as central for the play of worth, the OoW model calls attention to identity structures that are ‘always-already’ present in society. While Luedicke et al.’s model calls attention to consumption conflicts as a function of ideology, which often prohibits a nuanced within-community view on heterogeneity, the OoW lens provides a wider origin of the morality work that is at play. Consequently, our analysis provides interpretations of conflicts that extend the focus of the ‘moral protagonist myth’ as a source of consumer’s rhetorical means to ones that are more complex and nuanced. From the OoW perspective, the consumption-mediated conflict would call attention to how an activist regime, in competition with other regimes, would rely on the orders that structure society (Boltanski and Thévenot [1991] 2006), and how the intersection of these would define the conflict. We might speculate whether the connectedness between the market order and an activist order (Benmecheddal and Özçaglar-Toulouse 2015), and perhaps involving the inspired and green order too, might enlighten a different ‘morality play’ instead of the theorized dualist and somewhat isolated argument which the ‘moralist protagonist myth’ of Luedicke et al. (2010) provides.

Our study further extends research on intergroup dynamics (White and Argo 2011; Berger and Heath 2007; Bellezza and Keinan 2014) with new knowledge of the characteristics of core and non-core consumers. Whereas Bellezza and Keinan (2014) contribute to an understanding of community members being ‘citizens’, ‘tourists’, and ‘immigrants’, our analysis shows why the mimicry of ‘immigrants’ (sport consumers) would threaten the status of the community. In the intersection with ‘core users’ (lifestyle consumers), the principle worth of the ‘immigrants’ might pose a threat to the principle worth of the core citizens. More specifically, when the sport order of the ‘immigrant’ resembles unsolvable clashes towards the principle worth of the ‘citizens’, the symbolic distinctiveness would be threatened. According to our results, the ‘immigrants’ do not need to claim in-group status as the ‘threat’ is determined by the power dynamics in-between the regimes. For example, the sport consumers do not claim status but rather imitate the core consumers when needed (e.g., ‘blending in around the camp fire’). However, the ‘citizens’ see through the temporary imitation because they ‘know’ that the morale of the sports regime relies on justification drawn from the market order (competition, rivalry), inspired order (focus on technique), and fame order (as hard-core climbers), all of which are fundamentally in conflict with the principle worth of the lifestyle regime resembling ‘humans and nature in sustainable co-existence’. The situation does not improve when the ‘tourists’ (recreational consumers) show versatile attitude balancing between the principle worths for gaining increased

legitimacy within the community. Extending the model of Bellezza and Keinan (2014) we have discovered that it is possible that the mere presence of an ‘immigrant’ regime may pose a challenge to the community status due to the conflicting orders invoked and a ‘tourist’ regime that shows versatile compromises.

The role of compromises in consumption heterogeneity

Our analysis provides new insight into the implications of heterogeneity (Canniford and Shankar 2013; Thomas, Price, and Schau 2013; Cova, Pace, and Skålén 2015). Whereas Thomas, Price, and Schau (2013) argue that community continuity prevails when heterogeneity co-occurs with resource dependency (i.e. through frame alignment practices), Canniford and Shankar (2013) discovered ‘purifying practices’ in which consumers retain a romantic consumption of nature. Based on Boltanski and Thévenot’s framework we have discovered compromises where consumers avoid legitimacy testing; which we may refer to as (1) ‘compromise avoidance’, such as when recreationalists temporarily set aside their principle worth accepting the worth of the sport consumers. A different situation appears when consumers challenge a test’s validity or claim it may be relevant in a different world (Boltanski and Thévenot [1991] 2006). This dispute, or rather clash, appears when the lifestyle climbers cannot accept the relevance of the sport worth (market order) of the sport climbers, which result in (2) ‘composite compromise’. In this situation, the community is stuck in a conflict between the worth of the lifestyle regime (in-nature sustainability; civic, green, domestic) which is based on the traditional climbing world, and the sport regime (athletic competition; market, inspired, fame). To deal with this situation, composite objects of social meeting practices (e.g., bon fire, climbing café) are arranged to ensure the continuation of the community. A composite compromise brings together elements from several worlds for the service of the greater good, i.e. the continuation of the community. However, our data shows that arrangements of sociality are a fragile compromise because they depend on respect for the objective grounds in which they meet.

Compared to the research of Thomas et al., our results show that the community continuity does not prevail because of frame alignment practices and resource dependency (Thomas, Price, and Schau 2013), but because consumers involved in unsettling events justify their views according to legitimised principles of other regimes. The actor-network theory which Thomas et al. relies on in the study of runners, does not allow for such an analysis. One can assume that identifying consumption regimes in the running community (e.g., elite vs.

exercisers) might reveal a community with multiple regimes in which compromising worth could be an (additional) source for the continuation of the community. Furthermore, an OoW lens might have revealed the ‘purifying practices’ of Canniford and Shankar (2013) as a form of compromise between conflicting worths. For example, it can be questioned if the ‘ideological masking’ is the result of contradictions between the dualist ideologies, but rather the result of competition between different orders and structures of society. As we have explained, in an OoW optic there are not practices either ‘in-nature’ or ‘in-culture’ (Canniford and Shankar 2013; Tumbat and Belk 2011), but rather dynamic contacts between orders throughout consumption experiences which cannot be thought of as betrayals but, rather, as ‘normal’ negotiations of how ‘the worth of particular arrangements need to be justified’ (Patriotta, Gond, and Schultz 2011).

Finally, we extend the knowledge provided by Cova, Pace, and Skålén’s (2015) on composite compromises, which, according to Boltanski and Thévenot ([1991] 2006), take place when a clash between orders calls for ‘objects’ that facilitate fragile compromises. According to our interpretation, much of the sociality of the climbing community can be viewed as a ‘composite object’ because the three regimes are stuck in a conflict between structures that are unsolvable. While Cova et al.’s consumers are stuck in a conflict between a brand (Alfa Romeo) that they love (i.e., inspired order) and the company (Fiat) that had destroyed it (i.e., market order), the situation of extraordinary consumption communities such as the climbing community becomes more complex. Our analysis shows the fragility of compromises because the sport regime threatens the whole logic of traditional climbing by moving the principle worth out of the climbing hall and into a traditional climbing destination. Consequently, they essentially question the principal worth that the other regimes rely on by turning the logic of climbing into a competitive engagement. However, a compromise is unstable because it depends on the goodwill of the involved parties who can question the appropriateness of a given arrangement that favours the other involved order. As such, we think that the climbing community dynamically activates compromises and reactivates clashes due to the other regimes ‘denouncing the compromise as dishonourable’ (Boltanski and Thévenot [1991] 2006, 278). However, this calls attention to the need for more research related to the circular role of compromise in consumption heterogeneity.

Conclusion

The purpose of suggesting an OoW perspective for understanding consumption heterogeneity has been to develop a richer understanding of the constant dynamics of communities and to transcend a uni-dimensional or dualist acknowledgement of what might be at stake when tensions and challenges distinguish communities. Consequently, studying consumption heterogeneity would involve identifying challenges of intersecting orders of worth as the common ground for experiences, and to follow up how its members are able to co-exist among multiple regimes in which disruption and compromises mark consumption. We think that the OoW perspective contributes with mundane controversies to a research field that tends to focus on ‘grand’ conflicts and, as such, extend what this might mean to understanding consumption communities. According to Boltanski and Thévenot’s framework, there are no homogeneous ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’ but rather actors that rely on specific principle worths among several present in society. The OoW theory offers an alternative explanation by suggesting that the principle worths of social order, in our case those that relate to the three regimes, not only work to destabilize and cause tension, but may succeed each other, complement one another, and compete with one another (Corvellec and Hultman 2014). A basic premise, then, is that consumers engage and cope to maintain legitimacy throughout consumption, and our analysis shows that consumers legitimate their disparaging disputes in the conventions of their justified regime’s worth. Focussing on the mundane controversies are relevant for many consumption contexts, and the OoW perspective—in line with other convention theories (see e.g., Biggart and Beamish 2003)—may enable researchers to identify the justifications that are taken-for-granted and normalised. We would call for more research on the heterogeneous nature of consumption by illuminating the role of consumers and the structural constraints that they face when justifying worth and practices in-between orders of worth of society and competing consumption regimes. Furthermore, future research should try to extend the conventionalised manner in which consumption communities are understood. Our findings indicate that consumers are not primarily socially linked through a consumption activity (Cova 1997) but, rather, through consumption regime. However, this calls attention to the need for further research related to the circular role of tensions, disputes, clashes and compromise in heterogeneous communities.

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Table 1: List of participants

Pseudonym	Sex	Age	Nationality	Education/work	Years of climbing	Commitment
Espen	M	26	Norway	Engineer/oil-gas	3	Part-time, trad./sport
Asgeir	M	28	Norway	Aviation engineer/air force	10	Part-time, trad.
Lars	M	26	Denmark	Univ. student/no steady job	10	Part-time, trad./sport
Harry	M	34	Norway	Outdoor edu./coach	13	Part-time, trad.
Robin	M	25	Norway	Engineer	4	Part-time, trad./sport
Danny	M	26	USA	Public health/no steady job	7	Full-time, trad.
Erik	M	18	Norway	Student/Military (drafted)	3	Part-time, trad. sport/bouldering
Jennifer	F	24	Australia	B. of Art/no steady job	4	Full-time, trad.
Johan	M	28	Finland	Univ. student	1	Part-time, trad.
Mikkel	M	34	Finland	Univ. student	10	Part-time, trad.
Calvin	M	23	Australia	Univ. student	2	Full-time, trad.
Leander	M	27	France	Univ. student	5	Full-time, trad.
Jacob	M	23	Canada	High school/no steady job	11	Full-time, trad.
Birger	M	36	Norway	Officer edu., guiding edu./Mountain-climbing guide, no steady job	19	Full-time, trad.
Thor	M	18	Norway	Student/Military (drafted)	2	Part-time, trad. sport/bouldering
Andreas	M	[na]	Sweden	Engineer	13	Part-time, trad. sport/bouldering
Roger	M	27	Denmark	Music edu. /teaches sport climbing & kayak	4	Part-time, trad./sport
Martin	M	29	France	Architect/part time job	20	Full-time, trad.
Daniel	M	22	Germany	Univ. student	12	Part-time, trad./sport
Albert	M	30	Sweden	Teacher college/Teacher	10	Part-time, trad.

Table 2: Research phases, engagement and descriptions

Context levels	Research engagement 2014-15
<i>Macro context:</i> Socio-history, Culture	Web, books, magazines, social media Participant observations, El Chorro, Spain Mountain climbing training, El Chorro, Spain Interview/discussion; climbing guide and expert, El Chorro, Spain Interview/discussion; climbers Villa Bro/Brodalen, Sweden
<i>Meso context:</i> Lofoten, climbing villages	Participant observation, climbing cafe, Lofoten, Norway Observations at camp sites, Lofoten, Norway Interview/discussion; climbing expert on Lofoten Conversations; tourists and inhabitants, Lofoten, Norway Interview; manager, Lofoten DMO, Lofoten, Norway
<i>Micro context:</i> Consumers, Experiencescape practices	In-depth interview, 20 informants on-site, Lofoten, Norway Observation, camp sites in Lofoten, Norway Observation, climbing café/pub Written narratives (22 pieces) of new climbing routes, climbing cafe

Table 3: Heterogeneity in-between regimes of the climbing community

	Recreational regime	Sport regime	Lifestyle regime
Conventions and goals	Recreational climbers: magical communion, self-renewal, transformation.	Sport climbers: athleticism, competition, exceptional performance, status.	Lifestyle climbers: primitiveness, counter-cultural, anti-materialist.
Principle worth	Humans need nature as antistructure to recuperate.	Humans need to engage in athletic competition.	Humans and nature in sustainable co-existence.
Adjacent orders with empirical illustrations	<i>Civic</i> : Equality and friendship (Albert). <i>Inspired</i> : Emotional embodied creativeness in nature (Asgeir). <i>Domestic</i> : Respect for heroes, minimalist and sustainable climbing values.	<i>Market</i> : Competition, rivalry (Erik). <i>Inspired</i> : Individual mastering of technique (Thor). <i>Fame</i> : Receive status as 'hard core' (Mikkel).	<i>Civic</i> : Solidarity and welfare among 'family' (Jennifer, Leander). <i>Green</i> : Conservation of environment (Calvin). <i>Domestic</i> : Respect for minimalist and sustainable climbing values.
Conflicting orders with empirical illustrations	<i>Industrial, market</i> : Necessary to escape regularly from efficiency, rationality, professionalism of everyday life (Mikkel).	<i>Domestic</i> : Insult the authoritarian 'old fashion' values of traditional climbing (e.g., camaraderie, lifestyle, minimalism, commitment) (Mikkel*). <i>Civic</i> : Disrespect egalitarianism, solidarity, commitment	<i>Industrial</i> : Ordinary life and people are silly (Calvin). <i>Market, inspired, fame</i> : Dislike the super strong, cool, bragging young guys (Leander).
Compromises	Versatilely balancing between worth of sport and lifestyle regime to increase legitimacy. They have prior experience with both justifications.	Temporarily set aside sport regime worth to 'blending in' in camp. Trying to make their position socially relevant.	Join other climbers in social gatherings, but do not accept sport climbers' worth. Emphasise justification of traditional climbing logics.

(*Mikkel is a recreational climber who have previous experiences as both sport and lifestyle climber)

Figure 1: Findings overview

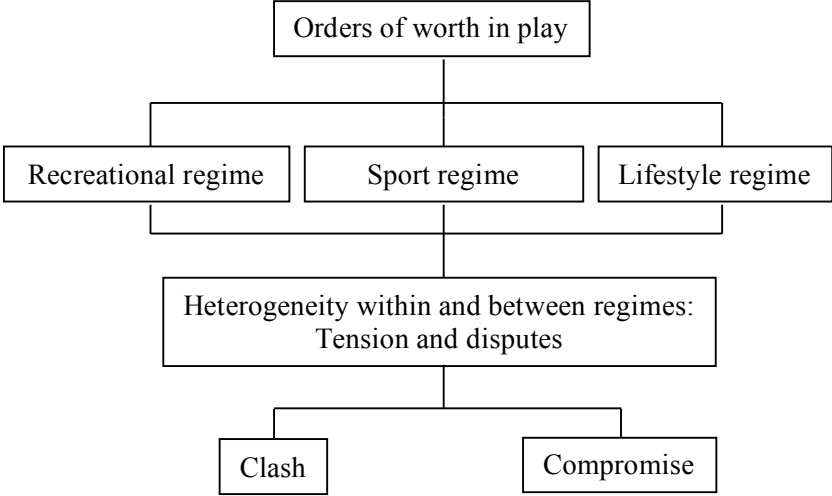


Figure 2: Orders of worth, regime and community's social order

