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The Practice of Blogging

– Slow Fashion and Sustainable Consumption

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- Slow Fashion and Sustainable Consumption

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Abstract

The textile industry is the second largest polluter in the world after the oil industry. It is also the fastest growing export industry in Sweden. In Sweden therefore public opinion puts high pressure on the industry to become greener. Green consumption, e.g. buying less and choosing clothes sustainably produced, is put forward in popular discourse as a way to change the industry from so-called fast to slow fashion. However, green consumption is seldom straightforward and finding slow fashion and evaluating a product's ecological footprint requires time, energy and mind work from consumers. Therefore consumers turn to for example fashion blogs for guidance since blogs offers advice and guidance in this complex arena. In this paper I focus on how Swedish fashion blogs construct ideas of slow and sustainable consumption and propose practices contributing to sustainability. Drawing on the theoretical framework of practice theory, I operationalize these blogs as intermediaries, translating a complex market for consumers. Through a textual analysis of self-identified slow fashion and sustainable fashion blogs I investigate the construction of ideas of slow fashion and sustainable consumption, and explore if and how the blogs propose consumers to put such ideas into practice. The result suggests that technology enables construction of ideas about slow fashion and sustainable consumption within the framework of blogging, where fashion is presented in a way where it is associated with more sustainable values. These ideas are presented to serve consumer as a source of inspiration for change of unsustainable habits with a hope of leading to more sustainable fashion practices.

Keywords: slow fashion, sustainable fashion, sustainable consumption, blog, practice

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1 Introduction

The fast fashion industry is said to be the second dirtiest industry in the world after the oil industry. Fast fashion entails a business model that fuels economic growth, as it offers low cost fashion with short production chains to the masses. This encourages consumers to be more sensitive to fashion, as a quick response cycled fashion system can offer the latest fashion demands in no time (Kim et al 2012; Turker & Altuntas 2014).

However, the fast fashion systems increased ecological footprint has fueled the pressure to convert the system to something more sustainable. The negative effects of the fashion system have resulted in that fashion consumers have begun to value environmental factors in their purchase decisions (Kim et al 2012). Meanwhile the interest for slow and sustainable fashion has grown since the beginning of the 2000s (Joy et al 2012, Clark 2008). Now slow and sustainable fashion is entering the arena to put new demands on the fashion system to stimulate a new system that acknowledge renewable materials and longer life consumables as well as fashion practices that does not encourage consumption (Reiley & DeLong 2011; Clark 2008).

However, green consumption is seldom straightforward and finding slow fashion and evaluating a product's ecological footprint requires time, energy and mind work from consumers. One-way to this this is however through social media. With Web 2.0 consumers became highly interactive both as customers with opinions but also to research services and products (Hanna et al 2011). Today, therefore, more and more consumers turn to social media for guidance since online services can offer advice and guidance in this complex arena (Joosse & Hrac 2015).

This study focuses on the social media known as blogs, for the reason that blogs are seen to have affect both as marketing tool and as mediators between decision and consumption of fashion (Kim & Ko 2011; Kulmala et al 2012). Blogs are seen as fundamental shift in how we communicate and have created a new arena where ordinary individuals can connect with the outside world in no time with a nearly limitless audience (Halvorsen et al 2013).

In Sweden the largest segment in the blogosphere today are fashion blogs (Bloggportalen 2016). However, within this segments of fashion blogs there are a few blogs with a focus on slow fashion and sustainable fashion. Their focus goes against the convention model of fast fashion and focus on fashion that accounts for the environmental and social burdens of the fast fashion system.

Considering these blogs to work as a source for inspiration and affect consumers purchase decisions, the aim of this study is located in investigating how the practice of slow fashion and sustainable consumption is expressed through social media in form of blogs. I therefore conduct a textual analysis on three Swedish slow fashion blogs. I operationalize these blogs as intermediaries, translating a complex market for consumers (Joosse & Hrac 2015), to explore the following research questions:

How do Swedish fashion blogs construct ideas of slow fashion and sustainable consumption?

If, and if so, how do the blogs propose the readers to put ideas of slow fashion and sustainable consumption into practice?

By drawing on the theoretical framework of practice theory, I analyze these blogs to understand the practice of blogging about slow fashion and sustainable consumption. In a practice theory view I understand the social reality as made up fundamentally out of practices, that simply is routinized ways of sayings and doings (Reckwitz 2002). Therefore, in this study, slow fashion blogs will not be looked upon as a result of individualistic choices or behavior, but as a practice on its own (Hargreaves 2011: Reckwitz 2002).

This approach lead to findings that suggests that technology enables ideas about slow

fashion and sustainable consumption in the practice of slow fashion blogging. Technology enables a specific way of writing about slow fashion and sustainable consumption within the framework or rules of blogging. This specific way of writing is reflected in the desire to be read and is presented in a way that serve consumers as a source of inspiration. Within these rules fashion is presented in a way where it is associated with sustainable and reflective values, such as classic and long lasting garments. These ideas are presented as help for consumers to start evaluating fashion differently with the aim of leading to changed habits in terms of more sustainable fashion practices.

1.1 Disposition

Background: In this section I will provide a background to this study, concerning the fashion system, sustainable fashion, slow fashion, intermediaries, blogs as intermediaries to end with relevance and contribution of this study to the field.

Theoretical framework: Next follows a presentation and discussion of this study's theoretical framework Practice theory, for the purpose of the forthcoming analysis.

Methodology: This section presents methodological framework used in this study. How the blogs were selected, an introduction of the blogs, data collection and how the textual analysis and coding procedure was performed.

Analysis: In this section the empirical material is analyzed in relation to the theoretical framework. This section is divided into the three elements *materials*, *meanings* and *competence* from the theoretical framework practice theory.

Discussion: In this discussion I will link my findings from the analyses to other literature of relevance in the field.

Conclusion: In this section I present the results, which show that slow fashion blogging is enabled and limited by technology, but also that fashion within this practice is presented in a way where fashion is associated with sustainable and reflective values for the blogs to serve as site for inspiring consumers.

2 Background

In this chapter I will review the literature regarding the fashion system and social media. The purpose of this literature review is twofold. First, to position my study in the existing body of literature. Second, to justify the relevance of the study and clarify its contribution to this field.

2.1 Positioning the Research in the Field

2.1.1 *The Fashion System*

In 2012 the global apparel market was valued to 1.7 trillion US \$ and employed around 75 million people (Fashion United 2014). According to a recent report (Sternö & Nilesén 2015) the total sales for the Swedish fashion industry was 237 billion SEK in 2013. In Sweden households consumed 27 percent more clothing and footwear in 2014 compared to 2004 (Göteborgs Universitet 2015). The increased consumption of fashion is for various reasons, partly because of a better welfare, but also because of the importance of so-called lifestyle consumption and identity consumption. This because fashion is a product that possesses expressive potential as it easily can be showed to others. It is a product that can function as a symbol of individuality and uniqueness and serves the need to satisfy our social needs, but also serves the need to satisfy as a contributor to economic growth (Davis 1992; Bhardwaj & Fairhurst 2010; Holmberg & Roos 2010), but above all the fashion market has increased because of to the availability of cheap fashion to the masses (Gustafsson & Ekström 2012).

The availability of cheap fashion is because of a relatively new fashion system in the industry from the late 1990s, which is often called ‘fast fashion’ or more negatively ‘throwaway fashion’ (Kim et al 2012; Joy et al 2012). The development of the fast fashion model was intended to attract people into the stores more often so that they would get people more sensitive to trends and impulse purchase more fashion as they would get tired of the old fashion fast (Kim et al 2012; Bhardwaj & Fairhurst 2010). The highly competitive structure within the fashion industry has put pressure on the retailers to lower costs and to become more flexibly to the desired market to be able to expand in sales and to make profit (Peck 2004; Bhardwaj & Fairhurst 2010). This efficiency has shortened time between sale and replenishment and therefore provided consumers with more choices of garments available on the market (Sheridan et al 2006).

However, the fast fashion model also comes with a downside that reflects the backside of cutting corners and lower prices in the industry. The environmental problems and the threat to our wellbeing that we today face are among other things because of our urge for consumer goods (Sheridan et al 2006). The dramatic change in the fashion industry the last thirty years has led to outsourcing of most clothing factories to developing countries, which has put increased environmental burden from transportation across the globe (Turker & Altuntas 2014). Furthermore, the fashion industry itself poses both environmental and social burdens on the planet. This is because production in the fashion industry use damaging chemicals and non-renewable natural resources, and therefore the production constitutes threats to land and water (Turker & Altuntas 2014; Brito et al 2008). Social issues are also at risk of being ignored by the pressure from fast fashion cycles. This is reflected in poor working conditions with long working hours and low wages (Turker & Altuntas 2014; Lea-Greenwood 2006).

2.1.2 *Sustainable Fashion*

The negative effects of the fast fashion system have led to the emergence of another type of system, namely a sustainable fashion system. The interest for sustainable fashion has grown since the beginning of the 21st century (Joy et al 2012) and is now putting new demands on

the fashion system to stimulate a system that acknowledge a new way of producing and consuming fashion taking into account the environmental and social burdens of the current system (Reiley & DeLong 2011; Bly et al 2015; Fletcher 2010). Clark (2008) even claim that the fast fashion system must be challenged to be able to move away from the current way where fashion is associated with something new. He argues that we need to “*present fashion as a choice rather than as a mandate*” (p.428), which means that fashion needs to be associated with other values than newness.

It was first with the Brundtland Report released in 1987 that consumer-oriented environmental policies were brought to light (United Nations 2010). In this report lies an urge to make consumers co-responsible solving environmental and social problems through consumption. With the aim to conceive more ethical and green consumers to serve as driving forces for the market to incorporate more social and environmental aspects. At the same time the concept of sustainable development was widened to account for the entire life cycle of a product, instead of just the production or final disposal (Christensen et al 2007).

However, there does not exist any defined concept of sustainable fashion. This because limited research has been done in the area of sustainable fashion, both in terms of consumption patterns but also of how the meaning of sustainable fashion is understood by consumers (Bly et al 2015). In this study I understand sustainable fashion as fashion that is produced and consumed taking into account the environmental and social burdens that the fast fashion system generates.

2.1.3 *Slow Fashion*

The last decade the term ‘slow fashion’ has also started to appear in relation to sustainable fashion. I understand slow fashion as a term where transparency is of weight in production and consumption, and where fashion is steered by more sustainable values than newness and trends. The term ‘slow fashion’ was first staged in London 2004, but was inspired by the ‘Slow Food’ movement that was founded in Italy 1986. The Slow Food movement was a response to the growing fast food market that later also became a rejection of the mass production models. Slow Food brought out the importance of highlighting the small producers, the raw materials, cooking and the qualities it carried in form of closeness in the communities (Clark 2008; Slow Food 1989).

In the same way slow fashion was a response to low-price and a bad quality market that gave rise to increasing need of unlimited wants for fashion. Like the Slow Food movement does slow fashion value the local resources, transparency in the production chain and is based on renewable material, sustainable and longer life consumables (Slow Food 1989; Fletcher 2010).

Previously, environmental factors, such as chemicals in the production or overconsumption have not been seen as factors influencing purchase decisions. However, a recent change has been observed, which shows that consumers have started to value these factors when purchasing fashion, as people are becoming more conscious (Kim et al 2012). However, the values that slow and sustainable fashion represents may not always be easy to find and evaluate. Yet, one way to do this is by turning to various social media platforms. Today more and more fashion is spread through social media, as it is a low-cost communication tool that can be used to affect consumer purchase decisions (Kim & Ko 2010), which leads us to the next section.

2.1.4 *Intermediaries*

As mentioned, sustainable consumption is seldom straightforward, and finding slow fashion and evaluating a product’s ecological footprint requires time, energy and mind work from consumers. Therefore consumers turn to social media for guidance since online services can offer advice and guidance as intermediaries in this complex arena (Joosse & Hracs 2015). In this study I understand intermediaries as people who take on the role in evaluating products,

to ease for consumers in their purchase decisions and to work as a source of inspiration. With launch of Web 2.0 consumers became highly interactive both as costumers with opinions but also to research services and products (Hanna et al 2011). On the Web there is a widespread use of social media and other types of applications. Social media hold a wide spectrum of communication tools, and is an accessible and relatively simple way to reach out to a large audience (Halvorsen et al 2013; Korda & Itani 2013). However, as social media can be a messy term, this study is in line with Haider's (2012) who states that: "*it is its use that makes social media social*" (p. 640). In this study I therefore define social media as applications that support user-generated content, that create interaction between users, and that work as a tool for communication.

2.1.5 Blogs as Intermediaries

The form of social media that this study focuses on is blogs. In the 1990s we saw the birth of blogs, but it was first in 21st century that we saw the bloom of the blogosphere. Blogs are a popular way of spreading your personal experiences and interests with the outside world (Halvorsen et al 2013; Rocamora 2011). Blogs are both used of businesses and individuals and they are seen as a fundamental shift in how we communicate. Blogs have created a new arena where individuals can connect with the outside world. Through followers and their comments the bloggers can connect in real time with a nearly limitless audience. Blogs also offers a possibility for the followers to get to know the blogger on a personal level (Halvorsen et al 2013; Hewitt 2005; Rocamora 2011).

Blogs are popular marketing tools for fashion diffusion. Blogs separate themselves from other marketing tools, as they focus on active participation rather than just exposure (Halvorsen et al 2013). As word-of-mouth (WOM) is understood as one of the most reliable and trustworthy sources to influence people's decision-makings, blogs become a highly persuasive tool. Followers often trust the world of the blogger, as they are perceived as having nothing to gain of not telling the truth. However, this trust can be lost if the followers realize that the blogger is getting paid for promoting a product e.g. (Halvorsen et al 2013; Brown et al 2007).

Blogs exist in a number of different sorts such as food blogs, beauty blogs and environmental blogs, and a blog lift basically whatever subject someone prefers. Blogs are far more diverse in their subjects then the basic formal elements that define them e.g. elements of sharing the similar type of layout in term of title, blogroll and the 'about page' (Rettberg 2008). In this wide range of blogs there are those blogs that grow to be famous with thousands of daily visits, while other blogs pass unread (Hewitt 2005). Nevertheless, part of being a blogger is to be visible and attract followers (Haider 2012).

In the never-ending flow of choices regarding fashion, beauty, decoration, food, environmental living etc. individuals are shown to turn to social media such as blogs for guidance (Joosse 2015). In the fashion world it has been found that blogs can have an effect as intermediaries between decision and consumption of fashion, as well as marketing and promotion for businesses (Kulmala et al 2012; Kim & Ko 2011). Thus, blogs are assumed to be essential in many individuals search for and consumption of fashion (Halvorsen et al 2013). Because of the blogospheres growing influence on individuals, bloggers can today be seen as producers of fashion news. It is argued that it has gone so far that the line between professional journalist and non-educated journalist is becoming weak in contexts of fashion (Rocamora 2011).

In Sweden today the largest segment in the blogosphere are fashion blogs (Bloggportalen 2016). Fashion blogs have skyrocketed because of the enormous interest in fashion. With constant feed and updates fashion blogs have the ability to make the new garments out-fashioned in fast speed, because of the constant flow of new arrivals on the market (Rocamora 2011). In Sweden there was a number of 35916 private fashion blogs active in March 2016 (Bloggportalen 2016). Sweden is even renowned for being one of the pioneers

in the fashion blogging sphere thanks to the country's raising export market. With well-known brands that are taking shares of the global market, people have started turning to the Swedish blogosphere for inspiration (CNN 2012).

However, in this segment there exist a few fashion blogs with another focus, namely, slow and sustainable fashion. These blogs claim to have another focus that goes against the conventional model of fast fashion. Specifically, they focus on fashion that accounts for the biggest problems of the fast fashion system, namely the environmental and social burdens.

Slow fashion blogs also belong to the segment of environmental blogs, as slow fashion blogs both focus on fashion as well as the environment. Interestingly, blogs with environmental topics have been acknowledged as being one of the fastest growing online news services, and is one theme that is among one of the more active in the blogosphere. Environmental bloggers are even renowned for having played influential parts in different environmental issues the last decade (Cox 2012).

2.2 Relevance and Contribution of this Study to the Field

The aim of this study is located in investigating how the practice of slow fashion and sustainable consumption is expressed through social media in form of blogs. By observations I found that slow and sustainable fashion blogs is still a quite unexplored field. Next I will discuss five studies that I find relevant and contributing to this study.

In her study from 2012 Haider investigates people's everyday life practices in social media, and argues that routinization is essential for environmental practices to work at all. Thus, in line with this study Haider (2012) understands the world as made out of social practices and investigates what makes environmental friendly living practices meaningful in everyday life. However she concludes that breaking up with old routines and rearranging practices is what makes environmental practices possible from the first start. In consumer studies the importance of routinization and habits is often neglected and consumption is investigated instead as the result of conscious and rational consumer choices. This neglect of habit is problematic and inspired by Haider (2012) as I had a special interest in routinization while doing the analysis. Indeed, in my study I found that the practice of slow fashion blogging encourages new routines adapted to slow fashion and sustainable consumption, as I will argue in the analysis and discussion.

Further, both Haider (2015) and Scatturo (2008) are showing the influence technology and social media have on how environmental friendly living is articulated and spread. They use the concepts of social media and technological innovations to highlight the ways technology shapes the content on the blogs. Their study makes clear that technology is relevant for how sustainable fashion and environmental information is shaped and thrives. Still, I find they pay not enough attention to what technology enables and limit. Therefore my study is based on that technology and materials as being part of defining the practice of slow fashion blogging, which I will demonstrate in the analysis and elaborate on in the discussion.

In Merrick (2012) and Rokka & Moisander's (2009) studies they argue that there exist online communities that are successfully in working as an agenda for encouraging change in sustainable behavior and consumption practices. This focus I also found in my study, as the blogs are operationalized as intermediates and therefore can be seen in the light of this work, for their work of encouraging slow and sustainable fashion practices, as I will argue in the discussion.

Informed by this literature I position my study in the field. I find my study relevant and contributing as it diverges from the studies above by its more explicit focus on the practice of slow fashion blogging.

3 Theoretical Framework

In this study I have applied a practice theory lens, with the aim to investigating how the practice of slow fashion and sustainable consumption is expressed through social media in form of blogs

Next I will present practice theory, and how I operationalize it within the aim of this study.

3.1 Practice Theory

By studying the social phenomenon of slow fashion blogging with a practice theory lens attention is given the social practice itself. A practice in this view is not a result of individual action nor bounded by structures, but instead simple put, routinized ways of sayings and doings (Hargreaves 2011; Nicolini 2012; Reckwitz 2002).

In this view, therefore, slow fashion blogs will not be looked upon as a result of individualist choices or behavior, but as a social practice on its own. The practice of slow fashion blogging is carried out by its agent (the blogger) and can be seen as routinized way of performing our sayings and doings in everyday normal life (Warde 2005; Hargreaves 2011). *“A practice is thus a routinized way in which bodies are moved, objects are handled, subjects are treated, things are described and the world is understood [...] A practice is social, as it is a ‘type’ of behaving and understanding that appears at different locales and at different points of time and is carried out by different body/minds”* (Reckwitz 2002, p. 250).

These routinized sayings and doings or rather the practice of blogging about slow fashion also consists of several interconnected elements. To simplify, a practice can be explained as a way of cooking, a way of blogging, a way of playing football etc. Each of these practices consists of different interconnected elements. Nonetheless, without one of the elements the form of the practice would change. Consequently, blogging without a computer would require other skills and therefore another type or form of practice (Reckwitz 2002). In relation to this study, blogging about slow fashions consist of certain elements that are reproduced and maintained by skilled practitioners. By investigating what these elements consist of the ability is given to capture the doings and sayings of this practice and connections, alliances and conflicts can be detected (Hargreaves 2011).

In this study I adopt Shove and Pantzar (2005) view of these elements to make the role of materials and consumer goods visible, considering the importance of e.g. technology in the practice of blogging (Haider 2015; Scatturo 2008; Hargreaves 2011). In this view a practice involves *“the active integration of materials, meanings and forms of competence”* (Shove & Pantzar 2005, p. 45). In this view bloggers are not just simply using materials to be able to blog, since materials is actively involved in reproducing the blogging itself.

Next follows an example of what the elements *materials, meanings* and *competence* may consist of in relation to the practice of slow fashion blogging, based on Shove and Pantzar (2005) work.

Materials – refers to the things and objects that are required for the practice. Blogging would not have worked without the keyboard itself, computer and certainly not without the technology.

Meanings and images – refers to the purpose and the symbolic meanings of the practice e.g. promoting ideas or sustainable fashion. These images will refer to this type and form of blogging, and depend on what people it attract and the ideologies that sustain them.

Competences – refers to the required skills needed to perform the practice e.g. the competence or know-how to blog or know-how of what are sustainable fashion alternatives.

Summed up, “*practices emerge, stabilize and ultimately die out as the links between elements are made and broken*” (Hargreaves 2011, p. 83). To provide an example, the practice of slow fashion blogging involves the elements of *materials, meanings and forms of competence*. The links between these elements are reproduced and maintained by the practice skilled practitioners (the agents) within this practice framework (rules). However, as the agent comes in contact with other practices through life, this practice will change when the agent resists and improvises new doings and sayings. This is because an agent's understanding of a practice varies according to group and place. Therefore the understanding of the links between the elements also varies (Hargreaves 2011; Warde 2005), as every practice consists of a certain way of know-how as well as wanting and feeling (Reckwitz 2002).

With this practice theory lens I will investigate how the practice of slow fashion and sustainable consumption is expressed through social media in form of blogs. By studying these blogs with a practice theory lens the understanding of the sayings and doings and the active and ongoing integration of images, artifacts and forms of competence can be deepened (Hargreaves 2011; Shove & Pantzar 2005).

4 Methodology

The aim of the study is located in investigating how the practice of slow fashion and sustainable consumption is expressed through social media in form of blogs. This study is therefore partly based on a qualitative textual analysis and partly based on observing the dynamics on the blog in terms of blogger and reader interaction as presented on the blog.

The qualitative research method used in this study gave an opportunity to emphasize the qualities and characteristics of the phenomenon. This is because qualitative research tries to come up with the often silent and hidden in social research (Repstad 2007), as qualitative research in contrast to quantitative research focuses on the social reality in terms of meaning of words instead of statistics and data (Bryman 2008).

Next I will present the methods, i.e. how this research was carried out. Under section 4.1 I will establish how the case selection was carried out. This will be followed by an introduction of the cases i.e. the selected blogs. In section 4.3 I will present the data collection, followed by the data coding procedure that is mostly based on Crang & Cook (2012) and Bryman (2008) framework.

4.1 Case Selection

The population under study is limited to Swedish blogs devoted to slow and sustainable fashion that were active in 2015. The decision to focus on Swedish blogs is motivated by the fact that Sweden has a high profile in the fashion industry and is the fastest growing export market in the country (Jungstedt 2015; Englund 2015; Sternö & Nielsén 2015), which makes a nice boundary to my research. Moreover, the researcher is Swedish, which makes analysis of these blogs in Swedish possible.

I started with a broad exploration of the field, in order to get a sense of the landscape of Swedish fashion blogs. I looked for blogs by Googling words as sustainability, slow, fashion, blogs etc. These are words that I expected to be used by the blogs while describing themselves. What I could observe was that these kinds of blogs often link to each other, a common activity in the blog world. Interestingly, these three blogs were thus related by linking and acknowledging each other which is an interesting finding which points to that these blogs operate in the same discourse, which I will get back to in the analysis. Yet, since the occurrence of linking to each other I used a snowball procedure, i.e. chain sampling, when finding the blogs (Bryman 2008).

After this broad exploration of the landscape it became clear that there did not exist any purely slow or sustainable fashion blogs in the limited search area Sweden. This is another surprising finding of my study; I had expected that Sweden as renowned of being one of the pioneers in fashion blogging (CNN 2012) would have been home to more blogs of this nature. I will return to this issue in the discussion. Consequently I adjusted my search criteria and broadened the exploration to lifestyle blogs with a strong focus on slow and sustainable fashion. With this I mean that the majority of blog posts during 2015 should concern slow and sustainable fashion. After broadening the exploration I now found three suitable sustainable lifestyle blogs with main focus on slow and sustainable fashion. Three blogs allowed me to do a more in-depth analysis. However, these blogs also write about other subjects that can be included in a sustainable lifestyle as for example three recurring subjects like skincare, food and traveling with a focus on sustainability.

4.2 Introducing the Blogs

The three bloggers I have chosen to look at all have different backgrounds, both in profession and why they blog. Two of the bloggers blog more as a hobby, but at the same time they operate related businesses on the side. The other blog is part of a profession, but like the others has a great passion for sustainability and fashion. What the bloggers all have in common is that they are female and between 20-30 years old.

I have chosen to present the blogs by name. This choice is based on that the blogs are public documents, and therefore anyone can take part of the material. This material is neither of sensitive nature nor is there restrictions on using it. The choice to present them by name is also based on that this study won't do the study objects any harm (Bryman 2008).

It is rather hard to know how many followers the different blogs possess, as this information is not shared as far as I can detect. However, *Ekoenkelt* had 100 comments in total 2015 on the posts used in this study. These comments were not spread evenly, but rather the opposite. One blog post could have 14 comments (not included responses) while others had zero. *Slow Fashion by Johanna N* was also open for commenting. On the used blog post in 2015 the blog had in total 43 comments. The last blog, *Fashion By Kim B*, were not open for commenting. None of the blogs showed statistics on page views. What I found is the numbers of comments as well as the number of blog posts are surprisingly few, which I will get back to in my discussion.

Below follows a presentation of the selected blogs and the bloggers' stated purpose of blogging:

4.3 Table 1

Table 1. The bloggers and their purposes

Blog	Name blogger/Blog Name	Blog URL	Age	Gender	Occupation	Tot. Entries 2015/ Tot. Entries used 2015
<u>1</u>	<u>Pernilla Johansson</u> Ekoenkelt	http://ekoenkelt.se	<u>28</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>Working/Student</u>	<u>62/28</u>
<u>2</u>	<u>Johanna Nilsson</u> Slow Fashion by JohannaN	http://thewaveswemake.se/slowfashion/	<u>29</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>Working</u>	<u>246/79</u>
<u>3</u>	<u>Kim Brink</u> Fashion By Kim B	http://www.lovebykimb.com/lovebykimb	<u>24</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>Working</u>	<u>114/70</u>

Ekoenkelt – is a blog about sustainable lifestyle that started in September 2010. The blog concerns issues of consumption, sustainable fashion, lifestyle and minimalism. Pernilla Johansson who runs the blog is a highly educated person with a professional education in sustainability issues. On the side of a blog Pernilla runs her own online shop with a focus on ethical and ecological fashion and is also studying fashion at the university. The purpose of *“Ekoenkelt has never been to tell the readers exactly what to do - but the goal is to share knowledge, and assist with how to think in order to make good decisions, no matter where in the process to a more sustainable lifestyle you are”* (Johansson 2016, own translation). She is also a columnist for e.g. Continuation magazine, where she shares experiences and tips regarding sustainability.

Slow Fashion by JohannaN – *“Johanna N is a blog about sustainable fashion, entrepreneurship, and to try to live as one learns”* (Nilsson 2015, own translation). The blog was started in April 2011. In addition to blogging Johanna Nilsson runs her own jewelry brand JohannaN and runs her sustainable fashion store Frejgatan 47 in Stockholm and is the originator of the Slow Fashion-petition (Slow Fashion-uppropet), which is a petition concerning to slow down and take responsibility in their decisions regarding consumption of clothing. This petition was shared widely and is today active in working towards a slow fashion as a change in the fashion industry.

Fashion By Kim B – is a blog about conscious fashion and beauty that was started in November 2013. Kim Brink who runs it is in addition to the blogging an international model and freelance fashion writer and editor. The purpose of the blog is to share *“Kim’s dedication to fashion created with conscious values, Kim writes her blog Fashion By Kim B where you are able to follow her inspiring journey within the field of sustainable fashion, pure beauty and green living”* (Brink 2016).

4.4 Data Collection

The material from the blogs was assembled in January 2016. All posts written under 2015 regarding sustainable and slow fashion were collected as empirical material. The decision to not include the rest of the blog post in 2015 concerning other subjects is made based on that these posts dealt with irrelevant subjects for this study’s such as beauty, food and travels.

Continuously the collected material has been coded and analyzed by a so-called textual analysis. This was done mostly based on Crang & Cook (2012) and Bryman’s (2008) framework, which I will describe in the next section. This approach opened up the possibility of going forth and back between empirical material and theoretical issues and concepts, which brings us to the next section i.e. coding and its procedure.

4.5 Coding & the Procedure

When dealing with blogs the data is already available for so-called textual analyses. However, the data is unfiltered and therefore the empirical material was coded. The coding procedure was carried out by help from Crang & Cook (2012) and Bryman’s (2008) frameworks.

The frameworks by Crang & Cook (2008) are like Bryman (2008) grounded on the possibility to bring up important themes and see their relationship to each other. In order to increase the understanding of the data and contribute to the theoretical collection, the coding process started early on (Bryman 2008). When coding you systematically go through the material to describe what it is about (Dalen 2007). The codes were developed through patterns and connections in the blog material manually. Concepts that could be included in themes were highlighted and similar events, actions, categories etc. were given similar labels equal to different themes and colors. These codes were covering single words to whole paragraphs of texts in the blogs, as well did themes overlap in the same segments in

the texts. Reading the blogs one sentence at a time in order to reconstruct the ideas behind it, made this possible. However attempts were made not to prejudge the material when coding it, an approach Crang & Cook (2012) advocate which implies the importance of being as transparent as possible (Bryman 2008). First the blogs were examined individually to secondly see in what ways the codes correlated to the other blog texts and their codes. By going back and forth from the primary material and the decided upon codes, differences and contradictions could be detected, to be able to create the most trustworthy coding system (Crang & Cook 2012). In this process some codes merged while others was deleted as well as some new came up. Bryman (2008) points out that the developed codes should touch upon what is significant for those who has been involved in the study, which leads us to the next section, namely the analysis.

5 Analysis

Since practice theory constitutes the theoretical lens of this study the focus has been on the practice construction of routinized saying and doings (Hargreaves 2011; Nicolini 2012; Reckwitz 2002). These sayings and doings, but also the dynamics of the blogs will be analyzed in relation to the three elements presented in the theoretical framework i.e. *materials*, *meanings* and *competence*.

Consequently this analysis has three parts. Each part consist of one of the elements presented in the theoretical framework i.e. *materials*, *meanings* and *competence* (for a similar set-up of study see Joosse and Brydges, forthcoming). Findings in the analyses will be linked to these elements and presented in the light of practice theory. In each part I will present the practice of blogging about slow and sustainable fashion, and its nuances that became visible in the coding procedure. I will describe the common characteristics for the practice, and present the different nuances with quotes. All quotes used from the blogs are typical examples, meaning that they exist and are recurring in all three blogs (unless stated otherwise) to illustrate the empirical material and increase the transparency of the analysis. All quotes are directly translated, to re-create the best possible meaning of the quote.

In this study I chose to see these three blogs as one practice. At first I was unsure if I should construct slow fashion blogging as several practices, or just as one. However I made a judgment to operationalize slow fashion blogging as a practice based on following considerations: 1) There exist few blogs in the landscape of slow fashion blogging; 2) The blogs link to each other and treat the same subjects. Based on the landscape of slow fashion blogging in Sweden I could not find any larger differences in the texts nor the dynamics of the blogs. This does not mean that they are exactly the same, but rather that they have the same mechanisms and processes at work. Therefore, based on these considerations, I operationalize slow fashion blogging as one practice.

In section 5.1 will focus on materials needed to perform the practice. Section 5.2 focuses on the element of purpose and meanings of the practice, followed by section 5.3 where I will analyse the required skills and competence needed to perform the practice.

5.1 Materials needed to perform the practice

When focusing on slow fashion blogs as a practice *material* element are essential in order to be able to blog. To work online require the agents routinized use of computer, smartphone and technology (Reckwitz 2002). You could even say that the materials and technology involved in the practice of blogging about slow fashion is what defines it. Indeed, the dynamic relationship between the things and their users is essential for the practice of blogging. As the materials are actively involved in reproducing the blogging itself, and is not just simply things used to be able to blog (Shove & Pantzar 2005). In this practice I found two things that are required for the practice, namely technology and fashion that I will discuss in this section.

Perhaps it is obvious that the practice of blogging would have a different format if the technology and the Web did not exist. However, what needs to be ensured are maybe not the obvious need of technology but rather the consequence of technology in this practice. Thus, how does technology enable or limit certain elements within this practice and influence the construction of sustainability? (Reckwitz 2002) It is clear that technology has enabled expressing of private views as a way to shape the understanding of slow fashion and sustainable consumption (Halvorsen et al 2013). This is done according to the specific conditions of what technology allows but also within the specific conditions of blogging. This is clear in the way that these blogs gives rise to a specific way of writing. Thus, that the blog posts are written towards an intended audience with the aim to be read (Haider 2012). This can be seen in the way the bloggers present their ways of becoming more sustainable etc. I will give an example that shows what the specific conditions of blogging enables in terms of page views and comments. This quote illustrates on of the bloggers gratitude towards her readers:

“And I also know that there are a lot of new ones that have found their way to this page in recent months, which feels so much fun. THANKS! I am really so crazy grateful that you are more and more who want to read my words!” (Nilsson 2015)

Further are the blog posts presented in a way that suggests that people always are available for the information flow in social media. Thus, new blog posts and information becomes outdated quickly, which allows the bloggers to post the same subject several times. What this is also evidence of is that the bloggers look at their followers’ when they form their texts. The bloggers utilize their ability to share ideas with a wide public in present time (Halvorsen et al 2013; Hewitt 2005; Rocamora 2011; Haider 2012). This does also have an effect on what kind of issues the blogger discuss and how they discuss it, which is seen in this quote:

“Amazing what very fine, good, wise and inspiring comments which appeared on my post about pointers does not help any of us when it comes to live more environmentally friendly. In response to all the extremely high demands certain environmental friends puts on others that are just beginning the path toward a more environmentally friendly life, I would like to present the following list” (Johansson 2015)

Technology has also opened up the possibility to take part in other social media and practices online, which is visible when these blogs are referring to knowledge of other blogs. This option allows the practice to be influenced by other social media platforms and make the practice of slow fashion blogging to shift as new information provide influence on how ideas of slow fashion and sustainable consumption in the practice are constructed (Reckwitz 2002).

Evident in the practice of blogging about slow fashion is that it also includes fashion, as part of actively reproducing the practice itself (Shove & Pantzar 2005). Not in terms of being able to blog, but for the purpose of being able to blog about slow fashion. This can be seen in all three blogs. Maybe this is trivial to point out, but the truth is that slow fashion blogs are mostly about fashion. However, in this practice fashion is not just about promoting buying new garments in the fast fashion industry (Gustafsson & Ekström 2012). In this practice fashion is presented as investments in classical, quality garments with long life. But also to preferable invest in natural ecological fibers, and also to buy second hand or vintage. In this practice *“focus is on quality, timelessness, usefulness and the importance of investing in second hand or vintage”* (Brink 2015). Another part of this practice is also not to buy any new garments, but rather see the potential in what you already got. Thus *“go shopping in your own closet”* (Johansson 2015) or *“less is more”* (Brink 2015). When the agents (bloggers) write about fashion in this practice, these mentioned themes are recurring.

Thereby they are part of actively reproducing the practice itself, as they are necessary components of the practice (Shove & Pantzar 2005; Reckwitz 2002).

5.2 The purpose and symbolic meaning of blogging

I found that there are three purposes in this practice, namely being acknowledged, spreading knowledge and obtaining knowledge, below I will discuss these purposes.

In this practice I found that one of the purposes of blogging is to be acknowledged by the blogs flowers (Haider 2012). As already mentioned this can be seen through gratitude to the blogs readers, but also in the comments on the blog towards the blogger. In general, the comments on the blogs are positive. They show gratitude to the blog by sharing experiences, knowledge and tips. These comments are most often re-connected with stories of the readers. Here is one typical an example of this from reader:

“Thank you for your advice to activate your wardrobe. Now I have inventoried mine, and submitted tattered clothing for recycling and outgrown clothes for sale. I’ve written a list of clothing that should be supplemented and I have taken the fun test, which showed that I needed to do some shopping fun and colorful clothes at thrift so I booked that too. I wish you a nice weekend. Hugs” (Nilsson 2015)

This quote illustrates how gratitude is played-out in interaction. I believe that this quote most likely could have been a mail sent to a friend, but now it is displayed in a public blog between two people that probably never even met. Therefore it illustrates that interaction in this practice takes on a very personal form (Halvorsen et al 2013; Brown et al 2007).

Interestingly, in one of the blogs it is not possible to comment. This is because the format of the blog does not allow comments to be made. Unlike the other two blogs, this agent can’t take part of other people’s information in terms of comments. In light of practice theory language is seen as a way to ascribe certain meanings to certain objects, thus a way of expressing how we understand the world (Reckwitz 2002). Consequently, if this blog choose to exclude the discourse in sense of comments, this may be seen as a way for limiting the agent’s own understanding. Thus, if one of the reasons of blogging is to be read, this agent miss out on the knowledge of the impact of the blog. Confirmation and spreading of knowledge appears more important then integration of the reader’s i.e. dialog with the readers.

Further, the practice of blogging about slow fashion includes the opportunity to spread knowledge you possess and want to share in order to help others be more sustainable. Within the lens of practice theory this can be seen as a way to challenge unsustainable practices. Thus, links between elements in the unsustainable practices have to be broken and re-arranged before they can be re-placed by more sustainable practices (Hargreaves 2011). In the empirical material this is primarily seen through tips on the blogs e.g. in how to clear out what you don’t need and how to live on less and tips on how to change your current practices and to improvise new sayings and doings. What these tips all have in common is that they are centered on to control one’s own actions in consumption. This in visible when one of the blogs provide the readers with an in-and-out list, thus, statistics on what comes in vs. what goes out of the home, to be able to control her consumption habits. However, this can also be seen in the way the bloggers advice in not buying any new fashion with e.g. buying nothing months.

It also seems important to obtain knowledge in this practice. This can be seen through sharing of other blogs, link or interviews. However, this is also a way of spreading knowledge, by sharing what you think is important. This appears to reflect the foundation on why they blog. Since the blogging gives an opportunity to communicate sustainability that gives the blogger a chance to communicate what may lead to change, which can be seen in all three blogs. Here follows one example, expressed by one of the bloggers.

“The ability to open people's eyes through my social media and display the range of more conscious fashion is very rewarding and the reason why I am passionate about my job.”

(Brink 2015)

If we dig deeper, we find what kind of information they want to communicate and spread. Recurring are thoughts about reflective and sustainable consumption in forms of vintage, minimalism, borrow, swopping, recycled and eco fashion. Essentially, focus seems to be located in a change of value in fashion. There is no acceptance for ‘throwaway fashion’ in this practice. But instead people must learn to value what they got.

In this practice it is also clear that you need to have some money to spend, or at least spend more money on less garments. In this practice the weight is not on quantity, but rather on quality. Examples demonstrate their money distribution on clothes and the importance of spending more money on clothing distinguished in terms of better quality, which indicate that these blogs are addressing a certain audience with money. Further all three blogs put weight on the power of the consumers, and the possibility to vote with your wallet. By this the bloggers promote opportunity for consumers to steer the fashion industry in a more sustainable direction. I would like to link this back to practice theory where improvisation of new doings and sayings is essential for new more sustainable practices to occur (Hargreaves 2011).

What is also clear is the promotion of labels and garment in this practice. This can be seen as a contradiction to other parts of the practice e.g. to what was just discussed, to consume less or not at all. However, all three blogs is promoting better fashion choices as a way to get around the problem with the fast fashion industry. One of the blogs discusses this in one entry:

“This means that we will always consume. Even things that are not directly necessary to survive. But together we can choose what to consume and how we do it”

(Nilsson 2015)

Further, this can also be analyzed in terms of promoting things in order to be able to pay your bills. Behind all three blogs there are entrepreneurs with the desire to earn their living by operating stores and their trademark. However, in this practice promotion is foremost presented as a will to make the best of the consumption society we live in, thus, to be able to convey options to people still consuming.

Interestingly, all three blogs promote second hand as one way to avoid buying new garments. Yet, one opinion stands out. This quotation demonstrates this.

“I'm not a big fan of shopping clothes at second hand, on the one hand because I'm very fussy with fit [...] but on the other hand also because I think it is just as irrelevant to buy cheaply produced garments from the big chains even if it is second-hand. To shop these clothes at second hand, it also contributes to unhealthy consumption spiral” (Johansson

2015)

However, I would argue that this statement is twofold. First, the argument is located in not buying second hand, because the agent experience difficult in finding what meets her requirements. Second, she celebrates those who are good at buying second hand and actually find something. This allows this argument to be within the same notion as the other blogs i.e. it is okay to buy second hand if you are as reflective as when you buy new clothing. Through the practice theory lens these different conflicting ideas within the same practice may reflect every agent is a unique crossing of different practices the and therefore their own understanding of the practice (Hargreaves 2011; Warde 2005).

Taking a different angle, the promotion of fashion also seems to be located in the notion of what fashion is. Since all blogs are clearly showing their choices in fashion garments. Mentioned earlier they promote fashion that they believe is a better option for the planet in terms of classic, quality, eco etc. They prove this by posting pictures of their outfits and tell what these clothes originate from. From this perspective, however, promoting of fashion also seems to be located in want to show your style and showing who you are, thus your identity (Holmberg & Roos 2010; Davis 1992).

Evidence within the empirical material show that the agents within this practice display pictures of what they wear or want to wear and at the same time indicate that it is about finding your personal style and what you cherish. Suggesting that one need to break up with unsustainable practices and replace them with more sustainable ones (Hargreaves 2011; Reckwitz 2002).

What these blog posts in pictures i.e. bloggers' outfit and garments they like, indicates is that slow fashion blogs also are extremely visual. This visualness of the slow fashion blogs I believe could be connected to any other blog. By just looking at the pictures in these blogs I would argue that they were promoting whatever fashion alternatives they find attractive. It is first when you read the accompanied text that you understand that these clothes are more sustainable alternatives. To speculate, by showing pictures like any other fashion blog could be a way to normalize the image of sustainable clothing, since sustainable clothing can be synonymous with boring (Joy et al 2012). However, it could also reflect the difficulty of giving a garment the intended explanation through a picture.

5.3 The required skills and competence needed to perform the practice

In this practice I found three competences and certain ways of know-how that are needed to perform the practice, namely use of technology, evaluating slow fashion and self-awareness, that I will discuss below.

The practice of slow fashion blogging can further be defined by competence i.e. the required skills needed to perform the practice (Shove & Pantzar 2005). One competence that is required in this practice is the competence of know-how to use technology and possess the skills to be able to use the hardware shared by producers and providers. This may seem obvious, but I would argue that this is a competence that is essential for blogging.

Furthermore one must posse's knowledge about both fast and slow fashion in this practice, by being able to make comparisons and lift the importance of slow fashion. One of the blogs provides us with an example of this:

“Why fast fashion can never be sustainable [...] Fast Fashion encourages increased consumption. New garments in the store with the high trend rate encourage us to shop frequently. The garments have by definition a short life. Design-wise, they will be “out” when the next trend will be. And most of the garments will not hold very many washes, because the low price makes it silenced the quality” (Nilsson 2015)

Throughout all three blogs examples of this can be seen. However, I would argue that this appears to be focused on the positive sides of slow and sustainable fashion, instead of emitting the bad sides of fast fashions.

To dig deeper, this knowledge seems to be located in terms of being able of evaluating how environmentally friendly clothing looks like. Environmentally friendly which in this case includes e.g. classical, quality garments with long life, preferably in natural, ecological fibers but also the competence of knowing where to buy them as well as second hand or vintage. Example of this knowledge can be seen in these two quotes:

“[When investing in fashion] in fine quality such as organic cotton or natural fabrics like silk or bamboo” (Brink 2015)

“I almost exclusively experiencing that smaller eco-brands have very fine quality, i.e. long life spans” (Johansson 2015)

However, as noted earlier, sustainable fashion practices also demand that you have more money to spend, and that you don't mind spending it on fewer garments with a higher quality.

To elaborate on the monetary factor, the practice of slow fashion blogging stress that you have the required skills needed to take the desire of spending money on new clothing. Two of the bloggers mentions the struggle with the former shopaholic inside of them. In this practice, therefore, it is necessary of inherit the knowledge in how to take the edge of the desire to spend money on new clothing and how to learn to live with less clothing. This can be seen as some kind of self-awareness but also an action that gives status in this practice. Essentially, within this practice it seems to be about making choices and prioritizing. On the one hand, it lies in the agent's routinized know-how to influence the view of the slow fashion and sustainable consumption, to be able to influence others. On the other hand, it is about to challenge ones own routines in order to become more sustainable (Reckwitz 2002).

6 Discussion

In this discussion I will link my findings from the analyses to other literature. I will do this by identifying the most important findings from the analysis for the research questions. I will reflect upon these findings and discuss its consequences and impact.

From the empirical data it emerges that technology plays a role in enabling the construction of the practice of slow fashion blogging. Indeed, technology is part in reproducing the practice itself. Moreover, I found that technology seems to enable and shape the ideas constructed in the practice by influence a specific way of writing. Partly influenced by the framework of blogging, but also influenced by its readers as the wish is to be read. Technology has also opened up for other possibilities of communication with social media practices and obtaining information from e.g. news sites and magazines online. With a constant influence through e.g. smartphones and computers this provides a higher flow of information, which helps in the shaping of how the ideas of slow fashion and sustainable consumption are constructed in this practice. This might suggest, what technology enables in terms of sharing information have a large impact on the practice of blogging about slow fashion. Indeed in section 5.1 the following examples were discussed: 1) enabling from technology within the limits of blogging by comments and dialogue with the readers; 2) sharing of links and information; 3) and promotion of clothing. These findings bears resemblance to Haider (2015) and Scaturro (2008) who suggest that social media is a tool that shape how information is articulated shaped, and made meaningful (Haider 2015), but also that technology with its communicative strategies in social media is an enabler for sustainable fashion to thrive by e.g. giving options in consumption (Scaturro 2008). Accordingly, social media may be a contributor to how the ideas of slow fashion and sustainable consumption is articulated and formed, and how consumers perceive slow fashion and sustainable consumption in this practice.

What is also fairly prominent in this practice is the willingness to be read. This is evident in section 5.2 through gratitude of the blogs readers and in the comments on the blogs. Clearly these blogs make use of their role as intermediaries as they work with inviting active participation (cf. Halvorsen et al 2013; Rocamora 2011), both in terms of their readers but also by sharing of other information such as links and interviews with knowledgeable people. To elaborate, since dialogue with readers and sharing of information in this practice appears to be prominent this bears resemblance to Shove and Pantzar's (2005) work. They concluded that a practice consumers and producers are involved in constituting and reproducing the practice, which means that a practice will adapt and evolve according to those who are involved in it. As Hargreaves (2011) indicated, practices recruit new practitioners to maintain and strengthen the practice.

Surprising, however, is the low amount of active participation in form of comments, in this practice. In one of the blogs there are not even possible to comments. This practice rather seems to use its role as intermediary as a source for inspiration, rather than a platform for discussion. What I could see is that the most of the comments are from other bloggers, maybe as a way to ask for attention for their own blog. On the other hand, these comments are most often re-connected with stories of the readers own ones, as could be a result to receive recognition for one's own actions. In the role as intermediary the practice of slow fashion blogging seem first and foremost about to spread personal experiences and knowledge in this study, thus to work as a intermediary and to be a source of inspiration (cf. Joosse & Hraes 2015).

To elaborate, the practice of slow fashion blogging appears to wish to be an inspiration or a mediator to change of behavior or routines. This can be seen in section 5.2 where promoting of fashion is demonstrated in terms of consuming more sustainable fashion. Whilst section 5.3 shows the bloggers' desire to both adjust themselves to more sustainable fashion practices as well as other individuals. In this practice these changed routines concerns adjustments to a more sustainable fashion system. To adjust or change ones own

routines one must break up with old ones and re-arrange them (cf. Hargreaves 2011; Haider 2012; Reckwitz 2002). Throughout the analysis evidence can be found of how in the practices the role of consumers is viewed and how consumers should go about in their fashion consumption. In this practice the role of consumers become visible when the bloggers speak to their readers of fashion in terms investing in e.g. classic, quality and eco fashion i.e. to consume better, consume less or not at all (see section 5.1 and 5.2). This results in the practice of slow fashion blogging presents fashion with other value than the fast fashion model, and offers a model where fewer garments are sold to higher price. The way the blogs frame fashion and the path to sustainability is similar to calls from literature, such as Clark (2008) who observes that the value of fashion needs to be shifted away from fashion looks and newness, and refocused on fashion to do with making of clothes and identities (cf. Fletcher 2010). As I have shown in section 5.2 fashion aims at shoving who you are and are not to be associated with the latest trends and images in the practice of slow fashion blogging. Consumers are therefore encouraged to act on the opportunity to make a difference e.g. by voting with their wallets and to present fashion as a choice rather than a mandate (cf. Clark 2008), as this is clearly how the bloggers view consumers' role in this practice.

What I promised to come back to in this discussion is why there doesn't exist any purely slow or sustainable fashion blogs in the limited search area Sweden, and why there exist so few with focus on slow and sustainable fashion within the landscape of lifestyle blogs. To go back to what I discussed earlier, if fashion keeps on being reconciled with something new and changeable slow fashion will have difficulty taking fast fashions place (cf. Bly et al 2015; Clark 2008; Fletcher 2010). As Bly (et al 2015) indicates, people need to abound the needs associated with fast fashion and instead invoke personal style as being the pleasurable fashion choice. To speculate, one of the reasons that there doesn't exist any pure slow fashion blogs in Sweden could be the disconnection between fashion and sustainability. Thus, even if people support the idea of sustainability they do not apply this when it comes to consumption of fashion (cf. Bly et al 2015; Joy et al 2012). Accordingly, as long as the fashion system is steered by newness and competitive advantages as price and consumer demand (cf. Clark 2008; Bhardwaj & Fairhurst 2010; Barnes & Lea-Greenwood 2006), fast fashion blogging will be easier to associate with then slow fashion blogging.

This could also answer why there are so few posts and comments in these blogs, because of the simple reason that slow fashion blogs not have the same need to show news. Since slow fashion is associated with other values that is not just about to serve the need as a contributor to economic growth, as sustainability is said to require genuine engagement something that contradicts the profitable interests (cf. Bly et al 2015; Bhardwaj & Fairhurst 2010). This could also be an explanation to why the practice of slow fashion blogging have less engaged practitioners, as less people understand this practice. Since the practice of slow fashion blogging is more complex and less dispersed then fast fashion blogging.

7 Conclusion

The aim of this study is located in investigating how the practice of slow fashion and sustainable consumption is expressed through social media in form of blogs. Swedish slow fashion blogs have been the object of study. These blogs have been operationalized as intermediaries, translating a complex market for consumers, to explore the following research questions:

How do Swedish fashion blogs construct ideas of slow fashion and sustainable consumption?

If, and if so, how do the blogs propose the readers to put ideas of slow fashion and sustainable consumption into practice?

The theoretical lens of practice theory allowed me to make the influence of the different elements of the blogging practice visible. What I found is that technology enables and shapes the ideas in the practice of blogging about slow fashion and sustainable consumption. Technology allows information about slow fashion and sustainable consumption to be communicated in the context of what the blog format allows. Thus, via dialogue with readers, spreading of own thoughts, values and sharing of information. Technology entails a specific way of writing where the blogger both write towards an audience, but also is influenced by its audience. This specific way of writing is reflected in the ambition to be read but also to serve consumers as a source of inspiration or as an intermediary, since blogs give an opportunity to communicate about slow fashion in a way that may lead to that consumers start making change in their fashion purchase decisions. Since people today are constantly available through their smartphones and computers, social media as blogs will affect and be affected by information spread in our everyday life practices and therefore shape how slow fashion and sustainable consumption is articulated and made sense of in these blogs.

I also found that the ideas about slow fashion are constructed in a way where fashion is associated with sustainable and reflective values instead of newness and looks. As stated in the analysis, the way the blogs frame fashion and the path to sustainability is presented in a way where consumers is encourage to associate fashion with values like classic, useful and personal instead of something new and constant changeable.

To answer the second question, the practice of slow fashion blogging does propose ideas for consumers to put into practice. What I found is that ideas e.g. to live on less, shop in your own wardrobe and reflective consumption, almost always is presented in away that boil down to change of routines. In this practice it is about making people do something differently, thus break up with their old routines and replace them with new ones. These ideas are therefore centered around to control consumption and is presented for consumers to be encouraged to act on the opportunity to make a difference, as consumers possess the opportunity to steer the fashion industry in a more sustainable direction. This understanding fits well with practice theory's notion of habits and routinization.

The current fashion systems negative impact on the environment and the social burdens it causes was why I first choose to write about this subject. The deep interest in fashion and sustainability, lead me on to blogs because of their impact on the fashion industry today. I also believe that slow fashion blogs can serve as an important function for the discussion and movement of slow fashion (cf. Merrick 2012; Rokka & Moisander 2009) since social media as site for sense-making in sustainability issues should not be underestimated (Joose, forthcoming).

As I decided to look onto blogs I also decided not to interview the bloggers themselves, even if that would have been an interesting, but however, another perspective. The textual analysis has made it possible of interpreting the practice of slow fashion blogging, as my interest was in the blogs as a site for sense-making and intermediaries. By choosing three blogs for the study I was allowed to do a more in-depth analysis as if I had just chosen one blog. Yet, three blogs cannot speak for the world, but can say something about the Swedish slow fashion blogging scope. Inevitably, my own knowledge has in one way or another subjectively affected the interpretation of the material.

Practice theory has worked as lens for this study and allowed me to see slow fashion blogging as a practice. Practice theory has therefore been of help to see how the practice of slow fashion blogging is reproduced and made sense of, as this lens could enable the relation between the sayings and doings in the practice. Therefore it allowed me to make visible the influence of the different elements of the blogging practice.

Naturally, during this study many interesting questions regarding the slow fashion blogging have appeared. For obvious reasons it is not possible to discuss all angles in this

study as it is limited, but two of those who raised my interest are how much slow fashion blogs affect consumer purchase decisions and how much slow fashion blogs contribute in changing the fast fashion system. These two perspectives could be of interest for future research.

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