COLLABORATIVE CONSUMPTION: CONCEPTUAL SNAPSHOT AT A BUZZWORD

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ABSTRACT

Considerable work has focused on Collaborative Consumption (CC) from a managerial standpoint. Little academic research has been conducted into this specific concept. This paper proposes two theoretical contributions in that regard: 1) a definition of CC that enables to determine effectively whether any given resource distribution system can be labelled as CC or not; 2) the scope and limits of CC by contrasting it with other forms of exchanges. Consumers' capacity to switch side from obtainment to provision or from "obtainer" to "provider" role constitutes the key criteria to identify a resource distribution system as being a form of CC.

We define CC as the set of resource circulation systems which enable consumers to both obtain and provide, temporarily or permanently, valuable resources or services through direct interaction with other consumers or through a mediator.

Collaborative Consumption is therefore a concept which stands in sharp contrast with the notion of Conventional Consumption. Conventional consumption – which underlies classic marketing thought – is a type of resource distribution system which involves passive consumers (not obtainers), who cannot, or are not given the capacity to, provide any resource or service (not providers). Incapable of engaging either in obtainment or in provision, their role is limited to that of buying – monetary exchange - and consuming organization-made resources or services, and, in the case of tangible resources, to discard them. In contrast, Collaborative Consumption involves not mere "consumers" but "obtainers" who may also be "providers". In sum, consumers' capacity to switch roles from provider to obtainer and from obtainer to provider, in a given resource distribution system constitutes the key distinguishing criteria between conventional consumption and CC.

We also introduce the consumer process that is specific to Collaborative Consumption by emphasizing that CC involves not only delegation, such as in conventional consumption, but also empowerment and quasi-empowerment. More specifically, delegation assumes that there is a clear distinction between organizations which produce and sell goods and consumers who buy those goods produced and sold by organizations. Consumers rely on organization-made advertising, texts, logos, labels, trademarks, brands and other communication to choose among the broad array of goods or other types of resources that are offered to them.

Empowerment means that consumers are empowered to collaborate directly with each other. They organize, arrange and negotiate informally the terms and conditions of the exchange of valuable resources, including goods or services. Under the concept of empowerment, consumers engage in what we call pure collaboration, where both the obtainer and the provider are consumers, such as in a secondhand purchase or sale at a flea market.

As a middle-ground between delegation and empowerment, quasi-empowerment involves consumer-to-consumer exchanges that are mediated by a third-party, which is typically an organization. Under the concept of quasi-empowerment, consumers engage either in sourcing

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collaboration or in trading collaboration. Sourcing collaboration means that the provider provides a resource or service to the obtainer through a mediator. On the other hand, trading collaboration means that the obtainer obtains a resource from the provider through that specific mediator.

INTRODUCTION

According to "The Mesh Directory", managed by business author and consultant Lisa Gansky, there are more than 9,000 online platforms across the world, which enable people and organisations to make temporarily available their private resources for others' usage (Owyang, 2014). These platforms represented a global market worth 15 billion dollars, in 2014; 29 billion dollars, in 2015; and are expected to reach 335 billion dollars, by 2025 (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2015). Focusing on tangible goods only, the Canadian-based Kijiji Secondhand Economy Index of 2016, estimated that about 84% of consumers acquired or disposed of pre-owned goods through secondhand marketplaces (secondhand purchase and resale), gift-giving, swapping or temporary renting (out), through either online or offline exchange channels. According to the Kijiji Secondhand Economy Index of 2015, the Canadian secondhand market, alone, was estimated at 230 billion dollars, in 2015. Through co-creation, some CEOs now want customers, not only their workers, to help them define the firm's new products and services (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004). What do these practices all have in common? They form part of a rising global phenomenon called 'Collaborative Consumption' (CC) (Botsman and Roger, 2010) or, more colloquially, "the sharing economy" (Gansky, 2010).

Despite the increasing use of the term Collaborative Consumption (CC) to denote a wide array of new Peer-to-Peer (P2P) business models or innovative technology-enabled exchanges, no consensus on the definition has yet been reached. This lack of agreement has made it difficult for scholars to determine the impact CC has for the study and practice of marketing as well as for society at large. It remains difficult to compare different studies and their results since each of them uses a different conceptualization.

A clearer definition of CC could have several benefits. First, delineating the phenomenon can guide future research and produce useful contributions and recommendations for marketing practitioners who are keen on learning more about how to adapt their business model to the rising CC phenomenon. Second, a clear conceptualization avoids confusion of terms. CC is often conflated with the notion of "sharing", as epitomized in the expression of "sharing economy" or "commercial sharing programs" (e.g. ridesharing, bikesharing, carsharing, tool-sharing, and so forth), which are also widespread in academia (Lamberton and Rose, 2012; Fishman et al., 2013; Parkes et al., 2013; Cohen and Kietzmann, 2014; Bardhi and Eckhardt, 2012), starting with Yochai Benkler (2004). CC is also confounded with access-based business models which involve access to goods without transfer of their ownership (Bardhi and Eckhardt, 2012). Overall, a clearer conceptualization of CC will allow further useful theoretical studies on the subject.

TOWARDS A DEFINITION OF COLLABORATIVE CONSUMPTION

Review of Previous Definitions

Collaborative Consumption (CC) has been first coined by Felson and Spaeth (1978) who themselves drew upon Hawley's (1950) theory of human ecology to theorize collaborative consumption as events requiring a high spatio-temporal concurrence and which must be analyzed

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in terms of human coordination and human competition. They made it clear that, from a consumer behaviour perspective, the unit of analysis is "people", or "consumers" This early conceptualization (see Table 1) is however too broad as it could include such trivial activities as having beer with friends or using a washing machine for family laundry.

Table 1
PREVIOUS DEFINITIONS OF COLLABORATIVE CONSUMPTION

Authors (year)	Definition of collaborative consumption	Web-facilitated	Offline	Transfer of ownership	Free exchanges	Company-owned resources
Felson and Spaeth (1978)	"Those events in which one or more persons consume economic goods or services in the process of engaging in joint activities with one or more others" (p.614)		X		X	
Botsman and Rogers (2010)	"The rapid explosion in swapping, sharing, bartering, trading and renting being reinvented through the latest technologies and peer-to-peer marketplaces in ways and on a scale never possible before" (p.xv)	X	X	X	X	X
Belk (2014)	"people coordinating the acquisition and distribution of a resource for a fee or other compensation" (p.1597)	X				X
Hamari *et al.* (2015)	"Peer-to-peer based activity of obtaining, giving, or sharing the access to goods and services, coordinated through community-based online services" (p. 2)	X		X	X	

More recent definitions which characterize the current phenomenon have therefore been developed but each tends to overemphasize one specific aspect of CC and misses out others.

First, based on the review of studies that sought to define the precise concept of "Collaborative Consumption", there is a common tendency to consider CC as being mainly web-driven. Belk (2014), for example, considers that the common denominator to CC ventures is "an Internet facilitated ability to help people find things" (p.1598). Harvey, Smith and Golightly conflate CC with a "computer-mediated economy". Similarly, Hamari, et al. (2015), conceive CC, primarily and even exclusively, as a technological phenomenon because Peer-to-Peer (P2P) collaboration finds its origins in open source programming, and file-sharing. Online cooperation and digital sharing formed the basis of web-facilitated exchange platforms (Botsman and Rogers, 2010; Gansky, 2010; Airgrain, 2012; Nissanoff, 2006). The technological terminology (e.g. start-ups) and metaphors (peer-to-peer) employed in the discursive construction of CC, are also explicit references to this close relationship between technology and CC (John, 2013a, p.13).

Actually, the Internet enabled to increase the scale and scope of practices that are not inherently new but which have always existed before and have been given a new impetus through web technologies (Ritzer, 2015). The web technology merely increased the scope of

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previously geographically- or community-ascribed exchange systems. As an example, the semantic field surrounding "collaboration" has not only been used to designate strangers exchanging any type of resource from any part of the globe, but also close neighbours joining for a street-corner yard sale on a Sunday afternoon, such as in Herrmann and Soiffer' s (1984) study on American garage sales. CC is therefore an incremental evolution rather than a discrete revolution (Ritzer, 2013). Since it accrues from previously offline-based informal exchanges, these should not be cast out of the way but rather regarded as founding practices of current CC. As such, "offline exchanges" should fit within the conceptual delimitations of CC, mainly because they are no less collaborative than Internet-facilitated modes of value exchange.

The Web technology also enabled unprecedented business models to emerge. Giesler's (2006) analysis of the Napster file-sharing platform emphasized the impact of the Web in transforming previously discrete dyadic (on-to-one) exchanges into networks of polyadic (one-to-many) and rhizomatic (many-to-many) exchanges. Informal product exchanges, resource pooling or jobbing have always existed, yet online applications such as Über or Airbnb tremendously increased both the scope and the intensity of such undeclared practices, which poses, among others, numerous legal issues. In essence, CC is not solely limited to technology-enabled exchanges. Yet, technological advances, especially Web 2.0, increased collaboration between individuals and thus the emergence of new exchange types, which conflate de facto with CC.

Second, since most of CC models are based on leasing and rental schemes, CC has been related to what Bardhi and Eckhardt (2012) termed 'Access-Based Consumption' (e.g. Belk, 2014, p.1597), which can be related to 'commercial sharing systems' (Lamberton and Rose, 2012), 'product service systems' (Tukker, 2004), 'use rather than owning schemes' (Leisman et al., 2013), or 'leasing-rental agreements' (Fisk, 1973), in which access to resources is favoured over their ownership (e.g. Ostrom and Hess, 2007). What is valuable is the service that the good offers rather than the good in itself (Varian, 2000). This approach to CC may be problematic. Focusing solely on product service systems or access-based consumption, excludes a great variety of exchanges such as secondhand purchasing, reselling or swapping, and which are also collaborative (Botsman and Rogers, 2010). Whether offline or computer-mediated, these exchange schemes have often been reported as entailing high levels of P2P cooperation and interaction (Guiot and Roux, 2010; Belk et al., 1988; Herrmann and Soiffer, 1984; Bardhi and Arnould, 2005; Sherry, 1990; Stone et al., 1996; Gregson and Crewe, 2003). The recent literature that started to examine informal and alternative consumption practices, emphasized further that technology – especially the Internet – has favoured the withering of the distinction between prototypical exchange systems (gift-giving vs. swapping vs. commodity exchange) (Arsel and Dobscha, 2011; Albinsson and Perera, 2012; Scaraboto, 2015; Harvey et al., 2014). Instead, there is a simultaneous presence and complementary interaction between different forms of resource circulation systems (Corciolani and Dalli, 2014; Scaraboto, 2015). In other terms, it makes little sense to refer to CC as being limited to temporary access-or granting of access to-resources, since collaboration between consumers can be found in permanent acquisition and disposition as well. Besides, online collaborative platforms tend to blur the frontiers between exchange paradigms anyways. A conceptualization of CC which leaves permanent disposition and acquisition aside would be at best, incomplete, and at worst, irrelevant since it would miss out a substantive portion of CC.

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Conceptual Delineations of Collaborative Consumption

Although being predominantly performed online (Belk, 2014; Hamari et al., 2015), offline-based exchanges should not be omitted from CC. Neither should non-access based consumption schemes which involve transfer of possessions. In line with a consumer-focused approach to collaboration, what should however be clearly kept aside form CC, are resource circulation systems which exclude consumer input either at, what we call, the "provision" and the "obtainment" level. In other words, collaboration should not be merely conflated with P2P, or even online systems, but rather with consumers' capacity of being both "providers" and "obtainers" of resources, in a given "resource circulation system". By taking Scaraboto's (2015) theory on hybrid economies, this means that consumers are able to "switch roles, engage in embedded entrepreneurship and collaborate to produce and access resources" (p. 166). The "resource circulation system" equates the metaphor of a "supply chain", much inspired from the discipline of operations management and logistics. CC is therefore characterized by the fact that a consumer could be both an obtainer and a provider of a given resource. Companies have traditionally sold products and services to consumers, they now start pulling on their resources too (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004). Consumers were classically conceptualized in marketing as buyers whereas they have also always been pushers too (Ritzer, 2015). Consumers invite themselves in the value creation process, as consumers and not as formal workers, employees or suppliers, to successfully reconcile their personal interests. Conversely, organizations tap into the sphere of private assets and skills, as formal organizations and not as family, friends, or acquaintances, to make profits or reach other objectives. A consumer is not only a consumer anymore but also an obtainer who may have the additional opportunity to endorse, if wanted, a provider role. More specifically:

1. The obtainer is the consumer who seeks to obtain a resource or service that is provided directly by another consumer (i.e. the provider), or indirectly through the mediation of an organization known as the "mediator" (for profit or non-profit). "Obtainment" entails secondhand purchase, free receiving, swapping, accessing resources for free or for a compensation (excluding conventional consumption access), reconditioned / refurbished consumption, and to a lesser extent, recycled consumption;
2. The provider is the consumer who provides a specific resource or service either directly, to a consumer (i.e. the obtainer) or, indirectly through a "mediator". "Provision" involves reselling, giving for free, swapping, providing access for free or in exchange of a compensation, recycling or trading in with an organization.

CC may be better conceived of in a broader perspective of resource circulation systems incurring differential levels of collaborative intensity, which can be categorized as: (1) pure collaboration (P2P, or Peer-to-Peer); (2) sourcing collaboration (P2O, or Peer-to-Organization); and (3) trading collaboration (O2P, or Organization-to-Peer).

1. Pure collaboration: both the obtainer and the provider are consumers (e.g. a secondhand purchase/sale at a flea market);
2. Sourcing collaboration: the provider provides a resource or service to the obtainer through a mediator (e.g. resale of a pre-owned television set to a secondhand electronics shop);
3. Trading collaboration: the obtainer obtains a resource or service from the provider through a mediator (e.g. the consumer who purchases the television set from the secondhand electronics shop).

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Pure collaboration involves direct P2P exchanges, in which consumers directly exchange a specific resource or service. For example, on online platforms (e.g. Peerby, Kijiji, eBay or Couchsurfing), consumers directly provide and obtain resources or services. Although these online platforms are intermediates they are not "mediators", because consumers are free to devise the terms and conditions of distribution and consumption of the resource or service together, whereas mediators interfere in the devising. For example, the Canadian-based "ridesharing" website Amigo Express does not allow obtainers (service obtainers) and providers (service providers) to get into contact to arrange the terms of the ride, rather each needs to separately contact and pay a fee to the website in order to, respectively, obtain and provide the service. Most P2P websites are online platforms and operate on the freemium model, where the use of the website is free, but premium features must be paid for (e.g. Kijiji) (Scaraboto, 2015, p.164). Others have a donationware mode of exchange, whereby website use is free but financial donations are requested or accepted to offset production and maintenance costs (e.g. The Khan Academy) (Scaraboto, 2015, p.164).

Sourcing collaboration includes, for example, refurbished or reconditioned products, sold by conventional organizations, but provided by providers who were, for some reason, dissatisfied with the products in question. Other examples include antique dealers, consignment shops or pre-owned books dealers on Amazon.com. Similarly, online platforms which take a percentage off the transaction cost in supposedly P2P exchanges (e.g. Über, Instacart, Task Rabbit, Airbnb), actually outsource the fulfillment of specific tasks or jobs to consumer A in order to efficiently redistribute those to consumer B. In short, instead of manufacturing / purchasing a good or delivering a service by themselves, such organizations rely on providers and obtainers to perform both. They benefit from the Internet to mediate, at a cost and more efficiently, exchanges that would otherwise be authentically P2P exchanges. New technologies have therefore sparked entrepreneurial creativity to develop new breeds of intermediates. They claim to challenge conventional business, and they do so, because they operate business differently, without delivering or producing anything, but by capitalizing on the logics of 'crowdsourcing'. Also, a tangible resource may circulate across multiple organizations (intermediates) from the provider to the obtainer. For example, a car sold by a consumer to a professional car dealer may then be sold and resold by several other car dealers, before being eventually resold to a consumer.

Trading collaboration is the corollary of 'sourcing collaboration'. It is consumer B who obtains a cheap refurbished iPhone or who enjoys a Montreal-Toronto commute in a high-end car driven by consumer A, via ÜberXL. It is the converse of sourcing collaboration, in that it refers to the obtainer who enjoys a resource mediated by an organization but originally provided by a provider via sourcing collaboration.

CC is therefore salient in a multiplicity of resource circulation systems in which the core characteristic is that consumers are able to switch sides. As obtainers, they perform trading collaboration with organizations or pure collaboration with providers; as providers, they engage in sourcing collaboration with organizations, or in pure collaboration with obtainers. In sum, CC can be defined as:

> *The set of resource circulation systems which enable consumers to both obtain and provide, temporarily or permanently, valuable resources or services through direct interaction with other consumers or through a mediator.*

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SIMILARITIES AND FRONTIERS WITH RELATED CONCEPTS

Discriminatory Criteria

Consumers' capacity to switch roles from provider to obtainer and from obtainer to provider, in a given resource distribution system, constitutes the key distinguishing criteria between conventional consumption and CC. Conventional consumption – which underlies classic marketing thought – is a type of resource distribution system which involves passive consumers (not obtainers), who cannot, or are not given the capacity to, provide any resource or service (not providers). Incapable of engaging either in obtainment or in provision, their role is limited to that of buying – monetary exchange - and consuming organization-made resources or services, and, in the case of tangible resources, to discard them. Although a whole literature stream started to acknowledge consumers' capacity to provide resources in addition to obtaining them (Stone et al., 1996; Gregson et al., 2007; Harrell and McConocha, 1992; Hanson, 1980), today, however, academia has devoted precious little research to integrate disposition practices and alternative means of consumption-other than conventional consumption-into theory development and consumer behavior studies. So, from a paradigmatic perspective, the marketing discipline still appears to conceive the consumer as being confined to a role of goods and services buyer-destructor with a limited input in other consumers' consumption processes or in organizations' supply chains.

Acknowledgement of CC challenges that conception. Once it can be acknowledged that consumers can dispose of resources, it follows that they become suppliers or providers of that resource to another party. They cooperate or collaborate with other actors in the market. The idea of cooperation or collaboration has generally been confined to production and B2B relationships (Robert et al., 2014; Perret, 2015). CC epitomizes the overspilling of cooperation or collaboration outside of the production sphere toward that of exchange (Perret, 2015). CC disrupts therefore marketing because it clamps market economies into the social while inserting economic activities into social networks (Laville, 2008; Scaraboto, 2015; Lessig, 2008). It embodies practically the abstract idea that "economies are not the product of intersection between two pure, existing economies [market and nonmarket economies] but are constituted by an interplay of logics and modes of exchange that could occasion a hybrid if their struggle (...) persist or move toward becoming more of a market or nonmarket-like economy should performativities favouring one set of logics and modes of exchange prevail" (Scaraboto, 2015, p.157).

The Consumer Process

After having defined CC and the different concepts that are attached to it, it is also useful to define the process by which consumers perform CC. According to Actor Network Theory (ANT) and convention theory (Latour, 1997, 2005; Boltanski and Thévenot, 2005), the market is a dense network of mechanisms and possibilities e.g. prices, retail spaces, social conventions and norms that enable market actors to coordinate their actions (Callon, 1986 in Dubuisson-Quellier and Lamine, 2008). It prioritizes networks and behaviors over human agency (Bajde, 2013; Loyal and Barnes, 2001). These mechanisms produce consumer processes of delegation or empowerment (Dubuisson-Quellier and Lamine, 2008).

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1. **Delegation:** Delegation relates to the ANT concept of purification, a modernist conception characterized by critique and separation (Latour, 1997; Bajde, 2013). Purification displaces culture and technology. It is most common and most effectual in conventional consumption practice and in consumption studies (Bajde, 2013, p.236). Purification thus assumes a clear distinction between "organizations / production and society / consumption" (Perret, 2015) or "market economies" vs. "nonmarket economies" (Scaraboto, 2015). Consumers on the society / consumption side delegate the supply of resources to organizations / production and perform exclusively conventional consumption. They rely on organization-made advertising, texts, logos, labels, trademarks, brands and other communication cues to choose among the vast morass of goods or other types of resources that are offered to them (Miller, 1987, 1998). This situation is stable in that consumers cannot obtain or provide anything. Hence the purchase of staples in groceries; of (semi-)durables or semi-durables in commercial centers; of lodging in hotels; of leisure and entertainment in cinemas, amusement parks, restaurants; or of financial management in banks and insurance firms;
2. **Empowerment:** Empowerment refers to the ANT concept of translation (Latour, 1997; Bajde, 2013), a postmodernist concept characterized by assemblages (actor-networks) and proliferation in which things are distributed, transported through assiduous association and transformation (Kjellberg and Helgesson, 2007). Contrarily to delegation, consumers are empowered to collaborate directly with each other (Dubuisson-Quellier and Lamine, 2008). Through co-constituted assemblages, they organize, arrange and negotiate informally the terms and conditions of production, distribution and consumption. For example, in farmers' markets, farmers are considered as peers, with whom consumers negotiate directly about conditions in which produce should be cultivated (Dubuisson-Quellier and Lamine, 2004, 2008);
3. **Quasi-empowerment:** In the case of CC, a third hybrid category entitled Quasi-empowerment could be added. While empowerment involves clearly pure collaboration, quasi-empowerment involves both sourcing and trading collaboration. As a middle-ground between empowerment and delegation, in cases of sourcing collaboration, consumers provide inputs into production or distribution in collaboration with a third-party, but the third-party is responsible for the successful trading of the resource or service to other consumers. For example, consumers may be allowed to co-produce or co-create goods or services with established organizations (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004); or they may be allowed to trade-in used games for new ones with video games merchants (Guiot and Roux, 2010, p.397). In both cases, the mediator keeps an important level of control over most of the production and the distribution process, which is why consumers only enjoy quasi-empowerment. This is the second example of listed material.

These three consumer processes, which could be considered as a continuum from delegation to empowerment with quasi-empowerment in-between, can be positioned against another axis scale of perceived distance (Sahlins, 1972, in Arnould and Rose, 2015, p.6). Smaller scales of social distance involve processes that take place with family, friends, relatives and then acquaintances, while larger scales denote collaboration with strangers. Because increased capacity to connect strangers lies at the crux of the current re-emergence of CC as a phenomenon (Botsman and Rogers, 2010; John, 2013a), the focus will be put on large-scale social distance, i.e. people with whom levels of sociality are very low.

Forms of Collaborative Consumption and Frontiers with Other Concepts

Table 2 introduces the concepts referring to different resource circulation systems, according to the level of collaborative intensity (sourcing, trading, or pure) that they involve as well as the consumer process (delegation, empowerment, quasi-empowerment), that each of them entails. As discussed previously, the focus is put on resource circulation systems which imply large social distances, thus excluding close social circles such as family, relatives and friends.

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Table 2
RESOURCE CIRCULATION SYSTEMS, COLLABORATIVE INTENSITY AND CONSUMER PROCESS

Resource circulation systems	Collaborative intensity			Collaborative consumption	Consumer process	Examples involving tangible and intangible types of resources
	Sourcing	Trading	Pure			
Conventional consumption	None	None	None	No	Delegation	- Consumers buying resources at a cost from conventional retailers or directly from manufacturers (e.g. Buying a Chromecast receiver from a Best Buy store)
Reconditioned / refurbished consumption	Yes	Yes	None	Yes	Quasi-empowerment	- Consumers trading in/buying pre-owned resources with/from an organization (e.g. Ikea trade-in programs) - N/A to services
Sharing	N/A	N/A	N/A	No	Empowerment	- Neighbors share a tree located in-between their respective house properties - Colleagues share a 'Potlatch' meal
Free P2P access	None	None	Yes	Yes	Empowerment	- Consumers borrowing/renting out resources temporarily for free from/to other consumers (e.g. Peerby) - Consumers obtaining/providing services for free from/to other consumers (e.g. Couchsurfing)
Compensated P2P access	None	None	Yes	Yes	Empowerment	- Consumers renting (out) a resource temporarily at a cost from (to) other consumers (e.g. Rentable) - Consumers obtaining/providing a service temporarily at a cost from/to other consumers (e.g. Covoiturage.org)
Free mediated access *(peer resources)*	Yes	Yes	None	Yes	Quasi-empowerment	- Consumers borrowing/renting out pre-owned resources temporarily for free from/to an organization (e.g. community sharing center) - Consumers obtaining/providing a service temporarily for free from/to other consumers through the coordination of a third-party (e.g. The Khan Academy)
Compensated mediated access *(peer resources)*	Yes	Yes	None	Yes	Quasi-empowerment	- Consumers renting (out) a resource temporarily at a cost from (to) other consumers via a for-profit mediator (e.g. Getaround, Turo, EasyCar Club, Drivy, RenttheRunway) - Consumers providing/obtaining a service temporarily at a cost to/from other consumers via a for-profit mediator (e.g. Über, Airbnb, Livementor, Lyft, TaskRabbit, Instacart, Tok Tok Tok, Zopa, Prosper, Lending Club, Upstart, Bla Bla Car, Kiva, Gigwalk, Coursera)
Free mediated access *(organization resources)*	None	None	None	No	Delegation	- Consumers renting a resource for free from an organization (e.g. public libraries, toy-lending libraries) - Consumers access services provided by organizations for free (e.g. Fab Labs)
Compensated mediated access *(organization resources)*	None	None	None	No	Delegation	- Consumers renting a resource at a cost from a commercial rental scheme (e.g. Bixi, Car2Go, Zipcar, Lokéo, U-Haul, Rent-a-Car, Avis, Hertz, Stylelend, LendingLuxury, Vestiaire Collective); - Consumers access services provided by organizations at a cost (e.g.,McDonald's, HSBC, Deloitte, Hilton, ING, Virgin Mobile, Barclay's)

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P2P marketplace	No	No	Yes	Yes	Empowerment	- Consumers purchasing/reselling secondhand from/to consumers (e.g. flea markets, car boot sales, garage sales, eBay/Amazon pre-owned goods sections, Kijiji, Gumtree, Craigslist, Vide Dressing) - N/A to services
Mediated marketplace	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Quasi-empowerment	- Consumers buying secondhand/reselling goods from/to mediators (e.g. consignment shops, antique dealers, thrift stores, retro-shops, auctions sales, secondhand stores or sections within conventional stores) - N/A to services
P2P swapping	No	No	Yes	Yes	Empowerment	- Consumers swapping resources with other consumers (e.g. swap meets, SwapTree) - Consumers swap skills and services with other consumers (e.g. interest-free lending/repayment, HomeExchange)
Mediated swapping	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Quasi-empowerment	- Consumers swap resources from a set of resources pooled by a mediator (e.g. Troc-t-Trucs) - Consumers swap skills and services through a mediator-coordinated system (e. g. Local Exchange Trading Systems)
P2P gift-giving	No	No	Yes	Yes	Empowerment	- Consumers giving/receiving resources for free to/from other consumers (e.g. Freecycle) - N/A to services
Mediated gift-giving	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Quasi-empowerment	- Consumers giving/receiving pre-owned resources for free to/from an organization (e.g. charities, food banks, GoFundMe) - N/A to services
Mediated hybrids	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Quasi-empowerment	-Consumers give resources for free to organizations which then resell them (e.g. Yerdle, The Salute's Army, Minitrade, examples from 'mediated marketplace' when consumers do not resell but give away resources for free) - N/A to services

Conventional consumption designates a resource circulation system in which consumers follow a delegation process, because they can neither provide resources to organizations, nor obtain such resources. Consumption becomes collaborative as soon as empowerment possibilities are offered by the conventional manufacturing and retailing system to consumers (e.g. trade-in schemes), involving sourcing and trading collaboration, and which is called refurbished / reconditioned consumption, a form of quasi-empowerment that applies essentially to tangible resources.

Sharing is defined as "the act of distributing what is ours to others for their use and/or the act and process of receiving or taking something from others for our use" (Belk, 2007, p.126). Under sharing, provision or obtainment become attenuated and irrelevant, since the resource is not exchanged but owned jointly (Belk, 2007, 2010). Yet, attenuation and irrelevance does not mean suppression, because under specific situations (e.g. divorce), previously latent ownership rights become salient again (Arnould and Rose, 2015; McAlexander, 1991). Instead of sharing, Arnould and Rose (2015) have proposed the concept of "mutuality", a higher-order orientation underlying forms of exchanges, as a metaphor of inclusion, nearing concepts such as generalized reciprocity (Sahlins, 1965), social utilitarianism (Giesler, 2006) or communal sharing (Fiske, 1992). It is "action that entails the assumption that another party would act toward the first party in a similar, mutual, fashion if circumstances were reversed, as guaranteed by their mutual

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inscription in a common social frame" (Arnould and Rose, 2015, p.14-15). Resources are allocated without calculating returns, and there is a low level of formality as well as a low need to acknowledge what is taken and given (Fiske, 1992). It is most prominent in the household sphere (Belk, 2010; Douglas and Isherwood, 1979).

Either sharing or mutuality may be used, and both denote "a metaphor of inclusion" (Arnould and Rose, 2015). More specifically, in a given resource circulation system, both usage and ownership are shared. Sharing neutralizes thus, at least temporarily, the distinction between provider and obtainer and thus the switching between both roles. If one draws a line in a sand spot, crossing that line is made possible but if no line is drawn in that sand spot, then there is nothing to cross, although the same sand spot is being walked upon. Sharing boils down to the erasing of that line in the sand, and to the recognition of one common spot in the sand instead of that spot being separated into two distinct areas. In other words, sharing is a tacit or implicit agreement related to a supposedly permanent denial of obtainer(s) and provider(s) statuses, of the notion of a resource circulation system and thus of the notion of exchange.

As explained earlier, specific life events or circumstances such as divorce or interpersonal conflicts, may threaten sharing so that original ownership rights may ultimately resurface. Once a consumer reclaims a resource that was originally pooled and subject to joint usage and ownership (shared usage and shared ownership), the 'alienation' of that resource from the sharing system reinstalls potentialities of collaboration (Curasi et al., 2004), because that consumer may provide the resource to potential obtainers.

Further, because sharing refers to the mental model of Communal Sharing in which people treat - or at least, pretend to treat - material objects as things they have in common (Fiske, 1992), it is therefore rooted in empowerment. The resource is theoretically regarded as a commons, without regard for how much any individual uses or takes; everything belongs to all together and individual shares and property are not marked (Fiske, 1992, p.694). There may be certain hierarchies and levels of ownership intensity within a given sharing sphere (Ostrom and Hess, 2007), but distinguishing between obtainer and provider is irrelevant since resources do not undergo discrete exchange patterns and thus ownership and usage transfer. Rather, they are embedded in a continuous and evolutive (narrowing or widening) circle of ownership and usage sharing (Albinsson and Perera, 2012, p.306). Considerations of sourcing, trading or pure collaboration are thus irrelevant since sharing is not rooted in exchange.

Although this assertion might be counter-intuitive because sharing is inherently something that appears collaborative, for the present conceptualization of CC, it is not. The case of sharing is also an excellent one to demonstrate the independence between consumer process and collaborative intensity. Consumer process refers essentially to the extent to which consumers are emancipated from conventional retailing (Dubuisson-Quellier and Lamine, 2008). Empowerment signals maximal emancipation and is at its highest when no intermediary is involved (i.e. P2P) or when the logic of exchange, derived from the notion of commodity exchange and underlying the mental model of market pricing (Fiske, 1992, p.196; Komter, 2005), is bypassed (i.e. sharing). For each type of resource distribution system that integrates pure collaboration (i.e. P2P), empowerment is adjunct because it signals independent consumers who are the only ones responsible for the exchange. Besides, for each type of resource distribution system that does not acknowledge the existence of individual property, empowerment is similarly adjunct, because such a system transcends the notion of exchange and exclusion in favour of mutuality (or commensalism [Hawley, 1950]) and inclusion (Arnould and Rose, 2015).

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Collaboration, on the other hand, is rooted in exchange and characterizes the various levels through which, consumers collaborate with each other or with other organizations to make resources circulate across closed-ended ecosystems of sharing, through temporary or permanent transfer of ownership rights. As such, although P2P exchanges involve empowerment, they are still rooted in the notion of exchange and, as such, qualify for attributions of collaborative intensities.

In brief, sharing overlaps with CC when consumers (re-)associate the ownership rights of a resource with (a) particular consumer(s); or when compensations are provided to the supposed owner / provider, in order to use the resource. Both conflate respectively with free and compensated P2P access. They also refer to empowerment.

Access and related concepts are temporary acquisition or disposition of a resource. More specifically they refer to "transactions that may be market mediated in which no transfer of ownership takes place" (Bardhi and Eckhardt, 2012, p.881). Contrarily to sharing, which involves shared usage and shared ownership, access does not involve joint ownership (Bardhi and Eckhardt, 2012). Usage is shared but ownership is not. For example, different consumers who share the usage of a car to get from Montreal to Toronto share the usage of the car, but car ownership rights remain legally attached to the car owner. Also, Access may be free or compensated; and P2P or mediated. Therefore, certain aspects of Access overlap with CC but others are clearly excluded from it.

First, there is a thin line between free P2P access and sharing. However, sharing involves joint ownership (Belk, 2007, 2010), or at least, a temporary and tacit recognition that ownership rights are being detached from a specific individual and shared with others. Free P2P access, on the other hand, involves no transfer of ownership or joint ownership (Ostrom and Hess, 2007; Bardhi and Eckhardt, 2012). Second, the provision of a compensation to the lending consumer would indicate a shift toward compensated P2P access. Whether free or compensated, the fact that consumers interact directly to discuss the terms and the conditions of the access, would mean that they follow an empowerment process. Third, some organizations may also grant free access to resources sourced collaboratively such as in community centers, where, usually, not for profits coordinate the process in which consumers may rent out their goods for free to others and may take them back whenever they want. Such a system corresponds to quasi-empowerment. In Table 2, this practice refers to free mediated access (of peer resources). Fourth, when resources to which an organization grants compensation-based access, have initially been provided by consumers, CC is manifest through sourcing (trading) collaboration. Consumers on both ends enjoy quasi-empowerment. Usually, the third-party or mediator takes a certain percentage on the price of the transaction, or requests users to pay membership. Entrance or listing fees and other types of charges are added in certain circumstances such as "late charges" for obtainers or providers who do not behave on time, "no show up charges", for obtainers or providers who do not show up at all. Über and Airbnb, for services, or Zilok and BMW's Drivy, for goods, are prominent examples into that category of compensated mediated access (of peer resources) (Table 2). Fifth, access offered by organizations such as Zipcar, Daimler's Car2Go or tool libraries are compensated mediated access (of organization resources) (in Table 2). They do not allow for any form of collaboration and involve delegation. They correspond therefore to the access-based form of conventional consumption. Sixth, there are many instances were organizations provide goods, and especially, services to consumers. In public libraries or toy-lending libraries, consumers borrow goods for free. Similarly, consumers may access to fab labs (i.e. fabrication laboratories) which are open innovation centers that provide access to modern

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means of invention to consumers, for free. Access to any type of resources comprised within a fab lab, university, or museum, including towels in the bathroom, do not involve CC. Consumers delegate the whole process of providing the resource and infrastructures to organizations, and they do not provide or obtain any type of resource, which indicates therefore absence of CC. The paragraph about hybrid economies brings some nuances to that assertion.

In addition to temporarily accessing to resources, consumers may also acquire or dispose of them permanently. First, P2P marketplace refers to monetary exchanges in which consumers purchase or resell pre-owned goods directly with one another. The intensity of their collaboration is therefore high because it is P2P and the consumer process involved is one of empowerment. Second, in mediated marketplace, consumers are able to purchase from and to resell to a mediator such as a conventional store or a second hand store; collaboration become of trading or sourcing nature and the consumer process is quasi-empowerment. Third, P2P swapping indicates that consumers directly exchange resources in person, involving pure collaboration and empowerment. Fourth, the introduction of a mediator between swappers causes the consumer process to become one of quasi-empowerment because consumers exchange indirectly through a coordinating mediator, which is mediated swapping. Fifth, consumers may give away resources for free without any compensation in return. P2P gift-giving involves consumers who give and others wo receive, without any mediator. The process is one of empowerment. Sixth, in an attempt to render git-giving and resource redistribution more efficient, some mediators such as online platforms (e.g. Kiva) or charities redistribute resources to consumers who need them. Through mediated gift-giving, the intensity of collaboration is therefore of trading and sourcing type and the consumer process is one of quasi-empowerment.

Hybrid economies designate resource circulation systems in which different modes of value exchange paradigms (gift-giving, swapping or monetized exchange), occur within a given resource circulation system (Corciolani and Dalli, 2008; Dalli and Corciolani, 2014). All the different resource circulation systems listed so far, in Table 2, involve the same exchange paradigm across both obtainment and provision. For example, "free P2P access" involves a consumer who may rent out a Playstation 4 for free and another consumer who borrows it. In both cases, free access occurs. As another example, in 'mediated marketplace', a consumer may resell a used car to a car dealership, and that car may be ultimately purchased by another consumer. Usually, consumers get vouchers or gift cards for trading in their pre-owned products, which is equivalent to money. More importantly, both the obtainment and the provision phases, involve a permanent monetary exchange. Scaraboto (2015) defines hybrid economies, as the "coexistence of multiple logics and modes of exchange in a mutually beneficial dynamic, and where new logics and modes for the distribution of resources emerge that resemble but are nevertheless distinguishable from the ones commonly associated with either market or nonmarket economies" (p.155). Therefore, hybrid exchanges indicate the presence of both market and nonmarket practices within a single resource circulation system. For example, many secondhand stores, such as The Salute's Army are donation centers, which receive goods from consumers for free and resell them at a cost to other consumers. Some retailers enable consumers to swap their used goods, which will then be reconditioned or refurbished, to be resold at a cost. In some resource circulation systems labelled as free mediated access (of organization resources), libraries may use procurement systems to purchase new books, but consumers may also supply books that will be available at libraries. For example, Ozanne and Ballantine (2010) identified that consumers give toys to toy-lending libraries which are then rented out for free to other consumers. These are forms of hybrid economies.

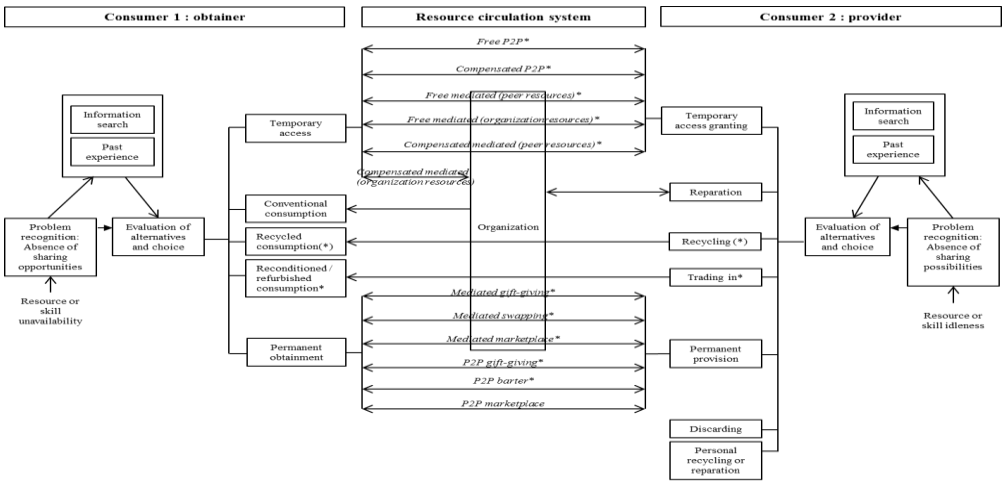
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The Collaborative Consumption Stages

By drawing on previous works from the literature stream about disposition (Jacoby et al., 1977; Hanson, 1980; Paden and Stell, 2005; Harrell and McConocha, 1992), the classic stages in the consumer decision making model (Engel et al., 1968) can be adapted to depict CC, as exhibited in Figure 1. On the left hand-side, Figure 1, starts with the realization of the unavailability of a resource or skill. The absence of sharing opportunities constitutes a problem that is acknowledged by the consumer. Problem recognition then triggers recollection of past experiences involving conventional consumption or obtainment and/or information search on ways to conventionally purchase or obtain the resource (Gregson et al., 2007). The search and memories recollection process may also be bypassed. The consumer then evaluates obtainment alternatives, in addition to conventional consumption ones, and further decides whether to access to the resource temporarily or acquire it permanently. Double arrows indicate temporary access with the resource returning to the initial provider (i.e. access).

Going to the right hand-side of Figure 1, Botsman and Rogers (2010) indicated that one of the key foundations of CC was 'resource or skill idleness'. Sharing possibilities are absent, perhaps because a former sharer has died, divorced, moved or relinquished ownership rights. A tangible good may be underused, unused or unwanted and falls prey to provision (Curasi et al., 2000). Similarly, a skill may be underused or unused because of a job loss or a lack of opportunity to exert that skill for useful purposes. Consumers' evaluation and choice of an appropriate disposition system is influenced by past experience (Gregson et al., 2007) as well as information search, but could also bypass those steps, such as when a consumer thinks spontaneously of providing a resource to a consumer with whom she is interacting and who may be in need of the resource. For example, one consumer may be speaking of her need of a child's bed while the other realizes that she has one and gives it to her. Consumption is collaborative when the consumer, who becomes a provider, either disposes permanently or temporarily of a resource through P2P exchanges (pure collaboration), or mediated exchange (sourcing collaboration). Sharing is again outside of the scope of CC. When consumers rely on organizations / professionals to discard resources, they follow a process of delegation which deters them from switching sides.

Figure 1
COLLABORATIVE CONSUMER DECISION-MAKING PROCESS



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When they perform either repairing or recycling personally (e.g. composting) and with their own private means, they do not exchange but follow empowerment, because they rely upon themselves. Just as for sharing, personal recycling (e.g. composting) and repairing as well as discarding, are cases in which collaboration is thus irrelevant. Mediated recycling is more ambivalent because the resource is destroyed by an organization and used as input for other types of resources, which is different from all the other types of exchanges which incur an integer or slightly modified resource (e.g. reconditioned, refurbished). Therefore, mediated recycling is a type of ambivalent collaboration which involves sourcing and trading exchange, through a consumer process of quasi-empowerment.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Theoretical Contributions

This paper seeks to contribute to the emerging literature gravitating around the concept of collaborative consumption (Lamberton and Rose, 2012; Bardhi and Eckhardt, 2012; Arsel and Dobscha, 2011; Albinsson and Perera, 2012; Harvey et al., 2014; Hamari et al., 2015; Belk, 2014). Given the lack of any clear definition of CC, and a common confusion with the "sharing" concept, the most important contribution of this paper is to suggest a conceptualization of CC and to clarify its relation to adjacent concepts such as sharing or access. CC is defined as, the set of resource circulation systems which enable consumers to both obtain and provide, temporarily or permanently, valuable resources or services through direct interaction with other consumers or through the mediation of a third-party. The key discriminatory criteria to distinguish between CC and other forms of resource circulation systems (e.g. conventional consumption), can thus be expressed in terms of collaborative intensity: any exchange channelled through a resource circulation system which allows consumer to switch sides from 'obtainer' to 'provider', can be deemed collaborative, whether it is free or compensation-based, peer-to-peer or organization-mediated, online or offline, involving a transfer of ownership or not.

Belk (2014) suggested that CC is a subset of Bardhi and Echardt's (2012) 'Access-based consumption'. Instead, the aforementioned definition implies that the concept of Access, as originally defined in the property rights literature (Ostrom and Hess, 2007; Hess and Ostrom, 2007; Schlager and Ostrom, 1992), is a specific form of CC. Regardless of whether it is P2P (free or compensated) or mediated (free or compensated), whenever the resource being exchanged has been initially sourced by another consumer, the resource circulation system embedding exchange encapsulates CC. Therefore, not all forms of access-based consumption pertain to CC, especially if they are market-mediated and use solely organizational private assets, contrarily to what has been reported in the literature (e.g. Lamberton and Rose, 2012; Bardhi and Eckhardt, 2012; Belk, 2014). Resource circulation systems which involve compensated mediated access (to organization resources) such as Car2Go, Zipcar, Communauto, Bixi and likes do not correspond to collaborative forms of consumption since: 1) they do not involve trading or sourcing collaboration and, 2) they put consumers into a delegation process. By now, the complete irrelevance of such resource circulation systems with sharing be even more evident. More genuine CC schemes refer, for example, to Daimler's Drivy which is a P2P platform enabling consumers to rent (rent out) their car from (to) others, and the website takes a percentage on the renting price, which corresponds to sourcing and trading collaboration, as well as a quasi-empowerment consumer process.

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This paper also makes a strong case in recusing the concept of 'sharing economy' that has been recurrently utilized by many business press outlets, commentators and analysts, even in negative critics. Rather, CC is everything but sharing as it starts where sharing ends and it ends where sharing starts (see Figure 1). Sharing involves de jure or de facto joint ownership and usufruct (Arnould and Rose, 2015; Belk, 2007, 2010), whereas the modes of value exchange headed under CC imply either permanent transfer of ownership and usage rights (reconditioned / refurbished consumption, gift-giving, barter and marketplace) or transfer of usage rights only (access).

It appears that the only setting involving genuine sharing and which is characterized by large social distances, is the digital context, and especially Web 2.0, whose constitutive activity is sharing (John, 2013b). Both usage and ownership are de facto being shared (Giesler, 2006; Airgrain, 2012). Digital examples of sharing abound such as open source P2P money systems (e.g. Bitcoin, Bristol Pound), user-generated content platforms (e.g. Wikipedia, YouTube), open source software and operating systems (e.g. Linux/Unix), P2P file-sharing (e.g. BitComet), and hybrid which involve sharing and other types of exchanges (e.g. Creative Commons, Dailymotion's pay-per-video option). Many online platforms reclaiming themselves from the so-called "sharing economy" involve no sharing at all. They do enable collaboration by extending its scope to unprecedented levels or drive collaboration by encouraging its materialization in offline and more diversified settings and many of them are P2P (John, 2013a), but the type of resource circulation that they involve is not 'sharing'. The future of the "sharing economy", if one may allow the term, may rather lie with participatory web cultures such as folksonomies, which are "archive sites where users contribute data to the archive and metadata to organize the archived content" (Beer and Burrows, 2010, p.5), such as YouTube, Flickr, Creative Commons or Wikipedia, which are now well-known and valuable cultural brands (Beer and Burrows, 2010).

Managerial Implications

The study suggests that conventional organizations, especially companies, are not the desperate losers as the media often portray. Rather, they are central not only for conventional consumption but also for a variety of CC forms of exchange. Organizations are part of resource distribution systems which aim at offering maximized value for consumers (Kotler and Keller, 2006). Yet, for consumers, value may not be limited to the purchase of a good or a service. Exchange is source of value (Simmel, 1978), and since exchange involves two facets, for consumers, value may not only reside in acquisition but also in proposition. Overall, marketers – regardless of their industry sector – may benefit from reconsidering how they consider 'maximizing consumer value'. Allowing consumers to play a more active role, beyond participation in advertising or product design as discussed in the co-creation literature (e.g. Ramaswamy and Pralahad, 2004), may have several advantages. It creates value for consumers in that the brand or company is now associated to a valuable partner in consumer economies, but may also lead to synergies in selling i.e. cross-selling, up-selling (Paden and Stell, 2005), and attract new segments of consumers who prefer to acquire lower-priced or re-used resources (Chu and Liao, 2007).

Marketing communications could emphasize the recourse through collaborative sourcing as a sustainable effort on part of the company to not only increase usage intensity through access but also foster environmental protection through the reuse of pre-owned resources. In other terms, this means coupling the advantages of access (practicality, intensity of usages) to the

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circular economy (extension of the resource lifecycle, reconditioning, reuse) (Robert et al., 2014). Companies offering CC access would also benefit from marketing the difference in cost between resource ownership and resource access (Leisman et al., 2013).

Because of cognitive lock-in resulting from the perception of a higher efficiency in re-using web platforms that are already mastered i.e. the Power Law of Practice (Johnson et al., 2003), consumers consult generally only a few websites in order to access various resource distribution systems (e.g. secondhand purchase, carsharing, gift-giving). For a company, as long as congruence is observed with its market positioning and branding, it may be worthwhile to develop a P2P consumer marketplace along conventional consumption offerings, on a unique website. For example, a sports equipment retailer website could include a forum or platform on which consumers can swap, donate, resell or purchase resources secondhand, organize homeswapping or carsharing for trekking outings, and so on. Previous research demonstrated that a cannibalization effect may be offset by the fact that consumers may easily dispose of resources on the website in order to acquire new ones, which would in turn lead to more product sales form the retailer (Paden and Stell, 2005). Some consumers even buy with the intention to resell which brings them cash to recover the original purchase payment and re-purchase other new or pre-used goods more easily (Chu and Liao, 2007, 2010; Liao and Chu, 2013; Nissanoff, 2006). Such efforts may also generate more favourable attitudes toward the organization, increase loyalty, trust and satisfaction.

Eventually, for companies which need to constantly remain in close contact with their markets because those represent rapidly shifting consumer subcultures such as, for example, Schouten and McAlexander's (1991) Harley Davidson biker community, the integration of consumers in co-production and co-creation is an interesting instance of CC through sourcing collaboration.

The current hype surrounding the 'sharing economy' is already driving existing and new organizations to position themselves in the so-called 'sharing segment' or 'sharing economy', and exposing themselves often quite unwillingly to 'sharewashing'. Yet, if companies position their business as sharing, while it is indeed compensation-based access (or even free-mediated access), this could undermine their credibility and reputation in the eyes of consumers and critics. Emphasizing economic, social and environmental advantages of their business model, with direct positive impacts on consumers' lives (Carrigan and Attalla, 2001), would be more honest, more credible, foster consumer trust and direct attention to distinct competitive advantages, because now everybody trumpets to be in the so-called "sharing economy" anyways.

Societal Implications

The present study enlightened the fact that many so-called "P2P business models" claiming to be part of the "sharing economy", are actually "compensated mediated access of peer resources". But verbal misuses have already been discussed and if that would all there was to discuss, everything would be just fine. However, such organizations are at the heart of rising polemics because they also often cause negative effects on society at large. For example, in a comment posted to The Press Project Blog on Friday 24 in 2014, P2P business models do not contribute to social welfare systems, impose disloyal competition to established economic agents, generate the emergence of a multiplicity of intermediaries (e.g. organizations taking fully in charge the posting of ads on Airbnb, or of the cleaning of properties listed on that same platform), and put providers in a precarious situation (e.g. absence of legal work contracts, absence of social benefits scheme, undefined professional status). From a social perspective,

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these organizations extend the market to the private sphere contributing to an increased commodification of all aspects of life (Perret, 2015). According to the comment posted on The Press Project Blog cited previously, every privately-owned asset or act of mutual aid (e.g. housing friends for free), has an opportunity cost which undermines genuine sharing or free giving away. Extended commoditization is marketed under a rosy package of appealing values such as mutuality, collectivism and disinterestedness. While some organizations are genuinely based on values of mutuality, cooperation, benevolence and financial disinterestedness such as Couchsurfing, or Local Exchange Trading Systems, others clearly take advantage of the legal, financial, fiscal or political – and obviously, conceptual - mist surrounding CC and the "sharing economy" to design peer-sourced business models that are everything but sharing (in addition to sharing being everything but CC). Rather, they deploy heavy lobbyism to curb institutional attempts to regulate their practices, are committed to shareholder value maximization and the implementation of aggressive / predatory business strategies to achieve organizational goals (Cohen and Kietzmann, 2014).

They do offer useful services in many instances such as temporary employment, additional income or increased savings (Dillahunt and Malone, 2015). They are also innovative, from an entrepreneurial viewpoint, because consumers do not only provide their labour and skills but also their own personal and private resources in order to perform jobs that are in demand but for which there is a shortage in the offer. In October 2014, Juliet Schor wrote in an essay on the Grassroots Economic Organizing website that, through 'new technologies of P2P activity' providers may regain bargaining power compared to regular employees in conventional consumption organizations, but this would require democratizing both ownership and governance of these online platforms. In other terms they should become truly P2P and involving empowerment, because as this study shows they are currently mediated and entail, at best, quasi-empowerment.

Deeper discussions about the normative aspects of these business models are beyond the scope of this article, rather what is contended is their affiliation to a so-called "sharing economy" and scholars' re-use of that same misleading rhetoric. Rather, and very beneficially so, because they involve sourcing and trading collaboration (not pure collaboration and not sharing), they are manifest instances of CC.

Limitations and Avenues for Future Research

Inter-organization as well as intra-organizational collaboration has been the subject of a large corpus of research in the strategic management literature (e.g. Martin and Eisenhardt, 2010; Galunic and Eisenhardt, 2001), because it is an important source of economic value for organizations (Bowman and Helfat, 2001). Similarly, collaboration is on the rise in consumer marketplaces because it enables consumers to derive more value-not only economic, but also practical, social, hedonic, symbolic, or ecological-than through conventional consumption (Belk, 2014; Mano and Elliott, 1997; Guiot and Roux, 2010). This novel form of consumption entails therefore important implications for strategic management.

As a first step to dig into the vast concept of collaborative consumption, this study sought to define CC. By so doing it introduced several new key concepts in strategy which are essential to understand the conceptual mapping surrounding CC, and to provide a conceptual framework for subsequent research in strategic management into that domain. Such concepts include: "resource circulation system", "obtainment" and "obtainer" as well as "provision" and "provider"; "delegation", "empowerment", "quasi-empowerment", "pure collaboration",

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"sourcing collaboration" and "trading collaboration". Other concepts are more straightforward. One key construct that has been used throughout this article is "resource" which, in addition to "services", has been voluntarily kept as large as possible. Many CC exchange schemes involve not only goods or services but land, money, time, skills or space. Since the focus of the article was mainly at delineating the CC concept, potential nuances between different types of resources have not been eschewed. For example, a service is delivered and there is no transfer of either ownership or usage. Skills and knowledge are not only exchanged but become, very likely, shared as soon as they are transferred. Future research could provide a more specific conceptualization of the collaborative process according to the type of resource involved in the exchange, and particularly when that resource is more intangible such as in the case of a service or a skill.

Second and related to the previous point, the variety of collaboration configurations (e.g. C2C, C2B, B2C, G2C, C2G) through highly differentiated forms of resource circulation systems , makes the study of collaborative consumption schemes a complexity phenomenon often termed an "edge of chaos" in the literature (Davis et al., 2009). In addition to the framework proposed into this study, future research could adapt the classic cross-business-unit collaboration framework (Martin and Eisenhardt, 2010) to examine the various collaborative configurations that may exist between consumers and organizations. This kind of research could be of particular value in order to further our understanding of co-creation and co-optation between firms and consumers as initially discussed by Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2000) or Ramaswamy, Venkat and Gouillart (2010).

Third, the media and firm communications have contributed to introduce CC as an "innovation" and discussed it as a strategy to change consumer behaviour to reduce the environmental impact of consumption (Meijkamp, 1998; Shaheen and Cohen, 2007; Jonsson, 2006). Several professional works contributed and still contribute to positioning CC as an innovative concept with intrinsic social benefits (Meijkamp, 1998). Such professional works include most notably Benkler (2006), Botsman & Rogers (2010), Gansky (2010), or Owyang, Samuel & Grenville (2014). The CC innovation was presented as a way to improve the "production process" or certain end results which can be called "units of service" for the consumer, the whole being defined as "consumption technology" (Meijkamp, 1998). Examples of units of service may include, getting a loan, a lift, a meal or accessing clothing. Their corresponding consumption technologies are peer-to-peer lending, carpooling, co-lunching, and secondhand systems. These consumption technologies and the eco-efficient units of services that they allow are therefore introduced as an innovation strategy (Meijkamp, 1998). While posing the whole of CC as being innovative is debatable, most of its web-mediated components are. Future research could investigate in more details to what extent innovative CC schemes (e.g. web-mediated ones) are more eco-efficient than their conventional counterparts.

Further, this study shows the depth of collaboration in consumption and it is actually huge. Although special attention has been granted to be as exhaustive as possible in identifying resource circulation systems in which consumers are able to switch sides from obtainers to providers and conversely, some may have been omitted, either because they have not (yet) been documented in the literature or because their link with CC is ambiguous. For example, a car that is put at the scrapyard by a consumer may involve discarding or recycling. The scraper may also remove valuable parts from the car and resell them to professionals or to other consumers, which corresponds to sourcing-trading collaboration and quasi-empowerment. Varying forms of collaboration are involved but their exact designation implies close scrutiny of the scrappers'

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activities. Further research could therefore develop more specific categorizations within each specific type of resource circulation system.

A final remark concerns consumer agency in the decision-making process. Very often, some resources are imposed on the consumer rather than the consumer deliberately seeking a resource, as well as comparing and choosing between different options to get it. This is very prominent in gift-giving where consumers are being "imposed" a good or a service which they did not necessarily ask for. Such circumstance of lower consumer agency, often trigger subsequent disposition intentions, which increase in salience when consumers are aware of CC alternatives to get rid of unwanted items (Chu and Liao, 2007, 2010). This abridges the consumer's decision-making process from its initial phases and may also increase the velocity of resource circulation because the consumer will quickly seek to get rid of the resource. Future research could therefore investigate the extent to which lack of agency in a collaborative acquisition process could be counterbalanced by a(n) (pro)active collaborative disposition process in order to confirm one's capacity to act upon the world.

CONCLUSION

Despite increased attention for Collaborative Consumption (CC), both in academia, by scholars, and in practice, by marketers, a clear definition of Collaborative Consumption is still missing. This study delineates the concept of Collaborative Consumption and compares it to other consumption schemes such as conventional consumption, sharing, access-based consumption or the sharing economy. It posits that Collaborative Consumption refers to all those resource distribution systems which enable the consumer to be either the acquirer of a resource or the provider of that resource. As such, it defines Collaborative Consumption according to three levels of collaboration and it also introduces the type of process consumers follow in different systems of resource channeling. The implications of this study are then discussed and limitations are highlighted in order to provide avenues for future research in the domain.

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