

Editorial

The current issue includes an article *'Experience and Sustainable Consumption'* by Tove A. Rasmussen and a review by Yves Laberge of the book *'Methods of Sustainability research in the Social Sciences'* edited by Frances Fahy & Henrike Rau.

The article on 'Experience and Sustainable Consumption' introduces an alternative understanding of consumption drawing on modern hedonism and experience-orientation of consumerism towards values and symbols providing meaningfulness and identity. The author touches on the emotional aspects of consumption and how ambivalences may be resolved by dream-like fantasies not involving any kind of actions apart from the feeling of bad conscience, expressed by irony and self-irony. The re-reading of existing studies reveals the inherent dilemmas in experience-based sustainable consumption. Drawing attention to the time consuming aspect of experience-based consumption and the inability of consumers to make sacrifices by renouncing to consume, the author questions the prospects for making consumption more sustainable, apart from handling the feeling of guilt by atoning to emotionally gratifying sustainable consumption. As such self-reflexion is linked to emotional control of consumption, although it may be linked to ritualized rational concerns for future generations. The author argues that understanding the emotional aspects of consumption may be a possible path to understand the discrepancy between values and actions, and the need for breaking individual inaction by calling for collective responsibility and action.

The book review touches on the definition of sustainable development and the operational approach to sustainability as being about achieving harmony between or balancing the environmental, economic and social dimensions of sustainability. Balancing the three dimensions of sustainability seems to be an ever-present challenge to innovation and changes directed towards more sustainable futures. The need for balancing environmental, economic and social sustainability in an equal way is by most scholars seen as the true approach to sustainability. In real life, economic sustainability often takes precedence over environmental and social sustainability. Maximising one pillar of sustainability in comparison to pursuing a more balanced approach to sustainability, calls for developing new practical approaches to sustainability research. Taking a more balanced approach to sustainability calls for methodologies capable of handling conflicts surrounding values, strategies and actions for sustainability. Methodologies for the sociology of the environment are welcome and certainly needed to overcome the barriers to sustainability.

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Editor