



AALBORG UNIVERSITY

CULTURE COMMUNICATION AND Globalisation

Master Thesis

Unravelling Consumer Identities

A study of online knitting discourses from a globalisation point of view

**Master Degree in
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Abstract

This thesis explores the online identity formation of hand crafters through their engagement with knitting. The thesis seeks to understand the identities knitters form based on their connection to the handmade world as well as how they use this type of craft to articulate their sustainability views in a globalised society. The main areas of study explored in this thesis are discourse analysis, globalisation and identity and consumption.

The main theories applied in this thesis are Anthony Giddens (1990, 1991, 2000) and Ulrich Beck (1992) theories on globalisation as well as Jenkin's (2008) theories on identity and consumption in the age of globalisation along with Phillips and Jørgensen (2002) and Fairclough's (1989, 1995) theory of critical discourse analysis.

The overall objective of the thesis is to investigate what discourses of the “new craft movement” are exemplified in online knitting communities, and how do they reflect changing consumer identities in contemporary globalised society? In order to uncover the answer to the problem, three selected blogs will be analyzed using the three dimensional model of critical discourse analysis of Fairclough (1989, 1995), along with additional empirical data, brought to add context for the analysis of the blog discourses.

The findings of the thesis refer to the emergences of a sustainable attitude involving craft consumption practices, more specifically knitting practices. As well as the indications that knitting practices are more than a tool in the identity construction of individuals, they become a lifestyle for the individuals involved in this type of consumption.

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1.INTRODUCTION

The first chapter approaches the overall problem that will be researched in the present thesis. This is carried out first through an introductory discussion of some changes taking place in the consumption habits of Western contemporary citizens and second, through a delimitation of the problem formulation and the connected research questions.

In today's Western contemporary society an increasing amount of people, often women spend their time and money on crafting (Hestad, 2009). Furthermore, the act of crafting is no longer considered to be a necessity but is regarded as a leisure activity (Minahan and Cox, 2007). Through textile crafts such as knitting or sewing, paper crafts, decorative crafts and functional crafts, crafters make things that are meant for selling, gifting or self use. Campbell describes this phenomena as "craft consumption" (2005) and according to him this term refers to consumption activities in which "the products are both made and designed by the consumer". Moreover, Campbell states that "this concept goes beyond the ideas of personalization and customization" (2005). The premise from which he starts discussing the concept of craft-consumption is "that people's consumption of a particular thing is inspired by their desire to engage in creative acts of self-expression through which they apply their skills, knowledge and passion" (Campbell, 2005). The main idea here is that some people have a different way of consuming goods, by self-producing an item that expresses their personal taste, that they themselves will later consume (Campbell, 2005).

The starting point of this thesis is that maybe this change in consumption in contemporary society is a manifestation of a larger change happening in Western society consumption habits. More precisely, changes, that have their roots in globalisation and, in the customers relationship with the products that they consume. According to Giddens (1990), globalisation is changing the way we live and make sense of the world, in terms of family, relations, society, religion and culture. Following this claim, this thesis will seek an understanding of craft consumption, (more precisely of knitting as a form of fiber crafting) in the lights of globalisation. Knitting or fibre crafting (Wills, 2007), is viewed not only as a form of production but also as a form of consumption. The resurgence of knitting is an increasingly noticeable phenomenon in the late modern society and it can be seen as a part of the new craft movement (Wills, 2007; Adamson, 2010; Minahan and Cox, 2007).

If globalisation is disrupting the order in structures and traditions (Giddens, 1990) it also means that other things become unsure and most likely to change, like the construction of identities (Minahan and Cox, 2007). This creative process provides a way of self-expression and may play a part in

creating and developing the social identities of individuals (Minahan and Cox , 2007; Fields, 2004). Thus, another concept that will be further discussed in this thesis is identity. Identity is a concept that says something about who an individual is. The approach of this concept will be used in this thesis from a social constructionist point of view, which consists of looking at identity “as both shaped by and as shaping one's social environment" (Wetherell, 1996). Discussing these concepts can help us understand how people make sense of themselves and their social world (Beck 1992; Giddens 1990; 1991). The concepts mentioned above will help this thesis in exploring the social and cultural trends that exist in Western society and it will help discover the connections between knitting and the discourses that surround this type of consumption.

Furthermore, speaking of the discourse, this thesis will follow Fairclough (1995, 2001) critical discourse analysis theory on all three levels (textual, discursive and contextual), in order to investigate how people construct realities around knitting, as well as how they construct their own identities and how they relate to their social world (Giddens ,2000).

The chosen discourses that will be analyzed with this method are a form of personal or lifestyle blogs that are referred to in this thesis as global intercultural social spaces, where people can communicate without any physical or geographical boundaries. Another argument in choosing this type of digital platform is the fact that blogs are considered to be a form of life document (Plummer in Hookay, 2008) that help construct knowledge and identities. Blogs are personal narrations of individuals concerned with everyday live problems. They are considered to be a type of online diaries, that have a broad reach across generations, social backgrounds and cultures (Plummer in Hookay, 2008).

1.2. Problem area

As previously mentioned, there are certain trends and changes in consumption taking place in the Western society. One of the trends that is puzzling the society in this contemporary times is the reemergence of crafting practices as well as the sudden interest of people to engage in craft activities. More precisely, the interest in knitting as an alternative form of consumption. This thesis is interested in uncovering the layers behind this change by observing why people have different reactions when they are asked the question “did you make that yourself?” or “is that handmade?”. Depending on the nature of the answer, this question brings out a contradictory response of either positive or negative reactions. This opposition of answers and attitudes towards this form of consumption sparked an interest in my mind also. I have often wondered why some people get overexcited when talking about the amount of skills and patience used in crafts, while others

simply cannot understand why anyone would waste their time and money on crafting. Especially when there are a multitude of retail store and shopping malls where one can choose and purchase already made items, without putting any extra effort into constructing them. I always thought that crafters and people who make things from scratch are sometimes wrongfully judged, as they feel a need to always justify their choice to spend time, money and effort in doing crafts. Thus, this thesis will investigate the possible connections between the changes occurring in society due to globalisation and its various consequences on the contemporary consumption culture.

The theoretical framework that will help tackle these areas will involve globalisation, identity and consumption. And in order to uncover the underlaying aspects about identity construction through consumption discourses, a few blogs will be analyzed with the help of critical discourse analysis. More specifically, the sustainable living and knitting blogs chosen are (Docksjö, A Playful Day, needle & spindle) and they are all written by women coming from different cultural backgrounds. The main arguments behind this choice are: personal blogs are looked at as global intercultural social spaces and the texts should provide insights into the everyday lives of the bloggers including their consumption practices. The analyzed discourses are chosen based on three parameters: knitting, identity and attitudes towards consumption. Overall, the investigation will focus on how the discourses surrounding the practice of knitting may play a role in identity construction and may reveal consumption patterns existing in the contemporary globalised society.

1.3.Problem Formulation

In order to tackle the above mentioned, the following problem formulation has been composed:

What discourses about the “new crafting movement” are exemplified in online knitting communities and how do they reflect changing consumers identities in contemporary globalised society?

The following sub-questions have been formulated in order to help respond the problem formulation:

1.3.1.Research questions

- 1. What characterizes the knitting online movement and what type of discourses are being expressed by its participants?*
- 2. How can craft consumption be contextualized as identity-making in the society of globalisation?*
- 3. What relation between identity and consumption does the “new craft movement” represent?*

1.4. Structure of the Thesis

This section consists in a overview of the thesis which is presented as a reader's guide, and its purpose is to give a basic understanding of the structure of the thesis.

The first chapter approaches the overall problem that will be researched in the thesis. This is carried out first through an introductory discussion of some changes taking place in the consumption habits of Western citizens living in a globalised society. And second, through a delimitation of the problem formulation and the connected research questions.

The second chapter establishes the background context of the thesis, which includes reviews of existing literature, organization websites, official documents, as well as other scholar research papers (Campbell, 2005; Adamson, 2010; Minaham and Cox, 2007; Cherrier, 2008; Park et.al., 2013) about the topics that are of interest for this thesis. This section describes the relationship between craft and crafting, and the specific type of fiber craft which is knitting.

Chapter three looks at the philosophical and methodological considerations that are relevant for the research conducted in this thesis. First, the choices made in relation to the constructivist paradigm (Guba and Lincoln 1994; Guba, 1990) and structuralist thinking are discussed. Next, the choices involved in the research design, in terms of methods of data collection and analysis of the thesis are outlined and explained.

Chapter four outlines the main theories used in the thesis, the purpose of this chapter is to present and examine the central concepts used in the analysis. The theoretical framework consists in theories about globalisation (Giddens, 1990, 1991, 2000; Beck, 1992), identity and consumption in the age of globalisation (Jenkins, 2008; Giddens, 1990, 1991) and critical discourse analysis theory (Fairclough, 1995; Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002).

Chapter five focuses on the empirical analysis. The analysis follows the three dimensional critical discourse analysis model of Fairclough (1995, 2001), and it consists of three stages: text analysis of the three blogs, analysis of the discourse practices of the chosen blogs texts and the last stage consists in the analysis of the socio-cultural practices of which the textual and discursive dimensions are part off.

The last chapter of the thesis is the conclusion and discussion chapter, which will consist in summarizing the results of the analysis and discussing the overall findings of the thesis. The overall purpose of this chapter is to respond to the thesis research problem and connected research questions.

2. BACKGROUND CONTEXT

This chapter establishes the background context in which “the new craft movement” takes place and has the purpose to bring contextual richness for the analytical part of the thesis. This chapter offers social and cultural context information that constitutes the backbone of this thesis. It offers information about: the relationship between craft and crafting and the emergence of “the new craft movement”, the specific type of fiber craft which is knitting and attitudes that surround the craft consumption world.

2.1. The New Craft movement, craft and fibre crafting

In order to understand the context in which the emergence of this new type of consumption takes place, a brief history about the emergence of craft and craft related activities is going to be presented.

The term “craft” can be understood in different contexts, in order to research craft it's important to uncover the underlying issues surrounding this term and offer an interpretation that best suits this thesis. The word “craft” according to the 2016 edition of Websters' Dictionary of the English Language has it's origins in the Anglo-Saxon word “cræft” and the German, Swedish and Danish derivatives of “kraft”, all meaning "power" (Webster, 2016). This derivation is of interest for the present thesis because it contributes to the understanding of craft being more than a skill. Bev Gowers supported this claim in her 1989 Master Thesis where she discussed the various definitions given to “craft”, seen as a form of production that empowers people. In her thesis she also shared the views of John Ruskin (1819-1900), an English art critic, on craft. His definition of craft brings the hand and the spirit together, therefore combining the power with skills: “It is not enough that it has the form, if it have not also the power and life / It is not enough that it has the power, if it have not the form", (Ruskin 1870 in Gowers, 1989). Following this rather poetic definition of craft, Gowers argued in her thesis that the incorporation of the whole person, both physical and spiritual is a mandatory criteria when defining the practice of craft production.

However, the most common dictionary denotation of the word “craft” aligns with the skill of a particular manual nature. A craft can be defined as anything often done with the use of hands that involves a sense of skill and work, and can be described as a creative process (Sennett, 2008). Furthermore, Gowers in her search to define the word “craft” in her thesis, combined the same definition of craft offered by Sennett with the one given by the Oxford Dictionary and came up with the following definition: "a calling, requiring special skill and knowledge; especially a manual art, a handicraft" (1989). In the present thesis, the understanding of the word craft will follow the

definition given by Sennett. The crafts that are talked about in this thesis are mainly fiber crafts and more specifically the craft of knitting.

In the book “The Craft Reader”, Adamson talks about the field of crafts over time and across cultures , stating that crafting has shown periods of interest throughout history (2010). Moreover, he talks about the peaks of craft industry in recent and past centuries . He writes that it all started after the industrial revolution in the 18th and 19th centuries when a switch happened, craft-production was replaced with mass production aided by machines (2010). Adamson follows Sennett's views (2008) on crafting and explains that the renewed interest in craft production happening in the contemporary times has something to do with the skills that crafters need to possess in order to get involved in this type of manual labour. The skills and the crafters close relationship with the materials used, makes craft production to be seen as a more humane and creative process, which is the opposite of the mechanical labour of mass production that happened with the industrial revolution. Thus, as a reaction to that, the Arts and Crafts movement reemerged during the 19th century and early 20th century, the main idea behind it was the new found appreciation of crafts and crafters (Adamson, 2010). Besides Adamson (2010) other authors like Minahan and Cox (2007) reported a new wave of interest in arts and crafts in the 1960s and 1970s. This renewed interest is associated with a time of anti-war protests, renewed connection to nature and a fear of losing the natural resources (Minahan and Cox, 2007).

Recent research on contemporary crafting indicates the ways identity, gender, personality and culture may relate with craft. In the article “Stich'n bitch: Cyberfeminism, a third place and the new materiality” Minahan and Cox (2007), talks about the recent developments that happened around the arts and craft movement in the previous centuries. The authors also explored and reviewed different types of materials from mass media, as well as the internet, theories about feminism, globalisation and cultural changes, and introduced in their article a new concept called “the new craft movement”. The idea of a “new craft movement” is also addressed by researchers from the media and communication field like Bratich and Brush (in Gauer, 2011). They state that crafting is producing more than monetary value for the individuals that are engaged in this type of production, because it involves more intimate and affective feelings. Also in regards to how the crafting scene has changed in the recent years, they observed that crafting spaces have changed from an intimate domestic activity to a more open and online type of action. Minahan and Cox (2007) suggest that the reemergence of the craft movement can be viewed as a response to the political and cultural changes that our society is currently facing like globalisation, climate change and overall concerns surrounding the effects of mass production over the world. Based on the name of their article, the phrase “stitch and bitch” has become a term often used to describe this

contemporary movement that is dominated by young women meeting online or in public to knit, crochet or craft together and also discuss or “bitch” (word often associated with the word “gossip”) about the pressing issues that our society is currently facing (Stoller, 2003).

As previously mentioned this new craft movement is mainly formed with young contemporary women, using the internet. That is why this new development has also caught the interest of researchers in the information technology (Gamble, Johnson and Hawkey in Gauer, 2011). This scholars were interested to see how online craft communities are formed and also how can a craft be shared and learned between strangers through a screen, via blogs and forums that contain “how to” videos and pictures. (Torrey et al. in Gauer, 2011). Bonanni and Parkes (2010) refer to the online craft communities as virtual guilds, where people engage in a free and open exchange of ideas .

In order to summarize the previously discussed aspects, at the core of “the new craft movement” is the desire to personalize and express rather than consume mass-produce items in a passive and unengaged way. The creative consumers ,like the knitters prefer to take an active role in shaping the culture they desire rather than being satisfied by the existing conditions in the current consumption culture. However there is a gap in the literature when it comes to how contemporary knitter construct their personal identities and overall conceptions of consumption on a online platform like a personal blog . This research aims at clarifying the identity formation of knitters through their engagement with their craft. As well as what type of discourses they construct online in order to articulate their social and cultural worlds, and how can they relate their consumption habits with the process of globalisation.

2.2. Craft consumption, a form of anti-consumption

With the beginning of the 90s people became more aware of the exploitation of workers in the clothing industry and with the outcomes that globalisation has on this industry. It is believed that this might propelled the increase interest in crafts that happened around that time and also the inception of the anti sweat-shop movement that fights against mass-production (Cherrier, 2008). Dr. Sean Sands, co-author of the book, “The inscrutable Shopper. Consumer Resistance in Retail“, talks about a new type of consumer “the resistant consumer”. He defines this type of consumer as “a consumer that campaigns against globalisation, sweatshops, technology, waste and even advertising. They embrace sustainability and the slow movement, want value for their money... they recycle, they establish cooperatives, and they are not afraid to use online communities and social networks” (Sands in Minahan, 2007). A classification of the resistant consumer has been also made

by the authors of the book, they are: the ethical consumer, the green consumer and the activist consumer. Each type of consumer is characterized by its actions in the retail world. But what all these concepts show, is the importance and relevance of anti-consumption practices in the construction of modern consumer identities (Minahan, 2007). Still the craft producers are not part of of this resistance because many crafters have no choice but to buy their supplies from retail shops. One could argue that craft production can be refer to as a form of anti-consumption, as the creator of crafts refuses to buy a mass produced object and would rather construct one with their hands. According to Bratich and Brush around the 90s the ideology of anti-consumption was described as being a core value for the participants of the craft-movement (in Gauer, 2011). The participants shared the same values as the contemporary resistant consumer, the objects that they produced were often exchanged for other valuable goods, however the financial aspect was a rare motivation to participate in the movement.

Crafters value the joy and act of creation as the members of the Church of Craft (an online crafting community that intends to serve the community of crafters) highlight in their mission: “providing contact, craft support, advice, know-how-to, instructions, directions, tips, tricks, inspiration, and the blinding love of craft to all who seek it” (Janoff, 2008). Furthermore, they emphasize that crafting aims at creating “an environment where any and all acts of making have value to our humanness. When we find moments of creation in our everyday activities, we also find simple satisfaction. The power of creating gives us the confidence to live our lives with all the love we can” for crafters, the act of making good is more important than the products that result from any creative activity (Levine, 2008). The idea behind the “Church of Craft” is to “share and experience that sense of community, and to find like-minded people that share your passion” (Janoff, 2008). This all can feel like a cult for the outsiders but for its members is a chosen lifestyle.

As previously mentioned the craft producers depend on some form of consumption in order to create an object, but that doesn't mean that they agree with the contemporary consumer culture “consumption eats self esteem while creation makes it grow” (Levine, 2008). Through the act of producing and not purchasing, they feel more in control of their individuality from corporations and retail stores that promote a mass produce consumption ideology. Moreover, following the claims that craft production is a form of creative consumption, in the article “Anti-consumption discourses and consumer-resistant identities”, H  l  ne Cherrier states that ”creative consumers personalize their consumption lifestyle so as to express and construct their identity” (2008). Cherrier argues that the contemporary consumers are resistant consumers that have developed creative consumption practices in order to participate in the contemporary mass-production habits but on their own terms “the development of creative consumption proceeds as a reaction against unreachable social

accomplishments” (2008). Furthermore, the goal of practicing creative consumption in today's society is the fact that, “consumers no longer acquire, consume and dispose of material objects in response to others expectations. They consume according to their individual values and concerns“ (Cherrier, 2008), which makes them a conscious type of consumer. She adds that the overall goal of creative consumption is “to favor human expression at its most fundamental level” which is “consuming to be rather than to display having”(Cherrier, 2008).

In order to summarize the previously discussed aspects, at the core of the craft movement is the desire to personalize and express rather than consume mass-produce items in a passive and unengaged way. The creative consumers, like the knitters prefer to take an active role in shaping the culture they desire rather than being satisfied by the existing conditions in the current consumption culture. Furthermore, a new type of consumer that employs a more resistant identity towards mass consumption is emerging due to the cultural and environment changes that occurred in the recent years in our society.

2.3. Fiber crafting consumer

Within “the new craft movement” the popularity of fiber crafting has also emerged in the last two decades (Wills, 2007). Historically fiber crafting was viewed as a way to create clothes, connect with members of a community, generate an income, and even become involved in political issues (Wills, 2007). The views about fiber crafting in the contemporary society include the resistance against mass consumerism, a move towards an “eco lifestyle”, artistic expression, financial necessity brought on by the economic recession, and the recent popularity that knitting received in media as being considered the new “hip trend” (Wills 2007). Furthermore, because it is considered a ” hip trend”, the younger generations are more involved in the process of fiber crafting by promoting it as a young, tech-savvy lifestyle (Seering in Pfister 2014). This lifestyle also helps the new generation to create online craft businesses “a new generation of crafters making a living off the unlikely marriage of high tech and home crafting” (Schulte in Pfister 2014). An example of a successful craft online business is Etsy.com, described as a platform that allows individuals to shop and sell handmade and vintage items (Etsy Mission, 2016). This example demonstrates the growing interest in handicraft viewed as “a new craft movement” or also referred to as “handmade revolution” (Abrahams in Gauer, 2011). There is a multitude of ways that fiber crafting is presented online through websites, forums, blogs, fiber crafting apps, “how-to” YouTube videos, online tutorials. In referring to knitters, this thesis uses various adjectives like “ethic” or “sustainable” next to the term knitter, which emphasizes the values crafters apply to their products. For example a knitter characterized by being sustainable will only opt for local materials and not store-bought

materials. The diversity in material choices shows that there are different types of crafters in the crafting community (Jakob, 2012).

In order to summarize this section, the concept of consumers and consumption in the crafting world is a new emerging topic, thus defining the craft consumer is a difficult task. However, after the information presented above, we can state that crafting can be understood as a form of consumption. Although is difficult for some to detangle the confusion created between the production and selling aspect of a crafting object. This thesis refers to crafting as a form of consumption that can be understood as a merge of production and usage that goes beyond the buying aspect of the consumption concept.

3. METHODOLOGY

This section will cover the methodological considerations of this thesis. It will discuss the research paradigm that comprises the epistemological and ontological positions, as well as the reasoning behind the methodological choices of this thesis. Next, the choices involved in the research design, in terms of methods of data collection and analysis will be outlined and explained.

3.1. Philosophical Considerations

A paradigm is defined as “the basic belief system or worldview that guides the investigator, not only in choices of methods but in ontologically and epistemologically fundamental ways” (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). A paradigm can also be outlined through the responses given to three interrelated questions: the ontological question that refers to “What is the nature of ‘knowable’? or, what is the nature of ‘reality’?”; the epistemological one “What is the nature of the relationship between the knower (the inquirer) and the known (or knowable)?”; and the methodological one “How should the inquirer go about finding knowledge?” (Guba, 1990). The answers to these questions represent the way in which the researcher sees the world, the role of the individual within it, and the range of relationships that could exist between the individual and elements of the world (ibid).

This thesis doesn't reject the criteria outlined above when it comes to picking a paradigm, but it considers these relations between researcher and methodology to be about more than an overall paradigm or a response to three fixed questions. This thesis argues that within one paradigm, there are still methodological and philosophical freedom and therefore additional choices to be made, and that there are no fixed formulas when talking about the philosophical choices made for a research. These choices are presented and discussed after a short outline of the paradigm that will guide this thesis.

The primarily paradigm that this thesis employs is constructivism. Egon Guba (1990), a constructivist social researcher explains the constructivist paradigm using the three questions mentioned above. Hence in terms of how the researcher sees the world, he states that “researchers cannot discover universal facts or the way things really are, because empirical data is never independent of construct “(Guba 1990). Therefore no particular theory can be fully tested or explained, because there will always be a number of possible constructions and no absolute way to choose among them. Furthermore, “reality can be seen only through a window of theory (ibid.),” which means that research is still only a small view of certain aspects of reality, and the researcher

should be aware of its constraints. When it comes to the relationship that could exist between the individual and elements of the world, Guba states that “the results of a research are shaped by the interaction between researcher and the object of research”, making all knowledge a human construction that is constantly changing (Guba, 1990).

Moreover, as this thesis aims at understanding what discourses of “the new craft movement” are exemplified in online knitting communities and how that can reflect the changing consumer identities in contemporary globalised society, the social constructivist paradigm (Young and Collin, 2004) is best suited for this thesis. Following the claim that consumption is seen as a social construction (Witt, 2010), one could argue that more than one thought, meaning or purpose can be attributed to the action of consuming. Therefore, it is relevant to examine the discourses and meanings that knitters attach to the craft production and consumption from a constructivist point of view. In this way multiple sets of personal information can be gained, that will allow to create a deeper understanding of the research topic. Hence, this thesis will be guided by a social constructivist paradigm since the understandings of society and knowledge that are expressed in this thesis are built upon social and cultural constructs (Young and Collin, 2004).

Overall, the choice of social constructivism paradigm employed in this thesis means that the knowledge produced is ultimately a human construction and therefore subject to human error. In the next section the ontological and epistemological choices will be discussed, these choices are influenced by the paradigm but, as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the choices are mostly influenced by the kind of research directions this thesis employs.

3.1.1. Ontology

The overall ontological position undertaken in this thesis is relativism. This choice is supported by the claims that the ontological position of most of the constructivist studies is relativism, “because nothing about the constructivist approach to the world is absolute” (Guba, 1990). Moreover, Guba claims that “relativism is the key to openness and the continuing search for ever more informed and sophisticated constructions. Realities are multiple, and they exist in people’s minds” (Guba, 1990). Following this position, this thesis supports the idea that there is no such thing as absolute truth in the actions, meanings and beliefs that knitters attribute in regards to craft production and consumption. Each person attributes different meanings, intentions and motivations to the actions they undertake (Denzin and Lincoln 2008). Therefore, this thesis explores the possible multiple realities that underly craft consumption, which will hopefully uncover a diversity of meanings. Adding to the ontological position of relativism is the poststructuralism claim that

society is seen as a network of structures that influence the individual, and not only as a concept that exists in a individual's mind (Olsen and Pedersen, 2008). Furthermore, the analytical approach of this thesis, that is discourse analysis “takes as a starting point the claim of structuralist and poststructuralist linguistic philosophy, that our access to reality is always through language” (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002). Hence, following the structuralist and poststructuralist linguistic philosophy, the ontological position of this thesis is the fact that “reality is constructed through language and discourse” (Olsen and Pedersen, 2008) and reality will be investigated through the analysis of online discourses that the knitters construct in relation to their consumer identities. Consequently, taking into consideration that the aim of the thesis is to analyze the discourses of “the new craft movement” that are present in the online knitting communities, the analysis will have underlying consequences for the way this thesis positions itself ontologically.

3.1.2. Epistemology

The epistemological position undertaken in this thesis cannot fit only one description, but is rather a merge of positions that fit the reasoning behind this thesis. Traditionally, the constructivists will choose the subjectivist position that promotes knowledge as being constructed in the interaction between researcher and the object of research. However this thesis is interested in uncovering how discourses are constructed and uncovering the knowledge hidden behind language (Olsen and Pedersen, 2008). Thus, it could be argued that this thesis follows the structuralist and poststructuralist positions and deals with the critical manner in which discourses are constructed.

3.1.2.1. Structuralism and Poststructuralism

Anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss was one of the first scholars that renounced the subjectivist manner of thinking, and argued the fact that “civilization is constructed by codes and structures, thus forming a new way of thinking” (Strauss in Olsen and Pedersen, 2008). Structuralists support “a philosophy of the system, of concepts and of structures” thus opposing the philosophy of the subject (ibid).

The criticism attributed to structuralism has to do with the inability to report to change (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002). Structuralists “map the structure at a given time and then again at another point in time and find that the structure has changed” without having the tool to explain why that happened (ibid). The explanation given by Jørgensen and Phillips is close to this matter, in the fact that the structuralists object of study in the sphere of language is restricted to “langue”, the underlying structure, and not to “parole”, which is the practice of language (ibid). Subsequently, “if

practice is not investigated, it is hard to explain where the structure comes from and what can change it” (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002).

Poststructuralism refused the structuralism views in seeing language as a stable structure and brought new perspectives in the structuralism thinking. Jørgensen and Phillips (2002) note that poststructuralism “rejects structuralism’s view of language as a stable, unchangeable and totalizing structure (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002: 10)” . In this way, poststructuralism tries to combine the two levels, “langue” seen as structure and “parole” seen as practice, into a single process, where the structure, rather than being an underlying entity, exists only in the discursive practices that reproduce or transforms it (ibid).

In order to sum the views on the chosen epistemological position undertaken in this thesis, one could argue that the discourses surrounding a social phenomenon, like the emergence of the new craft movement, cannot stand alone, it must be analyzed within its context in a structural matter. Furthermore, only a linguistic analysis will not reveal in depth knowledge, that is why this research is also in accordance with the social constructivist idea that reality is viewed as a social construction. Following the constructivist and structuralist way of thinking, language and discourses are considered to be extremely important in the process of understanding social phenomenon.

3.2. Research Design

A research design is considered to be the plan that provides a “framework for the collection and analysis of data” (Bryman, 2008). The research design helps the researcher to answer the research questions and problem in accordance with the methods used to collect and analyze the data (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008). A research can be qualitative, quantitative or a mix between the two of them (Bryman, 2008). However, because this thesis is guided by the constructivist paradigm, data will be created using the qualitative method.

The research design connects theoretical paradigm to strategies of inquiry to methods for collecting empirical data (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008). Hence, in the next section these steps will be described and explained in accordance with solving the posed problem .

3.2.1. Theoretical considerations

The main theories that guide this thesis are: theories about globalisation in the Western contemporary society (Giddens, 1990, 1991, 2000; Beck, 1992), identity construction and consumption in the age of globalisation (Jenkins, 2008; Giddens, 1990, 1991) and Fairclough's critical discourse analysis theory (1995, 2001; Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002).

Anthony Giddens theories on identity construction and globalisation are present throughout the thesis. He theorizes the things that the globalised contemporary society is facing . Subsequently, he talks about the social structures and the changes in society, which influences the way people relate to and talk about consumption, craft production and about the environment. Moreover, he along with Jenkins stresses the importance of identity construction within the use and construction of discourse and consumption patterns that people develop in the globalised Western society (Jenkins, 2008; Giddens, 1990, 1991; Beck, 1992).

Another central theory used in this thesis is critical discourse analysis, viewed as a way in which social structures can be understood through language (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002; Fairclough, 1995). This choice is also in accordance with the poststructuralist thinking described in the epistemology section of this thesis (Olsen and Pedersen, 2008, Jørgensen and Phillips 2002). The choice was an obvious one because it argues the fact that critical discourse analysis complements the language analysis with discourse practices and social practices that help to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomena studied or as Jørgensen and Phillips puts it “discourse analysis is the most sophisticated framework for analysis of the relationship between language and societal practices” (2002). In this thesis the way people talk about craft and consumption as a new movement could be revealing underlying structural changes and deeper social and cultural meanings about their identities and consumption patterns. Therefore, Fairclough approach to discourse analysis presented by Jørgensen and Phillips (2002) was the obvious choice for this thesis.

3.2.2. Empirical data

The primary data chosen for this thesis are three personal crafting and lifestyle blogs (Dockjö.com (Lindsten, 2016; needleandspindle.com (Marsh, 2016) and www.aplayfulday.com (O'Sullivan, 2016). In order to understand this type of online discourse, a few characteristics of blogging and personal blog are going to be further discussed.

A personal blog often centers around “everyday life and self-representation in the form of personal and family affair” (Haider, 2014), and many of them could also be described as lifestyle blogs (ibid). Thus the types of blogs used in this thesis are identified as personal crafting blogs or lifestyle blogs. Hence, the chosen blogs all have the main focus in crafts and especially knitting; with a particular interest in how are the discourses build around the crafting movement, influencing the bloggers lifestyle choices and if there is a relationship between crafting and their identities. The genre of lifestyle or personal blog is defined as “a regular publication appearing on the World Wide

Web...some are simply online personal diaries while others are commentaries on politics, culture, hobbies, science or education”(Chandler in Thurlow, 2004). Furthermore, due to the type of blog discourses chosen for this thesis analysis, the blog posts or online discourses found are characterized by a high level of self-disclosure (Garden, 2011). They also provide a good material suited for self-representation, identity creation and creative communication (ibid), meaning that the bloggers communicate through their blog posts, personal thoughts as well as information and feelings regarding aspects of their lives, like choices in consumption and lifestyle.

Supporting the idea that blogs are suited for self-representation and subsequently for identity creation is philosopher Michel Foucault, who introduced the concept of the “technologies of self” (Foucault, 1988). He argues that “technologies of self” serve as a tool for people to represent themselves through letter writing and diary keeping (ibid). Blogs are approached in this thesis as a form of online diaries that allow people to think about their identity and to transform the way they think about themselves, and about who they want to be (Chandler in Thurlow, 2004). Thus taking into consideration Foucault concept of “technologies of self” and the characteristics that define a personal blogs such as accessibility, self-representation and identity creation (Garden, 2011), the choice of primary data is considered a relevant place to explore the discourses exemplified in the new craft movement. In order to summarize, the three blogs chosen for analysis are in accordance with the characteristics discussed above. Also, the blogs sought out for analysis had to be up to date with their posts and to have a certain level of activity from it's authors as well as readers or followers.

Furthermore, due to the choice of critical discourse analysis as a analytical tool it doesn't only involve textual and discursive levels of analysis, but also the context in which the discourses takes place (Fairclough, 1995). Additional secondary data that is brought for contextual richness in the form of reports, governmental laws, action plans, official documents, and organization websites as well as other scholars studies about the discussed phenomena.

3.2.3. Analytical considerations

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) will be the main analytical tool to research the problem area of this thesis, more specifically Fairclough CDA theory (1989, 1995).

Figure 1, shows a summary of Fairclough’s three dimensional framework along with the questions that guide this thesis. The responses of the three research questions will help solve the problem formulation that this thesis is build upon. However is should be noted that the three stages: description, interpretation and explanation will not be constrained to only answering those questions, it is just a way to organize the analysis, thus the three stages may overlap when doing

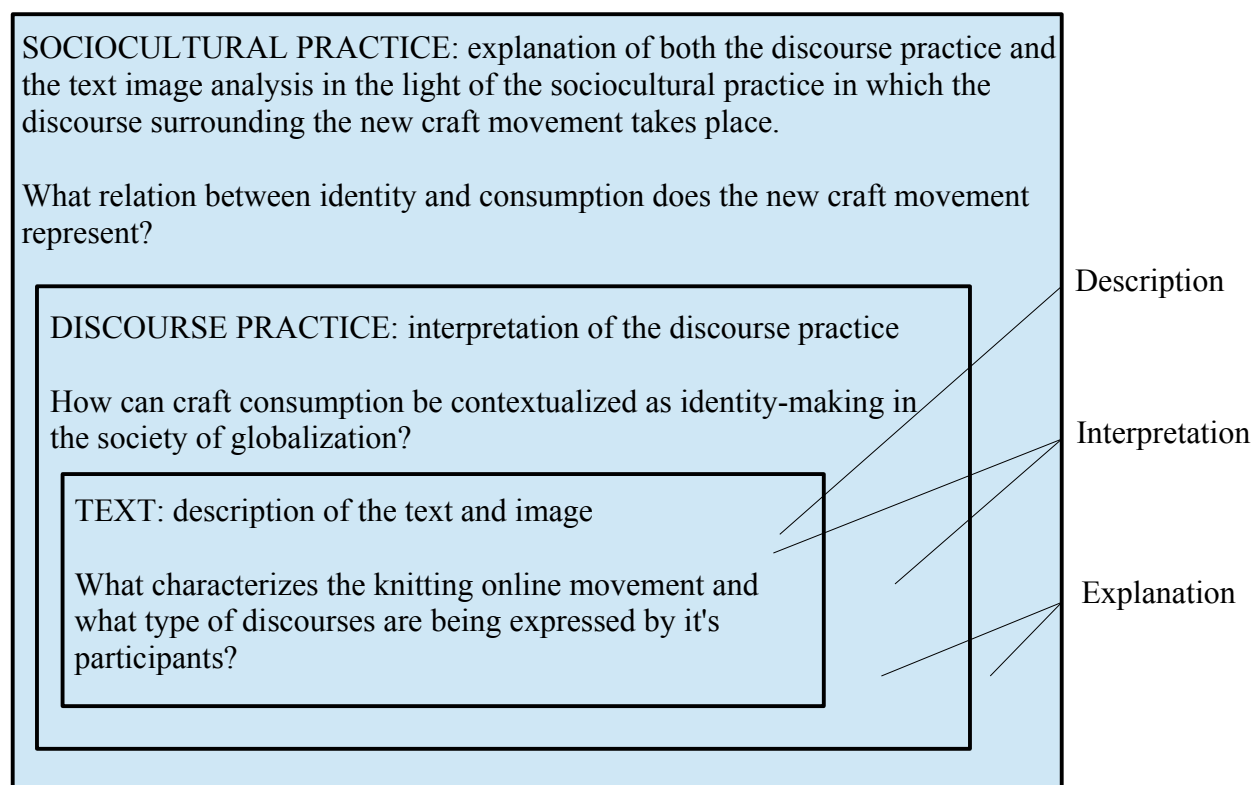


Figure 1. Fairclough's three dimensional framework (1989, p. 59;) and the guiding questions for this thesis.

The first stage is the text analysis. This step refers to the verbal or visual texts analyzed through the analysis dimension of description (Fairclough, 1989). In this research the first step can be related to the first research questions, that is concerned with the type of discourses that characterizes the new craft movement online.

The second stage of the CDA consists in analyzing the discourse practices (writing/speaking/designing and reading/listening/viewing) that are analyzed contextually through interpretation (Fairclough, 1989). To relate this stage to the current thesis, the second question that refers to -how can craft consumption be contextualized as identity making in the society of globalisation?- can be answered by interpreting the text and visual discourses with the use of information about the new craft movement and craft consumption from the background context chapter of this thesis (Campbell, 2005; Adamson, 2010; Minaham and Cox, 2007; Cherrier, 2008; Park and Lee, 2013).

The last step in Fairclough CDA, refers to the socio-cultural practices in which the discourse surrounding the object of analysis exists. This dimension is analyzed through explanation. According to Fairclough (1995), the social practices cannot be analyzed only with discourse

analysis, but also by using other theories (Fairclough 1995; Jørgensen and Phillips 2002). This step will be applied in this thesis by responding to the last research question, questioning the relation between identity and consumption existing in the new craft movement. This question will be responded to by using identity formation theories and consumption theories (Jenkins, 2008; Giddens, 1990, 1991) as well as Giddens globalisation theory (Giddens, 1990, 1991, 2000) discussed in the next chapter.

Consequently, Fairclough's three-dimensional model of CDA will be adapted in order to analyze the chosen discourses. This analysis tool will provide at least three approaches for analyzing the empirical data in a in-depth manner in order to respond to the problem that this thesis is build upon. When doing CDA it is therefore crucial for the researcher to look at all elements in order to get the full picture of the presented text.

4. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Chapter four outlines the main theories used in the thesis, the purpose of this chapter is to present and examine the central concepts used in the analysis and to present the different types of theories applied in the thesis. The theoretical background consists in theories about globalisation seen as a framework for analysis (Giddens, 1990, 1991, 2000; Beck, 1992). Theories about identity and consumption in the age of globalisation that will have a analytical purpose in the thesis (Jenkins, 2008; Giddens, 1990, 1991) and lastly as a theory but also a methodology tool Fairclough's critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1995; Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002) will be used.

4.1. Globalisation

Globalisation will be used and discussed in this thesis as a overall framework. The works of Ulrich Beck (1992) and Anthony Giddens (1991, 2000) will be used to examine ideas about globalisation and how this helps us make sense of our identity and everything around us.

Globalisation is the connection that binds discussions about textile production processes and sustainability and the effects that textile and clothes production has on the environment. Globalisation has not only changed textile processes and consumption patterns but it also changed the way people choose to live their lives and consume goods (McGrew, 1992). It is a undeniable present aspect throughout modern society (Giddens 1991; McGrew, 1992).

According to sociologist like Giddens and Beck, the 20th the century was supposed to bring a more stable, safe and ordered world because of the development of science and technology (1991,2000). However, our world is none of the above; the society is facing risks that were not there in the beginning of the 20 th century (Beck, 2009). Risks like global warming, the dissolving of structures and traditions and environmental issues affect the way society functions (Giddens, 2000; Beck, 1992). Globalisation is the main cause in how “restructuring the ways in which we live, has a very profound meaning” (Giddens 2000).

Globalisation is becoming more present worldwide and it refers to all aspects of life (economical, cultural, social) (McGrew, 1992; Giddens, 2000). The overall tone associated with globalisation in the public discourses is a negative one. Because globalisation is concerned with all aspects of the lived life it is considered to be a complex concept that is not that easy to understand “Globalisation.... is a complex set of processes, not a single one” this processes “operate in a contradictory or oppositional fashion” (Giddens, 2000). However, sociologists like Ulrich Beck

(1992) and Anthony Giddens (1991) had tried to understand this process.

Giddens understands globalisation as a descriptive process that concerns itself with different social processes that do not work together in a planned way (Giddens, 2000). He also describes globalisation as a process that is concerned with both local and global “the nation becomes too small to solve the big problems, but also too large to solve the small ones (Giddens, 2000).

Giddens believes that it all started with the development of new communication systems in the 1960 (2000; Beck, 1992). The way we receive and send information, it has changed and still changes the way we live and communicate (Giddens, 2000). That is why globalisation is believed to influence all aspects of life; political, technological, cultural and economical not just on a grand scale but also on a more intimate and personal level (ibid).

In relation to this thesis, consider what it means to know personal details and aspects about someone's consumption habits just through browsing their personal blog without even knowing the bloggers personally. This aspect has a profound influence and impacts different areas in our lives. (ibid). To conclude, globalisation is used in the current thesis as a way to address the social consequences of globalisation processes. Furthermore, the thesis is concerned with globalisation's influence on human activity, in regards to their attitudes and habits and, more specifically, in regards to their consumption patterns .

4.2. Identity and consumption

In order to answer the problem formulation of the thesis, which is to understand what identities and overall discourses of the new craft movement knitter express, it is necessary to first discuss how identity might be debated. The general understanding that different scholars argue about when it comes to the concept of identity is that, it is seen as a process that “uncovers to oneself who one is in relations to its surroundings” (Jantzen, 2006; Contrada, 1999; Jenkins, 2008). According to Jenkins (2008) identity is socially constructed by means of different interests, behaviors, actions, motivations and numerous other factors that differentiate individuals from one another.

Contrada (1999) argues that identity can be seen as multidimensional and an ongoing process, as there is no specific pattern for the identity construct (Jantzen, 2006). Moreover, according to Jenkins (2008) an individual possesses a primary identity and several secondary identities. On one hand the primary identity refers to the aspects people primarily identify themselves with, that cannot be changed easily, such as our name, gender, age. On the other hand the secondary identities are easily changeable and can vary depending on one's social background, education, family status, political beliefs and passions (Jenkins, 2008). This means that everyone's perceptions and behavior

towards craft production may differ, therefore, creating a unique identity regarding the process of craft production.

Several studies about the relationship between consumption and the formation of identity have been carried out by different scholars (e.g. Belk, 2001; Kressmann et al., 2006). In their studies they argue that through consumption one acquires and maintains their identity. Furthermore, Belk (2001) and Kressmann et al. (2006) argue that one's possessions, such as crafted objects, may serve as an instrument to self-expression. One of such self-expression instruments could be considered not only the possession of a crafted object but also the process of making it, and this thesis might show as to what extent someone may see knitting as a tool for self-identification.

The sociologists Anthony Giddens (1991) and Ulrich Beck (1992) are present figures in the academic world of reflexive making of the self. Giddens believes that the modern citizens, constantly construct and reconstruct their own identities through coherent narratives (1992). These narratives are seen in terms of relations, consumption and lifestyle choices (Beck, 1992) and thus individuals seek to construct an identity depending on the mentioned narratives (Giddens, 1991; Beck, 1992).

Giddens argues that the lifestyle choices of an individual are about life politics, about identities and about an individual's personal way of dealing with society's threats and risks (Giddens, 1991). Lifestyle choices consist in self-selected forms of consumerism, involving particular choices in food, clothes, appearance, forms of leisure etc. Therefore, making lifestyle choices is important, because "it creates certain consequences for the individual not only from the consumerism point of view (Giddens, 1991), but also from an identity point of view "because they give material form to a particular narrative of self-identity" (Giddens, 1991).

Giddens argues that lifestyle politics are reflected in one's everyday decisions, have global implications, and affect lifestyle choices (Giddens, 1991). For example, environmental lifestyle politics support the idea that "reversing the degradation of the environment depends upon adopting new lifestyle patterns" because "the greatest amount of ecological damage derives from the modes of life followed in the modernized sectors of world society"(Giddens, 1991).

Consequently, life politics and individual lifestyle choices, are relevant for analyzing consumption behaviors since they can represent how individuals relate to their household consumption, eating habits, or clothing consumption in a direct way. Furthermore, seen as a form of politics, they describe in what ways individuals get involved in projects and efforts to make this world better and more sustainable.

4.2.1. Identity construction through craft production

In the book “Storylines: Craftartists’ narratives of identity”, (1999), Elliot Mishler discovers that craft artists identity is negotiated and developed with the help of social factors, as well as the socially constructed institution of arts and craft.

Based on the previously mentioned research on crafts, it may appear that crafting and the process of making can be part on an individuals identity or can be used to express identities. The term identity can be used to explain who someone is and can be understood in multiple ways. Seen as a phenomena in psychology, many researchers argue that the many understandings and uses of the term identity can be ambiguous and troubling (Wetherell, 1996).

Elliot Mishler states that there has been a shift produced in the way the term identity is understood (1999), he goes on on saying that the concept of identity is not considered to be “a permanent and a central part of an individual” anymore but is rather looked at as being something “constructed, maintained and negotiated in social settings” (Mishler, 1999). According to Mishler one's identity may be defined in the ways individuals interact and view themselves in relation to others (1999).

Identity is looked at, as being dual, formed of personal and social identities (Simon, 2004). The personal identities refer to the individual self-perceptions and evaluations, while the social identities are perceive as collective one's and refer to how an individual carry himself in social groups (Simon, 2004). Identity can be perceive differently depending on the context an individual faces. For example, being a crafter can be perceived as a social identity when attending a knitting meeting, while in other contexts, being a crafter can be part of an individuals personal identity.

Another way to look at identity is as being multiple, an individual is not defined by a single and identity. Identity is built up with the help of social experiences and narratives (Simon, 2004). To support this clause (Hammack in Gauer 2011) defines identity as an “ideology cognized through individual engagement with discourse, made manifest in a personal narrative constructed and reconstructed across the life course, and scripted in and through social interaction and social practice” (2008). Consequently, the concept of identity is difficult to understand and define, as there are many opinions and studies about it. Although, in the end all the talk about it may change and vary during conversations, one thing is for sure, the reason human mind is a difficult concept to understand and define is because it's in a continual state of change (Howard in Gauer, 2011).

4.3. Discourse analysis

This section will discuss the choice of critical discourse analysis (CDA) as one of the studies

central theoretical tool. Taking into consideration that the field of discourse analysis is a broad one, there are a multitude of views and implications that stand behind the choice of CDA. In the following section, this thesis use and understanding of the theory will be presented. Discourse analysis is a broad field of studies that can be approached in different ways “there are as many approaches to discourse as there are researchers devoted to the field” (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002, p.60).

4.3.1. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

One of these approaches is critical discourse analysis (CDA) (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002). CDA concerns itself with “the relations between discourse and social and cultural developments in different social domains” (ibid). Moreover, the underlying meanings within a text can be understood in relation to issues of gender, cultural, politics, that is why CDA looks at language as a “power resource that is linked with ideology and socio-cultural change” (Bryman, 2008). The overall aim of CDA is “to shed light on the linguistic-discursive dimension of social and cultural phenomena and processes of change in contemporary society “(Jørgensen and Phillips 2002), that being exactly the aim of this thesis analysis.

Furthermore, CDA is a broad and complex term to describe, however there are some linguists like Norman Fairclough and Ruth Wodak that have tried to form a set of principles that guide the work done in the field of CDA like the ones that follow:

- “Social and political issues are constructed and reflected within discourse;
- power relations are negotiated and performed through discourse;
- discourse both reflects and reproduce social relations;
- ideologies are produced and reflected in the use of discourse” (Paltridge in Mortensen et al., 2007)

To summarize, through discourse one can position oneself within the realm of a social and/or political issue by using words to form and show one’s opinion on the matter (ibid).

4.3.1.1. Interdiscursivity

Another tool in discourse analysis is Fairclough's interdiscursivity (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002). According to Fairclough, inter discursive relations are important to analysis because they focus on how different discourses are articulated together across a series of texts or whether different discourses are combined in new articulations. He refers to the articulation of discursive

formations as “...institutional and societal orders of discourse..., meaning all the discursive practices that can be in a society and the interactions between them” (Fairclough, 1989). He also investigates how interdiscursivity is the driving force of social and cultural change (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2001). He argues that by analyzing interdiscursivity, it is possible to gain insight into the role of discourse in processes of social change. “When analyzing processes of change from the perspective of critical discourse analysis, it is important to bear in mind that discursive practices always function in a dialectical exchange with other dimensions of social practice” (ibid).

4.3.2. Discourse as social practice

Fairclough (2001) states three important implications of language being a form of social practice, these are: language seen as a part of society, as a social process and as a socially conditioned process (ibid). To elaborate on the first implication, people are subjects to social conventions when they speak, listen, write or read. How they communicate is determined socially and has social consequences. Social processes and practices are not just reflected in language but the language itself is a part of these processes “Language is a part of society; linguistic phenomena are social phenomena of a special sort, and social phenomena are linguistic phenomena” (Fairclough, 2001).

The second implication refers to language as a social process. Meaning that people should not only look at textual elements in order to understand discourse, because text is only a part of the whole process of social interaction. According to Fairclough (2001) this process has three dimensions: the product (the text), the process of text production and the process of interpretation. As a consequence to this dimensions Fairclough developed the three dimensional model of analysis discussed in the methodology chapter.

The last implication of seeing language as a form of social process refers to the fact that “language is a socially conditioned process, conditioned by other, non-linguistic, parts of society” (Fairclough, 2001). Language is a socially conditioned process in the sense that there is a pre-knowledge that people draw upon to produce and interpret texts and that this type of knowledge is socially generated and dependent on social relations (ibid). The meaning that Fairclough gives to pre-knowledge is “members resources” further claiming that “people internalize what is socially produced and made available to them, and use this internalized resources to engage in their social practice, including discourse” (Fairclough, 2001).

To conclude on the three views that form the understanding of discourse analysis for this thesis. CDA “is the uniting of text with the discourse and sociocultural practices that the text

reflects, reinforces and produces” (Paltridge, 2007). Consequently, there should be more than text analysis when talking about discourse analysis, as that alone doesn't explore the links between texts and societal and cultural processes and structures (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002). Thus textual and social analysis needs to be combined in order to uncover the underlying aspects of the problem that this thesis is concerned with (Fairclough, 1995). From the views on interdiscursivity and on discourse seen as a social practice presented above, the relationship between discourse analysis and poststructuralist becomes visible once again. In the way that they share the same starting point, which is that our access to reality always is through language (Jørgensen and Phillips ,2002).

5. ANALYSIS

The analysis chapter follows the three dimensional critical discourse analysis model of Fairclough (1995), that consists of three stages. The first stage represents a text analysis of the three blogs, focusing on craft consumption practices. This is the textual analysis.

The second stage represents the discursive level of the analysis. This section will follow Fairclough claims (1989, 1995) that texts shape and are shaped by social practices through discursive practices (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002). Thus, the main purpose of the discursive practice analysis is to analyze the circumstances of production and consumption of the blog texts, and in this way uncover the context of the analysis.

The third stage represents an analysis of the socio-cultural practice of which the textual and discursive levels are part of. In this stage the theories will be applied to the discourses found in the blog texts.

Initially, a short introduction about the trends that involve craft consumption, sustainable consumers and knitting seen as a sustainable practice, will be presented in an attempt to uncover the concerns and changes in the consumers identities surrounding the new craft movement and give more background context for the analysis.

Emerging trends in craft-consumption

Being sustainable is an emerging topic in today's society. Being sustainable is defined as “capable of being maintained at a steady level without exhausting natural resources or causing severe ecological damage” (Collins, 2016). The Brundtland report entitled “Our common future” (1987) associates sustainability in recent history with the human consumption of resources, highlighting the idea that consumers can influence with their consumption the environment and the future generations by “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Brundtland, 1991). The main focus of the report which was mainly addressed to the EU member states, was to form a “global agenda for change” (ibid) but has become the guiding principle when it come to moving towards a more sustainable way of living globally.

In the 21st century there is an increased global awareness regarding climate issues and sustainability towards the consumption and production habits that our society is involved in, especially in the clothing and fabric industry (Brundtland, 1991). Throughout history, the individual producers were replaced by the modern technological developments (Adamson, 2010), that is why

big production industries like food and clothing, consume a vast amount of energy, to power their manufacturing industries and release large amounts of CO₂ emissions without much consideration toward the environmental impacts (Brundtland, 1991).

And although with the rise of the new craft movement (Adamson 20110; Minahan and Cox, 2007; Gauer, 2011) and with the emergence of a new type of consumer that campaigns against globalisation, sweatshops, technology and waste - by embracing recycling, sustainability and the “slow movement”- (Cherrier, 2008; Gauer, 2011). The landscape of manufacturing is still changing dramatically in many developed economies, and the global environmental impact of manufacturing continues to rise (Brundtland, 1991). Cultural Movements like “The Slow Movement” advocates a cultural shift toward slowing down life’s pace in a world obsessed with speed and think about how the actions of our consumption habits are changing the environment (Cherrier, 2008) .

The sustainable consumers

The concept of sustainable consumption is closely related to sustainability. That is why the first definition of the concept coined in Oslo in 1994, is in line with the Brundtland report “Our Common Mission” (1991) defining both consumption and production. Sustainable production and consumption is “the use of goods and services that respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life, while minimizing the use of natural resources, toxic materials and emissions of waste and pollutants over the life cycle, so as not to jeopardize the needs of future generations.”(1991) The definition of the concept has changed over time but the meaning behind it still refers to how sustainable consumption is directed towards a better quality of life by minimizing our waste consumption. The desire towards a better quality of life has influenced the habits of consuming and has introduced a new attitude that consumers are characterized by, the environment conscious attitude or the eco-conscious attitude. This attitude refers to how consumers build behavior patterns that are directed towards resolving environmental problems. Subsequently, consumer become more involved in eco-conscious activities and attitudes (Park, 2013). Being eco-conscious means that a consumer is more aware about the global environmental problems and as a result tries to change the purchase, use or disposal of any goods (ibid). Eco-conscious is a behavioral pattern that highlights the importance of the relationship between society and the environment, as well as the relationship between the individual purchase, use and disposal of a good and the influence of that on the well-being of the society as a whole (Park, 2013). The eco-conscious consumer is interested in the environment and this determines the consumer's attitude towards environment issues such as pollution, population growth and climate changes (Liere and Dunlap in Park, 2013). This type of consumers are classified as highly responsible consumers based on their eco-friendly consumption

attitudes (Park, 2013).

Sustainability and knitting

When talking about knitting and sustainability the discussion takes us into the yarn shop consumption of the knitting producer and their attitudes on environmental friendly products. Thus, in order to address how sustainability has a part in the fiber crafting community of knitting, this thesis looks at it from the yarn consumption point of view, seen as an environmentally friendly product. Environmentally friendly attitudes refer to the position that a consumer assumes in their individual and social lives towards the products they use, purchase and dispose. For this type of attitude the ultimate purpose is for consumers to satisfy their wants and needs. Subsequently, an environmental friendly product attitude results in the purchase of environmentally friendly goods (Park, 2013). Studies on attitudes towards environmentally friendly products, focused on the characteristics of the eco-friendly consumer, previously discussed (Lee et al., 2001; Park and Lee, 2000), show that the environmental attitude of consumers is a collective concept that can be described as the consumers awareness towards environmental problems conveyed in terms of environment consciousness, interest and attitude.

Individual personality is also linked with how one consumes, purchases and use goods (Park and Lee, 2000). Studies show that customers who have an increased interest towards environment, become personally active in their engagement with eco-friendly purchasing and environment conservation, by developing a sustainable identity directed towards consciously participating in environment oriented behaviors in all area of their lives (Park and Lee, 2000; Balderjahn in Park 2013). Subsequently, having a conscious environmental attitude and consumption habits and participating in activities that help preserve the environment, creates a sustainable type of identity that is portrayed in all area of life not only in the purchasing habits (Balderjahn in Park, 2013).

Eco-Friendly knitters look at yarn labels in order to asses whether or not the yarn has been produce in a sustainable way. Yarn shop labels say “natural”, “eco wool”, “organic” and a variety of different terms to catch the attention of a eco- friendly consumers. Certifications agencies like the Global Organic Textile Standard International (GOTS) label the yarn taking into consideration how was the yarn produced and manipulated (GOTS, 2013). According to GOTS the choice towards organic textiles will become a significant part of everyday life by enhancing people's lives and the environment (GOTS, 2013). Knitters that engage in sustainable consumption habits are very careful in the way they pick their yarns. Buying an organic yarn that is locally produced “reduces one's carbon footprint through transportation and through the choice of organically grown and produced fiber” (Seiff, 2009). The knitters that are involved in a sustainable way of living look at the labeling

of the yarn that they purchase. In order to fit their organic yarn criteria they search for terms like: natural, eco-friendly, low-impact dyes, natural dyes, green cotton or wool etc.(ibid). Thus, the label represents a security for the knitters, showing the way the yarn was harvest and the produced.

Analysis level 1

The first stage is the text analysis. This step refers to the verbal and visual texts analyzed through the analysis dimension of description (Fairclough, 1989). In this research the first step can be related to the first research questions, that is concerned with the type of discourses that characterizes the new craft movement online. Thus, each blog will be presented individually in terms of text, content and visual elements.

5.1. Textual analysis

This is the first step of the analysis, which consists in the textual analysis of the chosen blogs. In this step the condensed textual data from the blogs is going to be organized in accordance with the areas of concern found, involving the following parameters: craft production, knitting and consumption. Initially, the choices behind the selected blogs will be presented and discussed.

Blogs selection

The primary empirical data chosen for this thesis are three blogs, more specifically, knitting and sustainable lifestyle blogs (defined in the methodology part); (Dockjö.com, needleandspindle.com and www.aplayfulday.com). The choices are relevant because blogs are online mediums where one can explore the discursive patterns that involve craft consumption and knitting, and also because blogs are considered to be a medium in which one can represent and create their identities through different types of content (Haider, 2014).

Thus, the chosen blogs have an overall or part focus on knitting and the practice of fibre crafting, and the authors all have taken a position on craft production in regards to consumption. The three blogs were chosen based on these parameters: craft production, consumption, knitting. While browsing through blogs a certain level of activity in terms of monthly posts was an important criteria in the selection process. And since only three blogs were selected, it was important that to some extent they represented diverse views on the parameters previously mentioned. That is why the three bloggers chosen for the analysis, all come from three different Western countries: Sweden, Australia and United Kingdom, and all the bloggers approach different perspectives when it comes to consumption, lifestyle, crafting and knitting. More specifically, Dockjö.com (Lindsted, 2016) blog views on craft production and knitting are related to building a more sustainable home by refusing to engage in unwanted buying habits, and talking about reusing as a sustainable lifestyle. The needleandspindle.com (Marsh, 2016) views on the mentioned parameters are related to sharing lessons about re-knitting, reusing and repurposing to her children and readers, as well as views

regarding organic yarn consumption and overall frugal lifestyle. And lastly, the www.aplayfulday.com (O'Sullivan, 2016) blog views on craft production, consumption and knitting are related to the sustainable aspects of consuming and producing homegrown local organic food as well as living in touch with nature and the community. The word blogger will refer to the writers of the blogs throughout the analysis, and the blogs will be referred to as blog 1, blog 2 and blog 3.

Textual analysis Blog 1.

Docksjö design blog – living sustainable, healthy and creative

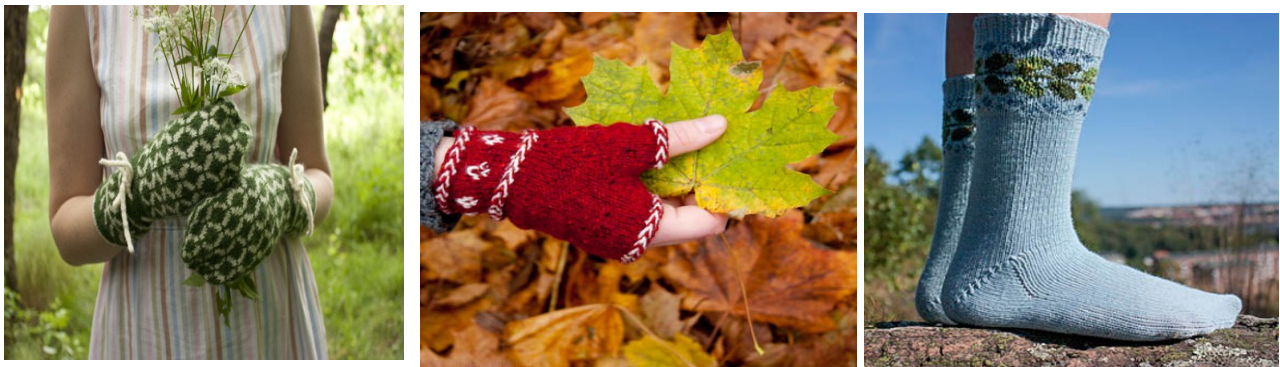
The creator of the “docksjö design” (Lindsten, 2016) blog is Nicolina Lindsten, a stay at home mom who lives in Gothenburg, Sweden with her husband and children. In the about section of the blog, Nicolina describes herself as a “knitting geek” (Lindsten, 2016), and admits that she is currently working full time on creating knitting and sewing patterns as well as being a mom and a wife. Her blog could be classified as a personal crafting and lifestyle blog because through her content she presents “everyday life and self-representation in the form of personal and family affair (Haider, 2014)”, but the focus on family is in this case related to her love of knitting and making things. The blog is focusing on clothes consumption and more specifically knitting clothing objects. With a focus on fiber crafting, her making weapons of choice are “the needles, yarns, and a sewing machine” (Lindsten, 2016). Her relationship with crafting and self-produce objects is driven by “necessity” (ibid). The choice to make clothes rather than buy them has a lot to do with the feeling she feels when creating something “The one thing that drives my creativity most is making the perfect wardrobe for my family, I want us to have well fitting, colorful and appropriate clothes. Clothes that keep us warm and stylish” (Lindsten, 2016a). The blog is organized in a journal-like form, where the blogger writes stories that are connected with her and her family day to day life. Also, she writes post about her daily activities which are mainly concerned with new knitting ideas and projects, new patterns and new ways to use yarn. Also her child is always part of her posts, being featured in the majority of her photos, wearing her creations (see below photos¹).



1 Photographs from docksjo.com (Lindsten, 2016)

She also appears to write advices in regards to knitting styles and patterns as well as the best choices when it comes to yarn picking and overall tips that are addressed to other knitters “I do have one restriction when it comes to future kid knitting, different size, because what’s the point of having more sweaters in size 3 months than there are days they’ll fit” (Lindsten, 2015b). By doing that she is creating a sense of community and a space where people are encouraged to participate and get involved in the conversation. Nicolina encourages her readers to write comments “ I love comments, please leave one every now and then” (Lindsten, 2016) and contact her in regards to any questions they might have “If you are wondering something about my patterns please email me” (Lindsten, 2016).

The knitting world she has created through her blog is also very visual, Nicolina is also passionate about photography, which she considers to be another way of creating “I get out of a creative rut by going out with my camera and bring a part of the world home with me, a camera always makes you look at the world in a new way” (Lindsten, 2016). Thus, the writing content is always accompanied by a series of photos. The photos displayed are connected to each writing post, the two mediums creating a detailed story, that Nicolina arranges in a very organized manner. Her love for the nature and the fact that she gets inspired in her creations by nature “I find my inspiration in the nature and the best thing I know is too knit out in the wild with some friends” (Lindsten, 2016) is reflected in her photos. The knitted objects are always portrayed in a natural environment interacting with elements of the natural world(e.g. below²).



A. Making is connecting with nature

Visually, the blog features mainly photos³ with natural settings , Nicolina herself models her creations surrounded by natural Scandinavian landscapes, around trees, flowers and grass in different seasons. She has a deep connection with nature when creating, she is in touch with the

² Photographs from docksjo.com (Lindsten, 2016)

³ Photographs from docksjo.com (Lindsten, 2016)

nature and inspired by it “I love to be out and about drawing inspiration form nature” (Lindsten, 2016) that is why almost all of her patters are named after a local Swedish plants.



In order to show the link between the knitted objects and nature, the blogger also describes the names she choses for different patterns, for example the Saffran Cardigan has the following description “This design is inspired by old Scandinavian motifs that makes me long for snow, frost and winter. The name Saffran or Saffron in English comes form a special kind of Crocus which happen to be one of my favorite flowers. They pop up right after the snow has melted and brings color to the world..” (Lindsten, 2016c). When knitting a pattern she takes these visual representations of the plants she chooses to name her creation after, and translates them into her designs. Below there are a few examples⁴ on how the knitted objects resemble the plant they are named after.



Saffran Cardigan



Saffron Flower



Skivling Tam Beanie



Tame Mushrooms



Vanten Blad



Leaf



Zinnia socks



Zinnia Flower

⁴ Photographs from docksjo.com (Lindsten, 2016c), www.Googleimage.dk (2016)

These visual representations indicate that being in nature and connected to it, is of great importance for the blogger. Her connection to nature is part of her life and through knitting and overall making of the objects she is able to express a part of her personality as a crafter.

B. Household Sustainability

On 7th of January, 2016, Nicolina made a veggie bag and wrote about it on the blog. This type of post is part of the “Sustainable Friday” category that Nicolina has created on her blog. She chooses a Friday in every month and makes an object that is meant to transform her home in a more sustainable space. In this way, Nicolina is establishing herself as a responsible and eco friendly consumer, writing about the reasonings behind her sustainable living choices “Living sustainable isn’t expensive, mostly it is about not buying, using and storing things you don’t need. Today’s tip is to not use the disposable bags when buying fruit and vegetables. We have for the past couple of years used reusable ones that I made from scrap fabric” (Lindsten, 2016d). Two major points are of importance for the blogger when talking about sustainability, those are “refusing” and “reusing” (Lindsten, 2016e). Refusing refers to the act of not buying unneeded things, like disposable bags from the supermarket, and instead reuse scraps of material to make bags that will last longer and will support the environment. Along with the entry, she also posts the instructions to create the veggie bag⁵, describing the type of stitches and materials you may use in order to complete the project. Again the blogger is trying to involve her readers in the act of making by creating this type of collaborative community. At the end of the post, she encourages the readers to make more sustainable and smart choices when it comes to creating a sustainable home and to leave comments about the sustainable projects they are involved in “Good luck with your continual improving sustainable home. If you have tips on smart solutions please leave a comment” (Lindsten, 2016d).



In another entry made on 12nd of February 2016, Nicolina proposes another reusable object, this time involving knitting. She proposes the knitted washcloth as a reusable object “for a more sustainable home” (Lindsten, 2016f). Again the entry is followed by the instructions on how to knit

5 Photographs from docksjo.com (Lindsten, 2016d)

the object. The reasoning behind knitting a washcloth is many folds, according to Nicolina “you could use them to do dishes or wash yourself. I always keep one in the kitchen, one in the shower and one by the sink where I wash my face in the evenings, they are perfect.” (Lindsten, 2016f). This action is justified by proving once again that a way to a sustainable living is reusing a banal household item like a washcloth (see picture below⁶) and refusing to buy things that will only clutter your life.



C. *“Me Made Everything”*

During the month of May, there is a challenge that is organized among bloggers, but everybody is welcomed to participate, as long as they sew/knit/crochet/refashion/upcycle garments for personal use, and actually wear every day in May. The participants decide the specifics of their own challenge pledge, so that the month is appropriate and challenging for them, it could be only an item of clothing or a whole outfit as long as it fits the criteria of being entirely handmade (Zoe, 2016). Nicolina decides to take this pledge for a month, some of her resolutions being “...to fix some of the holes I got in my handmade wardrobe. To make at least one pair of long trousers and a spring coat” (Lindsten, 2015g) she also pledges to wear one handmade clothing item a day during this month. By getting involved in this campaign the blogger positions herself as a maker and not a buyer.

On another post entitled “Say no to fast fashion” (Lindsten, 2015h) Nicolina stresses the importance of making rather than buying commercially in a sustainable aspect. She argues that as long as you think long term about your buying habits you are consuming in a sustainable and clever way “Think through exactly what you need and make it perfect, ensure that the fit is perfect for your shape, that the color suits you and is something you will like for a long time. Think long term, don’t stock up a big stash” (Lindsten, 2015h). On the same post she argues the fact that there are many sustainable brands on the market right now, but a truly sustainable consumer should not be lured in the marketing schemes of those products, because “Buying new or organic for you still

6 Photographs from docksjo.com (Lindsten, 2016f)

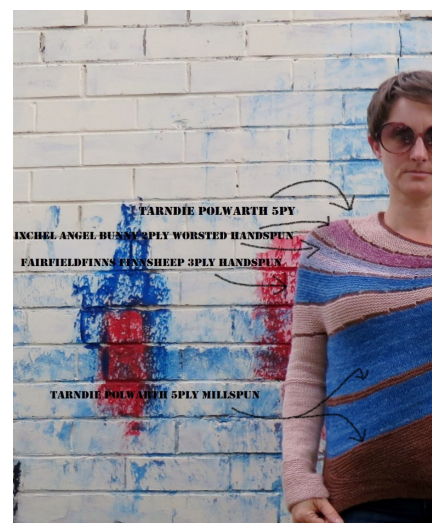
makes an impact and I think that the focus should be to use what you have instead, even if it isn't organic. The damage is already done in producing it" (Lindsten, 2016e). So the sustainable solution proposed by her is to "only buy when needed and then choose the better alternative"(Lindsten, 2016e). She goes further in explaining this choice, by giving the example of the existence of plastic in her household on which she doesn't approve of, however she states that " throwing out all your food storage and kitchen things over night and buy new in glass, wood and metal... The plastic didn't become bad for you overnight just because you found out. Sending all your, still functional, old containers to landfill or energy recycling isn't sustainable at all. You can always re-use jam jars as a lunch box, they're sort of free and recyclable and leak proof as there used to be jam in them" (Lindsten, 2016e). Is evident that she will rather make frugal choices than buy something just because the label says organic or produced in a sustainable way.

Textual analysis Blog 2.

Needle & Spindle – a blog about making, exploring sustainable craftiness

The author of this blog is a female, named Rebecca Marsh, she live in Melbourne Australia with her husband and two children. In the about section of her blog she claims to be “passionate about textile hand-crafts” (Marsh, 2016) and she regards the skill of textile hand-crafts as a practice that “remind us where we have come from, before mass production and the costing of time. They connect us with traditions across many cultures” (Marsh, 2016), thus hand crafting fits into her ideas of consumption. Rebecca also values the process behind the product, or as she puts it “creating meaning by enmeshing objects with memories and intentions” (Marsh, 2008a). For her, being able to create an object has something to do with her attitude towards consumption and how she identifies herself as a consumer “in making, we become more self-reliant, more curious and more connected to our world – we become more than consumers” (Marsh, 2008a). She describes her blog as a making blog and she guides her entire life, following the above mentioned arguments, which she wrote in the form of her textile manifesto. Her attitude towards making is a strong one, choosing it as a lifestyle.

The blog is very visual, the photos are very explanatory, she primarily takes photos of her creative projects and sometimes even adds text on the photo in order to explain the yardage and the types of knitting she used into making that object. Sometimes her children are in the photos but she is not showing their faces, keeping their identity private. However, more often the photos represent her crafting projects joined by her tools, yarns, needles and guiding patterns, often showing her making process (see below⁷). The blogger writes directly about her consumption habits or sustainability, and she portrays her making choices as being ”conscious” and “ethical”, thus involving fiber craft in a kind of sustainable discourse, normally related to ethical consumption.



7 Photographs from needleandspindle.com (Marsh, 2016)

A. Reshaping without a trace

The blogger comments repeatedly on her frugal lifestyle choices, even in posts that are not related to knitting or making. It seems to be a big part of her blog and of her life and identity. She embraces the frugal lifestyle and in her urge to repurpose and reuse everything, she wrote a post entitled “ Operation man shirt”, where she is documenting her quest “ to usefully transform all My Man’s old, worn business shirts that in some frugal madness I have stored for years” (Marsh, 2016b). In this post she is proving that everything can be reused, even the buttons from her husband's cotton shirts. Again, on the visual side, Rebecca is photographing every step of the operation, explaining the process in detail. First she removes all the buttons and stitches them on to a cardboard, in her opinion this makes them more visible “instead of being invisible, they now look, useful, appealing and covetable” (Marsh, 2016b). After that she cuts some circles from the shirts in order to make Suffolk Puffs or Yo Yos, which are embellishing flowers made from material. Then she uses those flowers for a gift wrap. The steps and the final product are shown below⁷.



1. the raw material



2. buttons collection



3. circle cuts



3. final product

The blog is primarily about sharing this type of projects and thoughts about her life and lifestyle. Thus, she shares everyday stories or thoughts, and when there is a lesson to be learned concerning sustainability or living sustainable she exploits it. Furthermore, on the post about reusing the cotton shirt, Rebecca tries to fit her lifestyle choices into societies discourse about upcycling. After researching the matter and attaching a few links and articles written about it, she argues that upcycling refers to the “process of converting old or discarded materials into something useful and often beautiful. Upcycling gives an item a better purpose” (hipcycle.com in Marsh, 2016b) which falls in line with her opinions about frugality and lifestyle choices. She ends the post by summing up “when you upcycle an item, you aren’t breaking down the materials. You may be refashioning it, like cutting a shirt into strips, but it’s still made of the same materials as when you started, nothing bought” (hipcycle.com in Marsh, 2016b).

B. Knitting confessions

In another entry, the blogger writes about her concerns as a mother. She writes about the

⁷ Photographs from needleandspindle.com (Marsh, 2016b)

various concerns that she has surrounding her children's upbringing in terms of consumption choices, like the fact that her daughter wants a Barbie “ I worry about corporations and advertising executives hijacking childhood and defining gender just to sell stuff ” (Marsh, 2015c). This would indicate that there are choices to be made in terms of, on what side of consumption one places himself? Furthermore, Rebecca projects her own conviction to her daughter, claiming that she encourages participation in “peer play” and “self expression outside of the product catalog” (Marsh, 2015c). She instills these values to her children from a early age by upcycling the Barbie doll and creating the Tree Change Doll version of it. Once again through her manner of presenting and documenting the process of transforming the Barbie dolls, she uses step by step photographs and writes “how to” instruction, giving advices to parents that are involved in the sustainable lifestyle.

Rebecca starts by mentioning that she bought her Barbie dolls from a second hand, removed their heavily make-up faces with acetone and painted on a more childlike, relax face with acrylics. Then she hand knitted and sewn clothes for their little frame. In her agenda “from the product catalog” (Marsh, 2015c) is considered less good parenting than reusing old dolls. The action is justified by involving the children in the action of self expression, and choosing the ethical way. This gives the blogger a “clean conscience” (Marsh, 2015c) about where the future is going. The before and after pictures⁸ are presented below.



These visual representations indicate that being able to make things from “stuff I already have”, is of great importance for Rebecca. It is a part of family life, and the choices she makes are part of her views about appropriate consumption practices “it is a real thrill to make something from scratch, without a pattern...a unique thing that arose out a particular combination of need, materials and skill” (Marsh, 2015c).

⁸ Photographs from needleandspindle.com (Marsh, 2015c)

C. Unravelling the yarn

One of the things the blogger seems to relate the most to about knitting is the production and consumption of the yarn. More specifically she is interested in the production process “where it was scoured, processed or spun” (Marsh, 2015d) and if it is local yarn and “attested to fair labour practices and organic growing”. According to the blogger, choosing organic is “responsible, sustainable and transparent” (Marsh, 2015d). She is concerned about the yarn production processes in relation to the yarn she buys, because she detaches herself from mass production and tries to self scour, spun and dye the yarn herself. However, she is still involved in the buying habits of yarn, but she tries to make the conscious decisions about her choices. In a post about locally grown cotton, she justifies her organic cotton choice by mentioning what certifies organic wool and cotton “This yarn is from Peru and is certified by GOTS (Global Organic Textile Standard), Control Union Fair Choice: Social and Fair Trade Standard and Control Union Eco Sustainable Textile” (Marsh, 2015d). Rebecca comments repeatedly on her organic lifestyle choices, and she is vehement in trying to reduce her impact on the environment through more thoughtful and informed purchases. “I start with the premise that any yarn purchase that is not completely synthetic or conventional cotton is spreading the environmental load of global textile production. But, in my choices online or at the yarn store, I can lessen the energy and water use associated with the yarns I buy ” (Marsh, 2015d). These concerns are a big part of the blog and seemingly a big part of her life and identity.

The visual impact of the product and packaging seen in the photos below¹⁰ are of big importance as well. This is evident in the way she describes how she picks cotton “ so I decided to go with the yarn that was least processed and had certification attesting to fair labour practices and organic growing, trading-off the carbon miles” (Marsh, 2015d). Overall, the blogger relates to the quality and the origin of the yarn in terms of what she stand for when it comes to buying yarn in the global market place.



¹⁰ Photographs from needleandspindle.com (Marsh, 2015d)

Textual analysis Blog 3.

A Playful Day- a lifestyle blog about making, creativity & process

The creator of this blog is a single mother named Kate O'Sullivan, who recently has moved away from the big city of London to the quite countryside village of Dorset. She classifies her blog as a lifestyle blog, with a focus on the storytelling of the creative process of making. In the about section of the blog Kate positions herself as a storyteller “ I love to tell tales” (O'Sullivan, 2016) not only written ones but also photographic stories “ I was given my first camera and with the ability to capture and tell tales, my life of chasing inspiration and nourishing my need for creativity began” (O'Sullivan, 2016). The blog is structured in the form of a personal journal filled with photos about her adventures in the world of making. Kate's hobby is also a profession, because she also uses her storytelling skills on her blog “run support services for fiber peeps” (O'Sullivan, 2016) in the form of content management and marketing, business strategy and copywriting for brands that look for an engaging content. Crafting things for her is not only a passion but also a way of living. She describes her blog as a “place for makers to celebrate their craft, travelers to rest, and friends to gather” (O'Sullivan, 2016). The overall subjects she discusses about are “parenthood, musings on life, recipes and projects she is making....and stories about making in a sustainable way” (O'Sullivan, 2016). The blog is very visual. She portrays her life in the countryside and her making projects in a very detailed and arranged manner. She sets up knitting projects next to flowers and books or elegant tea cups, she builds idyllic little setups organized in a pleasing and relaxed visual manner, such examples can be seen below¹¹.



¹¹ Photographs from www.aplayfulday.com (O'Sullivan, 2016)

A. The Makers Year

In the beginning of 2016, Kate made a pledge similar to Nicolina's "Me -Made -May" pledge, the differences being that Kate will document a daily making moment involving all aspects of life including food recipes, cosmetic products, household items and not only crafts related to clothing. The blogger named the challenge "The Maker's Year" and describes it as "a creativity and sustainable living challenge" (O'Sullivan, 2016a). The desire to take part of this challenge is related to Kate's relationship with sustainable living "The Maker's Year reflects my growing commitment to sustainable living that impacts our environment as little as possible" (O'Sullivan, 2016a). By taking this commitment she establishes herself as a conscious citizen that commits to make daily differences in her life in order to positively impact her day to day consumption choices.

Throughout her blog posts, Kate keeps going back to the idea of making and makers identity, associating being creative with the makers philosophy. She identifies herself as a maker because she is involved in creative activities such as "photography to upcycling, gardening to writing, weaving to baking. Making is about the act of using our hands and tools and taking the time to document and reflect what that means" (O'Sullivan, 2016a). She is convinced that the path towards a sustainable life is about the choices we make throughout our lives, and she claims that she is very conscious about her every day choices. The basis behind her choice, to make things, is about sustainability and building a better and "craftier world" (O'Sullivan, 2016a).

This blogger is the only one that also focuses on sharing food and sustainable products recipes. Kate comments repeatedly throughout her posts on her organic food choices and on how that is influenced by her fears as a women and mother in wanting the best for her little girl "Since thinking about sustainable products and routines, I've been thinking a lot about the beauty and health products I use. Making your own beauty products seemed like a pretty good way to cut down on packaging, avoid products tested on animals and stop this constant state of anxiety that I seem to get myself into every time I think of what I consume" (O'Sullivan, 2016b). She shares recipes for natural deodorant and fresh made garlic and nettle pesto. In the entry for the pesto recipe, she tells the story of finding the perfect fresh nettle and wild garlic personally plucked from her garden "grabbed some gardening gloves and gathered some of the newest shoots bursting up from the Nettles too. Satisfied with our first meal plucked straight from the earth"(O'Sullivan, 2016c). Overall, Kate relates to the ingredients of her food by taste as well as the origin of the ingredient and the final decision in procuring her food is influenced by her love for her daughter "my daughter is a pesto (and pasta) addict so I decided to create a wild pesto that would keep for a couple of weeks in the fridge"(O'Sullivan, 2016c). She offers visual representations of the raw materials used

in her recipes in the form of the photos shown below¹² that resembles the photos used in the cooking books.



B. Knitting stories

On the visual side, the blog features a abundance of photographs of idyllic countryside, natural setting, and beautiful landscapes. As mentioned earlier Kate describes herself as a “ outdoor junkie” (O'Sullivan, 2016), her passion for telling stories is beautifully portrayed visually on the blog. Through her pictures, she gets in touch with her creative identity and creates romantic representations of her surroundings. Usually she seeks inspiration in nature “when I get in a drought creatively I like to go out and take photos” (O'Sullivan, 2016). In a post about future knits she shares what inspires her “ I share some of the things that are inspiring my stitching at the moment from new yarns to my new surroundings in Dorset”(O'Sullivan, 2016d). The inspiration coming from the nature also influences her color choices in terms of yarn options. These visual representations portrayed below¹³, indicate that being in nature, or in any way connected to nature, is of great importance to Kate, this being directly related with her personality.



¹² Photographs from www.aplayfulday.com (O'Sullivan, 2016b,c)

¹³ Photographs from www.aplayfulday.com (O'Sullivan, 2016d)

C. Crafting for good

On a post with the title “#makegoodfeelgood”, Kate writes about a different aspect that involves the act of knitting and making, which is charity. The blogger writes about a charity that she supported for over a decade, “Mind”¹⁴, is a charity “that provide advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem”(O'Sullivan, 2015e). Kate even shares a personal story about a friend that she lost to depression and finds that charities like “Mind” share her passion for crafting in order to do good. Mind promotes crafting as an activity that helps people with mental health issues, “because it can be very therapeutic and rewarding to complete small and achievable tasks” (O'Sullivan, 2015e). On her post Kate shares another bloggers journey to mental health and how making helped her overcome her anxieties, the blogger name is Fran Stone which wrote on her blog, “Fall for DIY”, about how making was a blessing for her mental health “Escaping into an activity and keeping hands busy when negative thoughts about ability and confidence plague us” (Stone in O'Sullivan, 2015e). Kate is concerned with people's wellbeing and wants to help the charity by participating for “Mind Crafternoon” which is “a getting together with friends, family or colleagues and hold an afternoon of festive crafting to raise money for metal health” (O'Sullivan, 2015e). Kate supports the charity by promoting the event on her blog and inviting people to join, in order to “share a positive message about our crafting” (O'Sullivan, 2015e).

The attitude towards crafting in general and being a sustainable maker specifically is emotional for the blogger. Kate particularly enjoys making gifts for people she cares about “One of my favorite things about being a maker is the powerful resources that I have available to me to show people in my life or community that I care deeply about them” (O'Sullivan, 2016f). The vision of “crafting unique gifts” represents a emotional view on making, which the blogger holds onto by adding “layers of meaning” behind each crafted gift (O'Sullivan, 2016f) “so that not only is it just right for a problem the recipient might have been trying to solve but also has a little detail like the motif of a much loved flower” (O'Sullivan, 2016f).

Overall, the process of making for Kate goes beyond her commitment to living a sustainable life, by self producing with available resources. She attributes sentimental value to the act of making, considering it to be a creative outlet and a powerful tool to show appreciation and get involved in the community.

¹⁴ Mind charity website: <http://www.mind.org.uk>, retrieved April, 2016

Analysis level 2

The second stage represents the discursive level of the analysis. This stage will follow Fairclough claims (1989, 1995) that texts shape and are shaped by social practices through discursive practices (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002). Thus, this stage has two purposes, the first purpose of the discursive practice analysis is to analyze the circumstances of production and consumption of the blog texts, and in this way uncovering the circumstances involved in consuming and interpreting the texts (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002). And the second purpose, refers to how the author and readers interpret the text by analyzing the relations between the already existing discourses and the text, with the use of interdiscursivity (ibidem). In this research the second step can be related to the second research question, that is concerned with how craft consumption can be contextualized as identity making in the society of globalisation.

5.2. Discourse practice

The production and consumption of the texts involves interpretive analysis (Fairclough, 1995). The goal of this stage is to unpack the message and look at its functional parts in order to understand and interpret the relationship between the data and its producers (Fairclough, 1995). The production of the blog texts is done by the three female bloggers (Nicolina Linsdsten, Rebecca Marsh and Kate O'Sullivan). Neither of the female blogger have a background in article writing or journalism they write articles based on their daily lives, most of the articles are about crafting, knitting, sustainable choices, environment and ethical habits. The texts, all suggest that they have their readers in mind when they write, in terms of content and language use. As a genre, lifestyle blogging unites communities of people to be the authors of their own story and identities and not fit to the popular media image of a knitting person, which is considered to be boring and old. Thus, proving that blogging is the perfect form of online diary for the contemporary society citizens.

The consumption of the texts takes place in the online environment, on personal computers, smartphones or tablets. The readers of the blogs include the environmentally conscious people or those interested in the subjects that the bloggers approach on their blogs. The text can also be read by representatives from different yarn companies or sustainability movements and clothing industry, as they are the ones who are affected positively/negatively or are interested in new trends when an article is published on these blogs. Summing up the action of reading the text might be about sharing the same interests and values or it might be about relating to what the female bloggers write and create.

Interdiscursivity

The second purpose of the discursive level of analysis is to show the relationships between discourses, discourse topics and texts. According to Fairclough this is an important aspect in the analysis of discourses, because it would show if different discourses are articulated together as a series of texts or whether different discourses are combined in new articulation (1989). He also argues that by using interdiscursivity, it is possible to gain insights into the role of discourse in the processes of social and cultural change (Fairclough, 1995).

The discourses found on the blogs frequently include conversational discourses (“Where do you go to refocus (O’Sullivan, 2016); “What is your experience of laundry? Do you treat your handmade clothes/sweaters differently to your bought ones?” (Marsh, 2016)) and narrative discourses (“my little girl taste tested each meticulously and I wondered if oatmeal cookies could replace an entire meal” (O’Sullivan)), which one may say are typical for this medium as it has the same discursive criteria as a personal diary only is online. Moreover, in the analyzed texts other type of discourses were found like: promotional discourses “you’ll find the cookies featured in Squash Court, the wonderful kitchen garden cafe at Deans Court” (O’Sullivan, 2016); sustainability discourses “Living sustainable isn’t expensive” (Lindsten, 2016); warning discourses “The plastic didn’t become bad for you overnight”, “the damage is already done in producing it” (Lindsten, 2016). However there are some prominent discourses that are thematically related to the theoretical and analytical issues that this thesis is concerned with (new craft movement, knitting, globalisation, consumer identities). The following five discourses were recurrent in all three blogs:

Refusing and reusing. This type of discourse shows how the analyzed bloggers associate sustainable living with sentiments of frugality and what the “right way” of living is in correlation with their consumption habits. Sustainability in this discourse is about reusing or upcycling, and reducing waste by not create it in the first place. The discursive elements relate to how the manufacturing of a new product requires energy and materials extracted from Earth. And how engaging in reduction and reuse is considered to be the most effective way one can protect the environment by saving its natural resources.

Nature influence. The discourses found to involve nature, indicated a strong relationship between the bloggers and the natural elements including landscapes, plants, natural raw materials. Also all the analyzed bloggers live in the countryside, because they feel the need to be more closer to the natural environment that the big cities lack of. Being surrounded by natural elements connects the bloggers to the natural world, which proves to be an inspiration for the consumption and production habits on their daily lives. One could argue that the connection the analyzed bloggers

have with the nature is also related to the fact that they empathize with the natural imbalances and sufferings that “Mother Nature” goes through as a result of consumption and waste. And that is why they feel the need to be proactive and react by reusing and reducing.

Household sustainability. These type of discourses refer to family life and what being a responsible parent means for the bloggers. The discursive elements found, indicate that is better to make and reuse household objects rather than buy new ones. In relation to what it means to be a responsible parent the analysis revealed concerns about the insecurities of choices, like food and toys, which the bloggers display in relation to their children. And it also revealed the positions; the children of the bloggers have as participants in the “conscious” consumption movement which are influenced by their parents lifestyle habits.

The joy of making. Sustainable living practices can be an enjoyable and emotional type of practice. The discursive elements found showed that making is connected to creativity for bloggers. Other underlying aspects found in this discourse connects this practice with the joy of giving and helping, and being part of the community as a responsible global citizen. This type of discourses also refer to the psychological aspect of crafting and making. More specifically, helping people with mental illnesses to surpass their problems and focus on something beneficial, not only for treating their illness but also for using craft to create a healthier Planet.

Conscious choices. For the bloggers, choosing to reuse and make their own products is viewed as a lifestyle. The choice of using local products and upcycle, rather than buy, can supply an overall ethical conscious attitude. There are several discursive indications that this is the ethical way of consuming by appreciating the nature and being invested in what one produces and consumes.

The discourses found in the texts refer to sustainable practice and choices. Moreover, some of the discourses, like the “Me Made pledge” were repeated across all three blogs and that might indicate that some of the found discourses practices represent trends or processes of social and cultural change in the contemporary Western society. This will be discusses in the last stage of the analysis which refers to the broader sociocultural practices of which the text and the discourse dimensions are part of.

Analysis level 3

5.3. Socio-cultural practice

The third stage represents an analysis of the socio-cultural practice of which the textual and discursive levels are part of (Faiclough, 1995). In this research the third step can be related to the third research question, that is concerned with the existing relations between identity and consumption represented in the new craft movement.

5.3.1 Discursive practice

In this stage the broader context (social and cultural relations and structures) (Faiclough, 1995) on which the discourse takes place will be explored with the help of the theories presented in chapter four, more specifically theories about globalisation (Giddens, 1990, 1991, 2000) and identity formation and consumption theories (Jenkins, 2008; Giddens, 1990, 1991).

5.3.1.1. *Globalisation and the disturbance of the natural order*

As mentioned in chapter four of this thesis, globalisation is an important factor when it comes to make sense of our own identities and consumption habits. The argument that supports this claim is that the world today is separated from nature and traditions and is dissolving and constantly changing (Giddens, 2000). This facts, make people constantly change the way they positions themselves in the world. Thus globalisation is a relevant concept when it comes to analyzing the discourses found in the blogs.

According to sociologists like Giddens and Beck, the 20th the century was supposed to bring a more stable, safe and ordered world because of the development of science and technology (1991,2000). However, our world is none of the above; the society is facing risks that were not there in the beginning of the 20th century (Beck, 1992). Risks like global warming, the dissolving of structures and traditions and environmental issues affect the way society functions (Giddens, 2000; Beck, 1992). Globalisation is the main cause in how “restructuring the ways in which we live, has a very profound meaning” (Giddens 2000).

The analyzed texts revealed multiple examples in which restructuring the way one lives influences the society. There are also various signs on how risks, especially environmental one, dissolve traditions and structures and affect the way contemporary Western society functions. In the analyzed texts, the bloggers pose various concerns in relations to the perceived risks and how they are handling them. The majority of the discourses have to do with what the products we consume

really contain and how the production processes influences the environment in a negative way. The discourses found, also reflect how to avoid these unknown and possible dangerous cycle. The risk is presented when the bloggers have to engage their children in the consumption habits of day to day life. They fear that their children are exposed to unhealthy food products and unrealistic consumption patterns. The risk here is about the consequences their children have to face in the future in terms of their health, education, social interactions and overall care of the environment e.g. "I worry about corporations and advertising executives hijacking childhood" (Marsh, 2016). There is also the production risks concerned with the processes involved in the mass production chain, and whether or not those processes have a negative effect on the environment. The bloggers tend to handle the risks by either buying less processed products "So I decided to go with the yarn that was least processed and had certification attesting to fair labour practices and organic growing, trading-off the carbon miles. Yes, this is yarn buying in the global market place, a place of paradoxes and trade-offs!" (Marsh, 2016). Or overall refusing to engage in the consumption routine by producing or engaging in the acts of reusing and repurposing .

Another implication of globalisation in the contemporary society is that we have evolved into a society that lives on the other side of nature and tradition (Giddens, 2000). Consequently, the effect of this distance for the contemporary consumers causes the desire to be closer to nature and to return to less complicated modes of living (Giddens, 2000). This desire or wish to be closer to nature can be revealed in the analyzed texts especially on the visual side. The bloggers used photos of idyllic sceneries and of untouched natural landscapes to present how beautiful nature can be if the human hand doesn't intervene. Being thoughtful of nature, of animals and of the raw natural materials used is valued by the bloggers as a good consumption practice, especially when it comes to being sustainable and environmentally conscious.

Moreover, local and homegrown produces are regarded as better than overly processed and global, and all the bloggers separate themselves from mass production. They prefer to know the source of the materials and ingredients they use in their daily lives. Discursively, the bloggers try to make use of the products that nature has to offer, e.g. "I went foraging for some wood and started with a bit of a branch and started to shape a spoon" (Lindsten, 2016), or to make use of it in their food consumption "While cutting back through the woods on our way home though we spotted a sure sign of the new season tip toeing in: Wild Garlic...I grabbed some gardening gloves and gathered some of the newest shoots bursting up...Picking the young leaves from the top adds a sort of sweetness to their taste that elevates it above the earthy green taste of Spinach" (O'Sullivan, 2016). This type of discourses indicate that this is a way to deal with the distance from nature in the contemporary society. There are also discursive elements that show how the bloggers worry about

the impact that the processing of a product has on the environment. An apparent solution to those impacts is for the consumers to make more informed choice, buying in a more consciously and ethically manner e.g. “then perhaps our choices can centre around how the yarn is produced and sourced, how the sheep are treated, how the product is traced and accounted for, what impact the processing has on the environment and whether the workers are treated fairly?....I want my purchase to count for something, to have some kind of effect greater than anonymous consumption but it seems that production, manufacturing and purchasing have become incredibly confusing arenas for the consumer. Products are made cheaper but confusion is the shadow side of the global economy” (Marsh, 2016).

Another implication of globalisation revealed in the analyzed texts is the power of the internet in spreading the information to create awareness and stand for a cause. Due to the increased technological developments in the communication field, sustainable discourses, can easily reach a more broader audience globally, across countries and cultures.

5.3.1.2. Identity construction

The position of this thesis is that modern citizens experience a crisis of identity and that they constantly construct their identities through coherent narratives like consumption, social relations and lifestyle choices. This position is in agreement with sociologists like Anthony Giddens (1991) and Ulrich Beck (1992). In the following section the discourses that have been analyzed on the levels of text and discourse practice will be explained using the concepts of coherent narratives and lifestyle politics.

Coherent narratives

This analysis, is about exploring how the bloggers presented in this thesis reflect on their habits concerning consumption and lifestyle choices, and how they are relating this to their identity and daily lives.

Blogger 1 identifies herself as a stay at home mom and a full time knitter, who is engaged in living a healthy sustainable life. These two characteristics can be seen in the title of her blog “sustainable, living healthy and creative” (Lindsten, 2016). This narrative confirms her identity as a consumer that uses sustainable made products and talks about activities involving reusing and handmade household items. The text analysis indicates that she dedicates all of her free time to knitting and making and on working to transform her household in a sustainable one by constantly engaging in this type of activities.

Blogger 2 identifies herself as being dedicated to sustainable craftiness and making and in

trying to make conscious decisions about her consumption habits and overall impact on the world. Her narrative is also related with being a caring mother for her children, and being a person who is interested in reusing and making, rather than buying leading her to adopt a frugal way of life. The sustainable narrative is strong and show the bloggers powerful convictions about living a clean life that she will never act against on. Her overall narrative is that she knows what is best for her family, and she has found the answers to living sustainability through her craftiness.

Blogger 3 identifies herself as a storyteller, a blogger and a creative person and as a person who enjoys the nature and gets inspired by it. The majority of her posts talk about her love of telling stories, both visually and textually. The following titles: “Weekend. In pictures”, “Life through a lens”, “Slow blogging”, “The gift of making” (Marsh, 2016) construct the bloggers narrative with a focus on the beauty of creating and slowing down to enjoy life. To summarize, this bloggers narratives refer to the process behind the act of making, the preference for quality versus quantity and local versus manufactured. To her, creative making fits with her lifestyle, and it often has the local and unprocessed feel to it that she identifies with. Her making extends to her choice in food, often her narratives relate to the visual aspect of making and telling stories. Her photos are artistic representations of her daily life or natural landscapes that evoke a sense of serenity. This constitutes as proof that she takes her time to make and create, thus establishing her identity as a person who loves the process of telling stories though creating and making.

Lifestyle Politics

Another aspect presented in the theory chapter with the purpose of understanding the way identities are constructed is Anthony Giddens's “lifestyle politics “(1991). He claims that the way individuals construct their identities is not only through their personal narratives and how they present themselves but also through their daily choices in food, clothes, appearance, forms of leisure etc. (Giddens, 1991). Furthermore, because this thesis is concerned with exploring what relations exist between identity and consumption in the contemporary globalised society, life politics and individual lifestyle choices, are relevant for analyzing consumption behaviors, since they can represent how individuals relate to their household consumption, eating habits, or clothing consumption in a direct way. (ibidem).

Bloggers 1 choices are related with the refusal of engaging in unwanted buying habits, and choosing to reuse as a sustainable lifestyle. Proving that she has knowledge about what is considered to be sustainable and ethically produced. When it comes to making, she chooses to participate in campaigns that promote sustainable way of living e.g. “Sustainable Friday”, “Me-May-Day” as well as sharing knowledge about knitting patterns and “how to” instructions in

creating a more sustainable household. Also she shows that her way of living is sustainable and that she engages into conscious and ethical choices that are meant to preserve the nature.

Blogger 2 chooses to involve herself in the organic yarn consumption. In one of her posts, for example, she tried to support the local wool farmers, by wanting to know if the processes that involves the production of yarn harms in any way the environment. *Bloggers 2* consumption choices are related to her children, by involving herself in sustainable consumption lifestyle, she paints the picture of an engaged and responsible mother when it comes to her children's upbringing, by also involving them in her convictions. When it comes to yarn, she tries to support the local production of yarn by going to sheep farms and checking the production process, as well as sharing knowledge about certifications and labels concerning organic made yarn or about exposing the truth behind the production processes of yarn. She shares her lifestyle choices on the blog through lessons about re-knitting, reusing and repurposing and offers tips on how to live a frugal life.

The lifestyle choices of *blogger 3* are related to the consumption of homegrown and organic produce, especially with farming and getting the produce herself, under the believe, the more local the better. Her lifestyle choices involve participating in “Makers Year” campaign, as well as sharing knowledge about charity organizations and engaging in the local community through gift giving.

The analyzed bloggers life choices go beyond the act of knitting, through their choices they create sustainable lifestyles through which they rethink what they buy and consume and how they organize their daily lives. The lifestyle choices found in the analyzed discourses consist in “self-selected forms of consumerism, involving particular choices in food, clothes and appearance, housing, automobiles, work habits, forms of leisure, and other types of status-oriented behavior” (Giddens, 1991). Also their choices and actions whether at home or at work concerning food, transport, waste and communication contribute into building a sustainable lifestyle politics, which not only has to do with ones consumption choices but also with their personal beliefs and general rules that guide their life.

To conclude, this section has showed how discourses involving sustainability can be found in the globalised society. The terms “conscious” “eco” and ”ethic” are predominant as well as different trends that emerged around the new craft movement like upcycling, Slow Movement and Makers Movement.

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter will summarize the findings of the present research and will present the conclusive thoughts and perspectives related to the researched area.

Gathering the threads

As the CDA of the three chosen blogs has shown there are certain trends and changes in consumption habits taking place in the Western society, more specifically involving the increased interest in the fiber craft community of knitting and its relationships with consumption and globalisation. A general focus and a positive attitude towards sustainability are observed in the analyzed discourses, on multiple levels of society. Thus, based on these factors the overall aim of this thesis was to investigate the possible connections between the changes society faces due to globalisation and its various consequences on the consumption culture. It was proposed that the discourses surrounding the new craft movement in the online knitting communities would help uncover the changes in consumer identities through the perspective of globalisation. Thus, critical discourse analysis method was considered appropriate to investigate, what discourses of “the new craft movement” are expressed in online knitting communities, and how can they reflect the changing consumer identities in contemporary globalised society.

The analysis revealed three central discourses involving “the new craft movement”. The most important discourse found in the chosen blogs was related to sustainable consumption. The following discourses emerged in relation to sustainability after the analysis: refusing and reusing, nature influence discourse, household sustainability, the joy of making and conscious choices. All these discourses were recurrent across all three blogs, demonstrating that there is a growing phenomenon that can be applied to more than one individual, which indicates the existence of discursive tendencies. This thesis argues that these tendencies can mean changes in the way people consume in the Western society. More specifically changes concerning globalisation, our relation with nature and consumption habits and consequently how we identify as individuals in the contemporary global context. Findings showed that the bloggers practiced sustainable lifestyles by involving themselves in reduced consumption practices which include everyday mundane acts such as knitting washcloths and making homemade pesto to more time-consuming practices such as reusing the components of a cotton shirt to hand dyeing and spinning a sheep wool in order to produce yarn. Overall the analysis revealed that the bloggers engage in ways of living that are characterized by efforts to reduce their daily consumption, by living a simpler lifestyle and support the local small producers by building a healthy relationship with the nature.

The second discourse that the analysis revealed related to knitting and craft production being

viewed as more than a skill. Craft production was found to be more than a skill because it involves both the physical side and the spiritual side. The creative consumers, like the knitters prefer to take an active role in shaping the culture they desire rather than being satisfied by the existing conditions in the current consumption culture. Furthermore, a new type of consumer that employs a more resistant identity towards consumption is emerging due to the cultural and environment changes that occurred in the recent years in our society.

The discursive analysis also revealed that the tendency in the consumption habits of knitters to want to personalize objects to their own liking, has to do with their engagement in upcycling and repurposing acts. This type of acts enable them to transfer their consumption views into their everyday habits and life choices, which makes the act of knitting to be considered more than a crafting activity but as a way of living. Furthermore, the analysis of the three blogs revealed similar discursive patterns involved in sustainability across text and sociocultural context. The bloggers appear to be engaged in different types of identity construction surrounding their sustainable consumption habits. Their personal reflections create coherent narratives around being a full time knitter and maker with a passion for nature and storytelling, a caring mother, a conscious consumer that makes frugal choices or an individual that lives a healthy sustainable life. On a cultural and governmental level, similar type of discourses surrounding the word “conscious”, “ethic”, “eco”, “environmentally friendly” and “sustainable” were found. Other discourse include the idea of promoting crafting and making as relevant attitude towards consumption and as part of the new craft movement.

The third type of discourse that the analysis revealed has to do with the relationship between identity and consumption that is reflected in the discourses representing “the new craft movement”. The string that ties these two concepts together is the argument that knitting is considered to be more than a practice by becoming a way of life. Findings exposed the complexity of sustainable lifestyles, the bloggers engaged in diverse actions in order to reduce their consumption habits in different areas of their lives. One could argue that the bloggers could be viewed as “sustainable bricoleurs” (Cherrier, 2008) whose lifestyles are made up of different pieces or sustainable consumption practices: some pieces consist of anti-consumption practices of refusing (e.g. plastic consumption), reducing (e.g. synthetic yarn) and reusing (of e.g. cotton shirts), others of conscious consumption practices such as buying organic or locally grown product. Therefore, the sustainable consumption influences our individual lifestyle.

Overall it is suggested that the development in the crafting community can be connected to a shift in the Western consumers mentality. There were discursive patterns found in the lifestyle crafting blogs that were connected with the social changes and risks that the contemporary society

faces. These results can be seen as consequences of how globalisation is influencing the way Western citizens relate to the contemporary society. Living in a globalised society where the economy is growing, the effect of the financial crisis in consumers' mentality is impossible to ignore, that is why new market trends are generated like the emergence of the new craft movement. This movement argues that overconsumption is not trendy anymore and it should be replaced with reusing old things, knitting clothes instead of buying and overall consuming more consciously (Cherrier, 2008). The relevance of the discursive context for this thesis is knowing that consumption trends are moving towards knitting, recycling, crafting and home-grown products (Cherrier, 2008).

This habit makes it easier to see what type of discourses the crafting consumers construct and how they are related to the changing consumer identities and trends that occur in the contemporary globalised society.

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