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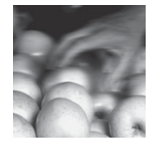

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Framing sufficiency: Strategies of environmental non-governmental organisations towards reduced material consumption

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Abstract

The efficiency approach of moving towards sustainable consumption through mainly technological solutions, which dominates environmental policymaking, has overall failed to reduce the adverse environmental impacts caused by unsustainable consumption patterns. Increasingly, it is recognised that efficiency needs to be coupled with sufficiency, which aims to reduce absolute levels of consumption. While the public policy realm continues to be linked to the efficiency approach, environmental non-governmental organisations have an important role in promoting sufficiency-oriented lifestyles and culture. Through interviews, participant observations and a media review, we analysed campaign strategies applied by environmental non-governmental organisations to promote sufficiency in material goods through less use, increased care and maintenance of products. This article contributes with insights on how sufficiency activities could attract a broader target group, as well as the various challenges and contradictions resulting from this process. To explain these challenges and contradictions, this article creates a conceptual distinction between market- and non–market-based sufficiency activities. The distinction elucidates how environmental non-governmental organisations are promoting activities ranging from those that can be applied within the current market arrangements

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to those dealing with social relations and non-commercial values beyond market exchange in order to gain cultural resonance.

Keywords
Sufficiency, sustainable consumption, Sweden, environmental non-governmental organisations, framing

Introduction

Critical sustainability researchers argue that addressing the ecological damage caused by unsustainable consumption patterns requires not only technological innovation and efficiency in production processes but also absolute reductions in resource use (e.g., Alfredsson et al., 2018; Jackson, 2017; Schneider et al., 2010). There are two overarching approaches in moving towards more sustainable consumption: efficiency and sufficiency (Sachs, 2015). Efficiency refers to reducing environmental impacts by improving energy and resource use in production processes, mainly through technological advancements (Schneidewind and Zahrnt, 2014). Efficiency-based approaches have dominated environmental policies and politics in recent decades but have largely been ineffective at achieving sustainable consumption (Bengtsson et al., 2018) and will likely continue to be insufficient on their own (Spangenberg and Lorek, 2019). This is due to the lack of historical evidence that technological advancements have decoupled production and consumption from environmental harms at the scale needed to avoid dangerous environmental breakdown (Hickel and Kallis, 2019. Importantly, such decoupling remains unrealistic for the foreseeable future (Jackson, 2017). Meanwhile, sufficiency-based approaches fundamentally challenge current consumption levels and lifestyle choices, in contrast to efficiency strategies which assume maintained levels of consumption, albeit at lower levels of resource use (Gorge et al., 2015). While circular economy, meaning continuous recycling and reuse of materials, has gained increasing popularity (Bocken and Short, 2016), it cannot be successful in reducing environmental harm unless total consumption demand is curtailed (Korhonen et al., 2018). In fact, if we are to fulfil the Paris Agreement (Alfredsson et al., 2018) and ensure 'a good life for all within planetary boundaries' (O'Neill et al., 2018), it is necessary to deploy sufficiency strategies among relatively affluent societies and social groups.

As mainstream political visions and governance are more closely associated with prevailing efficiency approaches, stronger promotion of sufficiency-related lifestyles and activities by environmental non-governmental organisations (ENGOs) forms an important step towards absolute reductions in consumption (Sekulova et al., 2013). Moreover, as ENGOs are often considered legitimate and trustworthy actors, they tend to have more leverage to promote alternative lifestyles and values (Lorek and Spangenberg, 2014), including engagement in and providing opportunities for sufficiency (Lorek, 2018). Thus, ENGOs are likely to be significant players helping sufficiency approaches and strategies to become more influential in working towards sustainable consumption.

There is a rich literature on how ENGOs mobilise their members and non-members to alter their consumption of specific products (rather than reduce their overall levels of consumption). For instance, research on political consumerism reveals how ENGOs engage the public in boycotting (Zorell, 2019) or buycotting (Boström et al., 2019) specific products and companies. There has been less research on ENGOs' efforts to promote sufficiency-oriented lifestyles and culture, such as fostering changes in people's use, care and maintenance of products to reduce environmental and other societal harm. Welcome exceptions include studies on grassroots movements for degrowth (D'Alisa et al., 2013; Forno and Graziano, 2014), local ENGOs promoting voluntary simplicity (Bossy, 2014), voluntary simplicity as a political movement (Zamwel et al., 2014), repair movements as a form of political and ecological action (Graziano and Trogal, 2017) and relations between repair practices and social change (Schmid, 2019).

The existing literature provides valuable insights into sufficiency-related movements and their characteristics, as well as the motivations among individuals to reduce their consumption (e.g., Alexander and Ussher, 2012). Still, they give primary attention to groups and individuals that are already strongly committed to social and environmental issues. Less is understood about ongoing ENGO strategies that seek to promote sufficiency in material goods to a broader target audience, which is what we aim to provide in this article. Specifically, our purpose is to provide an understanding of different strategies – argumentative as well as practical – that ENGOs apply in their campaigns, especially through less use, increased care and maintenance of products. Here, we understand 'broader audience' as those whose consumption-related activities are not driven by a strong ethos of reducing environmental or social harms.

In the analysis, we will show how ENGOs – both consciously and unconsciously – adjust how they frame sufficiency activities to gain increased cultural resonance and how ENGOs perceive and handle possible contradictions and trade-offs between various framings of sufficiency. In order to explain these tensions, we create a conceptual distinction between market- and non–market-based sufficiency activities.

Sweden, where our empirical cases are situated, has often claimed to be and has internationally been perceived as one of the most environmentally friendly countries in the world (Hult, 2017), while historically focusing on technological solutions in production processes to reduce environmental harms (Isenhour, 2010). However, like other countries, Sweden faces challenges concerning high levels of resource use caused by excessive consumption (WWF, 2020), making it a useful setting for this study.

In the next section of this article, we provide an overview of the sufficiency literature, establishing non–market- and market-based sufficiency activities, examined through the analytical lenses of framing theory and resource mobilisation. We then proceed to describe the empirical cases and the methodology, followed by the results based on our analysis. Finally, we summarise the main results and discuss the implications of our findings for the field of consumer studies.

Definitions and analytical framework

Sufficiency

There have been numerous attempts at defining and mapping the meanings associated with sufficiency (e.g., Alcott, 2007; Alexander, 2015; Fawcett and Darby, 2018; Fischer and Grießhammer, 2013; Gorge et al., 2015; Hayden, 2014; Moore and Rees, 2013; Princen, 2005; Schäpke and Rauschmayer, 2014; Schneidewind and Zahrnt, 2014; Spangenberg and Lorek, 2019; Speck and Hasselkuss, 2015; Spengler, 2016). Table 1 summarises our interpretations of common dimensions from these definitions.

Sufficiency's main tenets draw inspiration from various approaches outside the sustainable consumption field, such as steady-state economy (Daly, 1991), prosperity without growth (Jackson, 2017), doughnut economics (Raworth, 2017) and degrowth (Schneider et al., 2010). Similar to sufficiency, these approaches argue that decoupling economic activities from environmental harms is unlikely to occur at the scale needed and, instead, prioritise resource limits, social justice and well-being over consumption (Wiedmann et al., 2020). In this article, we chose to use the concept 'sufficiency' because it has been widely used within sustainable consumption and post-growth literature to describe lifestyle changes towards a culture of less consumption (e.g., Geels et al., 2015; Wiedmann et al., 2020). As this study is centred on exploring how ENGOs can stimulate such changes, we argue that sufficiency is a particularly relevant analytical term.

Distinguishing between market- and non–market-based sufficiency activities

Regarding specific activities, Speck and Hasselkuss (2015: 5) view sufficiency as 'linked to notions of sharing, reusing, recycling, repairing or changing behaviour to prolong the lifespan of goods'. Others stress that sufficiency activities include extending the life span

Table 1. Dimensions of sufficiency.

Sufficiency dimension	Description
Reducing total material and energy consumption	Advocating for a reduction in overall levels of consumption of materials and energy among relatively affluent social groups
Upper limits and lower thresholds	Acknowledging upper biophysical limits (e.g., material resource extraction) and lower social thresholds (e.g., universal access to health care and basic income security) to ensure a decent quality of life
Strengthening social justice	Pointing out that it is primarily the relatively affluent who must decrease their consumption level in order to leave resources and environmental space for those who are under-consuming
Well-being beyond materialism	Paying attention to different aspects of well-being and non-material values as contributing to a 'good life' (e.g., stronger community engagement). Material possessions beyond a certain level are viewed as secondary in terms of achieving life satisfaction

of material goods through repairing and reusing (Bocken and Short, 2016), sharing (Reichel, 2018) and reducing the frequency of use (Fischer and Grießhammer, 2013).

While activities related to sufficiency may connote self-provisioning and do-it-yourself (DIY), sufficiency does not mean doing without markets and businesses. For example, enterprises that repair items could be part of sufficiency-oriented politics and societies (Schneidewind and Zahrnt, 2014). With this in mind, we put forward a conceptual distinction between what we call 'market-' and 'non–market-' based sufficiency activities (cf. Forno and Graziano, 2014). We argue that this can bring further clarity – for the research community as well as ENGOs – concerning strategies towards reduced material consumption.

Before elaborating on the specific characteristics of market- and non–market-based sufficiency activities, a clarification of what we mean by markets is warranted. By markets, we mean the exchange of goods and services using money as the medium of exchange. We do recognise that market transactions go beyond purely economic exchange and can include a broader range of aspects such as bartering and time banking (Gibson-Graham, 2006). In this article, however, we use a narrower understanding of what constitutes market exchange.

With the term 'market-based sufficiency', we here refer to alternative forms of consumption which can reduce absolute material consumption, provided by businesses through markets using money as the medium of exchange. Activities include repair services and reuse of products through second-hand and sharing services (Bocken and Short, 2016). In market-based sufficiency, social relations are a product of economic exchange in markets. Although the social relation might go well beyond being a commercial one (Forno and Graziano, 2014), for example, buying repair services from the local repair shop out of care for its owner, it nevertheless hinges on some sort of economic exchange for it to be established. Market-based sufficiency activities can in principle be provided by businesses with alternative operational principles, such as non-profits, social enterprises and consumer cooperatives (Khmara and Kronenberg, 2018), as well as more conventional businesses, which we do not distinguish between here.

By 'non–market-based sufficiency', on the other hand, we mean activities which occur outside markets, such as DIY (e.g., repairing items), voluntary work, swapping and refraining from buying (anti-consumption). Typically, these activities go beyond consumption as an economic activity, focusing instead on non-commercial values, such as community engagement and cooperation (Lorek, 2018), and use value rather than exchange value. Another characteristic of non–market-based sufficiency is that it involves social dimensions that often focus on well-being derived from social relations and where these social interactions *are not dependent on economic exchange*. Instead, well-being is generated externally to markets via, for example, collective repairing (Graziano and Trogal, 2017), voluntary work or self-provisioning (Lorek, 2018).

Framing and resource mobilisation

As mentioned above, ENGOs can be important actors for spreading sufficiency activities. However, ENGOs often have limited material resources and power, particularly compared

to corporate and state organisations. In the absence of formal power and resources, the perspective of resource mobilisation, well established in the social movement literature (e.g., D'Alisa et al., 2013; Monforte, 2014), sheds light on how ENGOs can mobilise themselves and use various argumentative framings in order to reach a wider target audience (i.e., gain cultural resonance). The notions of resource mobilisation and framings of social movements are thus useful conceptual tools for understanding how ENGOs can make sufficiency activities gain wider cultural resonance among their members and non-members.

As ENGOs are well aware (see the analysis below), how people perceive various versions of sufficiency depends to a significant extent on how engagement in sufficiency activities is 'framed' (cf. portrayed and motivated) – as plain fun, as part of a wider political protest or as the basis for a warm, personal moral glow, for instance (cf. Brown, 2013). As with all attempts at stimulating changes in lifestyles, policies or cultural practices, sufficiency promotion by ENGOs involves strategies of framing the aspired changes in ways that gain wide cultural acceptance or 'resonance' (Benford and Snow, 2000).

The analytical tool of framing rests on the recognition that people or groups can never perceive a phenomenon, such as sufficiency, from a view from nowhere, in its unfiltered entirety (Klintman, 2019). Instead, we all understand, embrace or reject notions based on how they are framed (Rein, 2000). This is done through implicit or explicit diagnoses of, for instance, the nature of the problem and its causes, prognoses about what efforts would reduce the problem and motivational framing efforts to gain cultural resonance (Benford and Snow, 2000). Applied to sufficiency, these framing tasks may refer to narratives about why a change to a sufficiency-oriented culture would be beneficial, what problem(s) it would solve and whether sufficiency endeavours are primarily about morality, politics, aesthetics, well-being or trendiness (Klintman, 2006).

When framing processes are strategic, aimed at a particular goal – such as increased sufficiency orientation among consumers and society as a whole – they can be seen as one part of the resource mobilisation of the ENGO (Heaney and Rojas, 2014). One framing strategy that is especially relevant to our case is frame extension (McNall and Basile, 2014). Frame extension refers to efforts to *extend*, for instance, an ENGO's framing of environmental concern to include poor working conditions in factories in the countries where consumer goods are produced. Or they might extend their framing of sufficiency to include happiness and well-being, in addition to the suggested environmental benefits. Extending to include social and economic sustainability is common among some ENGOs that had initially focused on ecological sustainability. However, framing strategies aimed at resource mobilisation sometimes entail tensions, inconsistencies and conflicts between the interests involved, to which we will pay particular attention.

Empirical cases and methodology

Case studies

The selection of organisations was based on Boström et al. (2015) definition of ENGOs. Accordingly, the ENGOs eligible for selection needed to be non-profit, environmentally

focused organisations with voluntary members or participants. The ENGOs considered for selection also needed to engage in some form of campaign activities. 'Campaigns' refer to ENGO activities that (1) have a purpose, (2) aim at a relatively broad audience, (3) have a specifically defined time limit for when the activities occur and (4) include a set of communication activities (Rogers and Storey, 1987). Finally, the ENGOs had to have the main responsibility for arranging and promoting campaigns focused on sufficiency in material goods through less use, increased care and maintenance of products.

An initial screening was made by ENGOs that promote sustainable consumption in the context of Sweden. Subsequently, contact was made with four organisations to inquire about ongoing or planned campaigns related to sufficiency. Based on the aforementioned selection criteria, we identified (1) the Swedish Society for Nature and Conservation (SSNC) and (2) Responsible Consumption (RC) as the only cases fulfilling all of the requirements. Although they represent two contrasting organisations in terms of size and organisational structure, which is likely to influence the operationability of their campaigns, these cases can nevertheless bring insights concerning the dilemmas ENGOs face in promoting sufficiency-related activities. Below is a brief summary of the two ENGOs and their respective campaigns.

The SSNC and the Fix the Stuff Campaign. The SSNC is a non-profit organisation and is the largest and oldest environmental ENGO in Sweden. The organisation has over 200,000 members and employs approximately 170 people, who are mostly based in the Stockholm and Gothenburg secretariats. It operates on national, regional and local levels, focusing on production and consumption as well as nature conservation. Modes of advocacy work include campaigns targeted towards individuals and organisations, political lobbying and corporate partnerships and dialogues. Nationwide campaigns, such as Fix the Stuff, are centrally coordinated by employed staff, and 'on-the-ground' work is done by volunteers working in local chapters.

The Fix the Stuff campaign is aimed at increasing the lifespan of material goods, such as clothing, furniture and electronic equipment. Fix the Stuff was the theme of 2018 for SSNC's Environmentally Friendly Week, an annual event that takes place during the first week of October. Since its start in the early 1990s, the theme of the Environmentally Friendly Week has changed continuously, including activities such as promotion of eco-labelled food and raising awareness around chemicals in products. Compared to previous themes, Fix the Stuff was new in its focus on reducing consumption of material goods.

RC, buy nothing day and white Monday. RC is a non-profit organisation founded in 2008 and has its headquarters in Stockholm. The organisation has three employees and around 60 volunteers. RC works across Sweden, focusing on education and raising awareness around sustainable consumption and production. RC, together with several individuals, is the official representative of Buy Nothing Day in Sweden. Buy Nothing Day started in Vancouver, Canada, during the early 1990s and has since spread to over 60 countries. It is a protest movement against Black Friday, the embodiment of excessive consumption, and is practised by abstaining from buying anything for 24 h on a specific day in November

each year. In the Swedish context, Buy Nothing Day occurs on the same day as Black Friday.

RC is also the official representative and played a leading role in a related campaign, White Monday, together with the founder of White Monday. Initiated by an individual in Sweden in 2017, White Monday occurs on the Monday before Black Friday and is centred on a number of companies offering discounted prices on services that increase the lifespan of material goods such as clothing and electrical equipment. In addition to offering 'circular services' (e.g., repair services and second-hand products), all the 40 companies partaking in White Monday vowed (in 2018) not to do any advertising on Black Friday.

Method and materials

During the autumn of 2018, we interviewed a total of 21 respondents through nine semi-structured individual interviews and two focus groups consisting of four and five interviewees, respectively. Along with volunteers and employees of the ENGOs, we also interviewed the founder of White Monday and the official spokesperson of Buy Nothing Day. There was a high ratio of women among our interviewees, with 17 being women between the ages of 20 and 65 years. This is mostly because the majority of the volunteers were women among both organisations, and the employees working with promoting and coordinating the respective campaigns were all women. We conducted the interviews face to face or through Skype. Interviewees were selected either because they had vital insight into the campaign characteristics or they were engaged in different promotional activities. The interviews were conducted in Swedish, recorded and transcribed, and quotes have been translated by the authors. In Section 4, the interviewees are represented by a randomly selected capital letter together with the affiliated organisation and campaign. We asked about the aim of the campaign, the intended target group and potential challenges of the campaign's focus. Our questions aimed at understanding the ENGO representatives' perception of which target group(s) the campaigns intended to reach (e.g., people who are strongly committed to environmental issues or a broader audience). However, we did not pose any questions to those participating in the campaign activities about their norms and values. Therefore, whether or not the ENGOs were successful in reaching and influencing the perceived target audience is outside the scope of this study. It should be noted that neither the interviewees nor the campaigns actually used the word 'sufficiency', but instead used terms such as 'sustainable consumption', 'reduced consumption' or 'circular consumption'. However, based on the literature on sufficiency activities, we have interpreted these terms as sufficiency-oriented in the analysis.

In addition, we conducted participant observations to better understand how sufficiency activities were promoted on the ground. We attended four events during the autumn of 2018, where we took field notes and photos, and held short conversations with organisers and a few participants. These conversations were not recorded. The information gathered gave us a greater insight into how the promotion of sufficiency activities was materialised. All the events we visited were located around the Stockholm–Lake Mälaren region and affiliated with the Fix the Stuff campaign as neither Buy Nothing Day nor White Monday involved any physical activities.

Furthermore, we conducted a review of media activities related to each campaign. The review was initiated through an online search which generated around 65 newspaper articles, opinion articles and TV interviews. This shed further light on how the campaigns were framed and their intended target audiences.

Regarding ethical considerations, we have consulted the legal texts concerning research involving human subjects. Our informants have only been asked – and responded to–questions in their capacity of volunteers or employees in the organisations. Personal issues were not discussed, including those that are under the category of sensitive personal data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religion or health, or the like) for which formal ethical approval would be needed, according to EU, 9:1 'Processing of special categories of personal data'. Interviewees consented to participate in the research and to use quotes from the interviews.

Altogether, we unpack analytical factors that could be further applied to ENGOs in other countries and contexts. In particular, our analysis brings further understanding on ENGOs' efforts to reach beyond changing consumer purchasing through boycotting and buycotting to activities around care, maintenance and less use of products among relatively affluent societies and social groups where reducing consumption is politically and culturally contested.

Analysis and results

This section begins by examining two methods of diffusion that the studied ENGOs deployed when promoting non–market-based sufficiency activities, followed by an analysis of the challenges they faced. The subsequent section is devoted to the first strategy of framing non–market-based sufficiency as desirable in order to gain cultural resonance. Lastly, we examine a second strategy of extending the framing – from non–market- to market-based sufficiency activities – to reach a broader target audience and the resulting contradictions this entails, such as undermining the sufficiency dimension of questioning modern consumer culture.

Diffusing non–market-based sufficiency and its challenges

As recognised in the literature on ENGOs' resource mobilisation, a major challenge is how to diffuse the values, knowledge and practices that ENGOs promote in ways that entail substantial cultural resonance (Klintman, 2006). Some of the literature observes that ENGOs, depending on their resources, sometimes have to adapt their values and activities to the available resources, rather than the other way around (Benford and Snow, 2000).

It became evident during the interviews, participant observations and the media review that the two ENGOs had deployed different methods of diffusing non–market-based sufficiency activities as a way of mobilising resources. In the Fix the Stuff campaign, the SSNC strongly emphasised disseminating the skills required to repair different items. This was done in part by setting up a specific campaign website offering many suggestions on how to carry out DIY repair for a wide range of goods, including electrical equipment,

furniture and clothing. During the actual local and regional campaign activities, tools were made available for visitors to use to repair their own items. Workshops were also held where visitors could learn how to repair things. In addition to arranging activities related to DIY repair, local and regional chapters of the SSNC wrote opinion articles for different media outlets to increase public awareness of the need to repair things, instead of buying new ones and to inform the public about their various planned activities.

Meanwhile, RC had no physical activities related to Buy Nothing Day. They limited their efforts to approaching various media outlets in order to increase awareness about the event. For example, they used social media, submitted opinion articles to daily newspapers and participated in radio and TV interviews. Whereas the SSNC focused more on improving people's skills and knowledge about how to carry out their own repairs, RC concentrated more on campaign activities aiming to increase awareness of issues related to excessive consumption. One reason for these differences could be that the smaller RC chose the less resource-demanding strategy of using mass media and social media to increase general awareness about the downsides of excessive consumption. The far bigger SSNC, on the other hand, with more than 200,000 members, could engage in hosting physical activities and workshops aimed at practically helping people develop the skills needed to repair things that they own.

During the interviews with employees and members of both the SSNC and RC, it became evident that promoting non–market-based sufficiency activities came with a set of challenges, which are summarised in Table 2. In the case of the SSNC, having a campaign focusing on repairing, which diverged from previous campaigns focusing on promotion of eco-labelled products and foods, was considered a particularly challenging theme:

> *It's easier for people to embrace [the previous campaigns focused on organic food]. It's so much easier to buy a banana with [an organic] label compared to not buying it at all. Here, we want to work in another way. That's the big difference. It also requires more effort from people: 'Now I'll sit down to mend my shirt'. That's a more challenging theme in a sense* (SSNC - G).

Table 2. Perceived challenges related to non–market-based sufficiency activities.

Organisation and campaign	Challenges
SSNC and Fix the Stuff	Challenging theme in comparison to previous campaigns
	Requires a certain skill set as well as time to carry out the repairs
	Hard to reach the 'average' consumer
	Draws negative connotations (i.e., poverty)
RC and Buy Nothing Day	Does not provide alternatives for those who wish to buy something on Black Friday
	Considered not to be completely aligned with RC's organisational identity and purpose

Note: SSNC, Swedish Society for Nature and Conservation; RC, responsible consumption.

In addition, as highlighted by one of the SSNC members, DIY repair requires individual engagement and time to perform the activity, which in itself is a potential obstacle: '*It can take time to repair and maintain things. It takes a new way of thinking, which is a transition that takes a long time'* (SSNC - Q).

In light of the fact that DIY repair requires time, both in terms of carrying out the repairs and acquiring the skills needed to do so, several members explained that repairing could be particularly challenging for 'average consumers', that is, groups with relatively high consumption capabilities but limited leisure time.

Whereas some groups in society might associate DIY repair with the social signalling of competences in ways that may impress others, worries about the opposite framings of DIY repair often emerged during the interviews. Interviewees stressed how activities of repairing one's items run the risk of connoting a poor Sweden, pre-industrialisation and a general sense of impoverishment: *'Perhaps people think – in a traditional way – that fixing, mending, repairing and patching, that's for people who have been through war, poverty or misery'* (SSNC - R).

As for RC, the challenge of promoting Buy Nothing Day was that it offers no alternatives to those who want or need to buy a product on that specific day:

> *Our ambition has been to be a spokesperson for White Monday as a supplement to Buy Nothing Day. [This is] because we have met the criticism and the wishes from consumers: 'If I'm not allowed to buy anything on Black Friday but I still need to get Christmas gifts, what should I do?' Well, then the solution is White Monday* (RC - S).

Representatives of RC further pointed out that campaigning for Buy Nothing Day and the anti-consumerist message associated with it is in fact not completely aligned with RC's identity and purpose:

> *It's important to emphasise that we support one day a year, Buy Nothing Day. Our name isn't 'No Consumption'. Our name is Responsible Consumption. Because we wish to address over-consumption, and the huge volumes of consumption of today aren't sustainable […] We don't say that we should abolish consumption as a whole when we say 'Responsible Consumption'* (RC - S).

Thus, the promotion of Buy Nothing Day and the Fix the Stuff campaign carried a set of different challenges. The challenges of advocating DIY repair are tied more to the activity, while the challenges of Buy Nothing Day revolve around the seemingly contradictory nature of RC embracing a campaign with a strong anti-consumerist message.

Framing non–market-based sufficiency as desirable

The aforementioned methods of diffusing sufficiency and their related challenges are closely linked to strategies for framing sufficiency as desirable and for gaining cultural resonance (Klintman, 2006). Endeavours to frame sufficiency as desirable, however, move more profoundly into the reasons for sufficiency that are likely to best correspond

with people's – or the target groups' – current interests and values. Through talking with different SSNC members and analysing written materials (e.g., the official campaign website and news articles), we found that the organisation had adopted a strategy to emphasise how DIY repair can foster feelings of joy and a sense of accomplishment: *'Because that's what we have tried to emphasise in this campaign, that people should feel the joy of repairing things'* (SSNC - G).

Also, SSNC members associated DIY repair with a number of desirable outcomes, such as saving money and an increased sense of community and well-being, as well as a better environment. Although interviewees saw the reduction of environmental impacts as an important benefit of repairing, the discussion often centred on the positive social aspects of DIY repair. Interviewees also mentioned that sustainable products are more expensive and that DIY repair can be a way for low-income groups to consume more sustainably:

> *This thing with environmental issues and the environmental movement, it becomes labelled as a question for the middle or upper classes that have money and time for consuming consciously. But when it comes to not consuming or consuming less, having a clothing swap or mending, that's actually something everyone can be involved in, depending on time, of course* (SSNC - I).

In the case of RC, besides the environmental gains of reducing the consumption of material goods, such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions and waste, the strategy of connecting sufficiency to a number of different desirable outcomes was less pertinent. In contrast, as discussed further below, other representatives of Buy Nothing Day coupled the campaign's anti-consumerist message with notions of increased happiness as well as reduced stress and financial debt resulting from curtailing material consumption.

Extending the framing – from non–market- to market-based sufficiency activities

In Section 2.3, we described how ENGOs can extend their original framing of one concern to include another to become more influential, sometimes as a response to perceived interests among the general public. While framing non–market-based activities as desirable can be seen as one strategy to reach a broader target audience, the two ENGOs had also extended their framing by adopting complementary campaigns or campaign elements. These complementary campaigns and campaign elements are geared towards consumer activities that can be considered sufficiency-oriented. In the case of RC, this was done by embracing an already existing campaign, White Monday. It entails promoting the purchase of second-hand goods and repair, rental and sharing services through a collective arrangement of discounted prices on that specific day. These offers were enabled through collaboration with various businesses, where RC took a leading role in promoting White Monday through various media outlets.

White Monday can be situated within the current market economic logic, promoting alternative forms of consumption provided by businesses, while Buy Nothing Day, with its anti-consumerism message, operates outside of it. However, there is a two-sided relationship between Buy Nothing Day and White Monday. On the one hand, Buy Nothing Day necessitates refraining from participation in Black Friday. On the other hand, while White Monday also critiques Black Friday, it deflects critical questions arising from the promotion of Buy Nothing Day:

> *White Monday is a solution to all those questions that always come up when we say 'buy nothing' [through the Buy Nothing Day campaign]. 'I'm single, I have little money and shouldn't I be allowed to buy a Christmas gift [when it's on discount]?' White Monday is an answer to that: 'Yes of course, you can do that. There [on the website of White Monday] you can consume but in a circular way.' So, the consumer doesn't need to analyse how the product has been selected, if it's good or bad for the environment* (RC - S).

As opposed to the challenging anti-consumerist message of Buy Nothing Day, the employee at RC further explained how the message of White Monday is easier to convey as it is not an anti-consumption campaign: *'It's an easier message to the everyday consumer because an alternative, a solution, is offered. It's not that I'm not allowed to consume, but instead: "Oh, if I consume this, I can do it with a good conscience"'* (RC - S).

In relation to other movements and campaigns opposing Black Friday, Buy Nothing Day, as explained by one of its spokespersons, was considered different as it tries to bring in aspects of reduced working time as a way to mitigate indirect rebound effects, for example, the money saved from not buying during Black Friday might be spent on a flight abroad, cancelling the initial gain of reduced emissions. Furthermore, according to one of the interviewees, Buy Nothing Day carries a far-reaching message, highlighting the adverse environmental and social impacts:

> *We usually divide it [the downsides of consumption] into a number of different parts: the environmental, happiness, stress and lack of time. Then, we also have the whole thing with increasing debts. By maintaining the mass consumerist norms in society, we put pressure on those who actually can't afford to go into debt in order to buy Christmas presents and other things [...] We usually say that Buy Nothing Day is the starting point for a sustainable lifestyle that doesn't exhaust people or the environment* (Buy Nothing Day - U).

In effect, Buy Nothing Day questions the well-being aspects of material consumption, seeking to promote alternative ways of increasing well-being beyond markets and material consumption, which could be contrasted with the market-based approach of White Monday. Although White Monday promotes sufficiency-related activities, it does not challenge consumerism as such nor its potential effects on well-being. Furthermore, the notion that White Monday intends to make it easier to consume more sustainably entails forgoing questions of why one should consume to begin with.

A similar strategy of combining market- and non–market-based sufficiency activities could also be identified in the SSNC case as they added an element in the Fix the Stuff campaign that promotes commercial local repair shops and makers. This could be viewed as a way to address the challenges in Table 2, which are exclusively linked to DIY repair. It is worth noting that the notions of desirability identified and discussed in Section 4.2 are interlinked with DIY repair and not-to-repair services.

Meanwhile, the only challenge related to repair services we identified was the high monetary cost of repairing. The interviewees regarded DIY repair as an activity that can be performed across different income levels as opposed to the more costly option of using repair services. Nevertheless, in a post-industrial high-income country such as Sweden, where people know less and less about self-provisioning, it is arguably more challenging to become engaged in DIY repair than to use repair services. This process is sometimes referred to as 'deskilling', meaning 'forgetting how to fix and mend, less opportunities and time to practice and transmit such practical knowledge' (Graziano and Trogal, 2017: 652), interlinked with ever-increasing market expansion (Graziano and Trogal, 2017).

The different traits of challenges and desirability expressed by the SSNC members between DIY repair and repair services can be explained by analysing them through the lens of market- and non–market-based sufficiency activities. The joy of DIY repair was centred on communal experiences, where well-being was derived from sharing the repair experiences with others and the liberating feeling of executing the craft. In this manner, joy and pride are not centred on consumption, but rather on the enrichment of social life and relations. The social aspect of DIY repair is hence an essential facet (cf. Graziano and Trogal, 2017). Also, engaging with DIY repair requires a commitment to finding the time and acquiring the needed skills, which the interviewees considered to be a restraining factor for people living modern, busy lives. When interviewees formulated DIY repair as a way for those with less financial means to save money, they pointed to the possible effects of increasing social equity. DIY repair could thus be seen as going beyond market exchange and instead as being driven by non-commercial values and gains in social relations.

While the third strategy of combining market and non-market versions of sufficiency was used to address the challenges raised by the non–market-based sufficiency approaches and to reach a wider target audience, this in turn led to new tensions. This is particularly evident in the case of White Monday and Buy Nothing Day as White Monday was essentially promoting consumption by having discounted prices on reuse and repair services. At the same time, the campaigns were both formulated as counter-movements against excessive consumerism. The fact that activities promoted by the respective campaigns could be causing tensions was recognised to a certain degree:

> *Buy Nothing Day and White Monday are in a sense the polar opposites to Black Friday, the day when over-consumption reaches a new record, every year […] There's a very delicate balance since in a way we do encourage [consumption] by this campaign [White Monday]: 'Here, make use of these great offers!'* (RC -S).

The seemingly contradictory position of promoting both White Monday and Buy Nothing Day during the same week as Black Friday is handled by RC through their notion that the

sustainability problem is related to consumption of new things, not consumption in itself: *'It's over-consumption of newly produced things that wears on the resources of the earth. That's the problem*' (RC - S).

By promoting reused products and repair services, RC makes consumption less of an issue. Thus, as White Monday refrains from promoting 'new things', the internal contradiction is managed. Promoting market-based sufficiency campaigns, such as White Monday, may contribute to a greater diffusion of less material-intense lifestyles across a broader range of households. Nonetheless, this strategy runs the risk of diluting the potential sufficiency-oriented message of rethinking and reshaping the cultures and lifestyles associated with today's consumerist society.

Conclusion

We have shown that the two ENGOs being studied adopted two different methods for disseminating non–market-based sufficiency activities: the SSNC provided practical knowledge enabling people to repair their own items, while RC focused on highlighting the problematic nature of conspicuous material consumption. To further promote sufficiency in material consumption, the two ENGOs each deployed different strategies in order to reach a broader target group, beyond those that are strongly committed to social and environmental issues. First, the SSNC had adopted a strategy of framing non–market-based sufficiency activities as attractive by linking it to a number of desirable outcomes. These outcomes included monetary savings and an increased sense of community and well-being, as well as a better environment. In the case of RC, the strategy of framing sufficiency as something desirable was largely absent. Second, both the SSNC and RC had adopted a strategy of combining what we call non–market- and market-based sufficiency activities. The SSNC did this by extending the non–market-oriented DIY repair activity with the market-based sufficiency activity of promoting commercial local repair shops and services. RC extended their strategy by supplementing the non–market-oriented Buy Nothing Day with the market-based sufficiency strategy of White Monday. The combination of market- and non–market-based sufficiency activities we interpret as a frame extension (McNall and Basile, 2014) by the organisations to address the challenging nature of Buy Nothing Day and DIY repair.

As consumption levels remain strongly coupled with rampant environmental destruction (Wiedmann et al., 2020), initiatives that aim to influence consumer cultures towards reducing material consumption continue to be an important research theme for scholars within consumer studies. This article has been part of such an endeavour as it contributes with insights on how the sufficiency approach can move from the periphery towards the centre in public life and discourse. In particular, our results highlight how some ENGOs are in fact beginning to move beyond a focus on efficiency-based solutions of buying 'greener' and resource-efficient products towards emphasising sufficiency-based activities such as reuse, remake and repair. The traditional efficiency-based strategies that persuade consumers to buy differently (i.e,. greener products), but not less, run the risk of reinforcing a culture of materialistic consumption (Lorek, 2018). In this context, our

study elucidates how established ENGOs of various sizes are also engaging in the emerging, more critical consumer culture where identities and communities are created around repair, remake and reuse, rather than consumption of novel products.

At the same time, our article further points to the conflicting work around dilemmas of how to reduce consumption. For example, while advocating for sufficiency includes redefining the relationship between consumption and life satisfaction, this article suggests that ENGOs' strategies to promote sufficiency-related activities may not always fully adhere to this dimension of sufficiency. Although sufficiency certainly includes activities involving markets and businesses, sufficiency as an approach goes beyond these by questioning the ability of monetary markets to deliver social and environmental benefits. Therefore, one conclusion from this article is that if sufficiency approaches are to become relevant for a broader audience, ENGOs need to use strategies that work in tandem. This would include, for instance, offering market activities that can reduce material consumption, as well as non-market activities that facilitate alternative notions of well-being, while avoiding that they run counter to each other. Here, however, it is important to acknowledge that the organisational size is likely to impact the resources and strategies ENGOs can call upon, subsequently influencing the potential tensions between those strategies. For example, small ENGOs such as RC tend to have less access to financial and human resources than larger ENGOs such as the SSNC. Although large ENGOs frequently engage in strategic cooperation with businesses (e.g., Kopnina, 2016), it could be argued that small ENGOs are even more dependent on collaborating with commercial actors to forward sustainable consumption. At the same time, such collaborations risk undermining more critical and ambitious efforts (Kopnina, 2016; Van Huijstee et al., 2011), which the case of RC illustrates. It is therefore not necessarily so that smaller ENGOs embrace a more radical stance, as has been suggested elsewhere (e.g., Van Huijstee et al., 2011). The difference in organisational size of our studied ENGOs also had other implications. As the SSNC had resources to provide practical knowledge and spaces for DIY repair, the perceived challenges are likely to be quite different compared to organisations like RC, who rely heavily on media presence and collaboration with various actors to disseminate their campaign message. Therefore, the identified strategies and dilemmas could have been manifested differently if we had analysed ENGOs of similar size. Nevertheless, this study has highlighted that established ENGOs of different sizes are indeed problematising consumption levels and promoting sufficiency perspectives and activities, despite the presence of strong political and cultural pressure on individuals to 'keep consuming'.

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