

**When corporations preempt environmental
policies via market-based activities:
The case of take-back systems at Swedish
apparel retailers**

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Defensive reactions of Swedish fashion firms

- **Talk**
 - “We know that linearity is wrong”.
- **Actions (ex.)**
 - Leasing models
 - Repair to prolong usage
 - And *take-back systems* : In-store collection of used clothes



Take-back systems



The Breakup (1'57'')

Film by Bela Borsodi (2014) for H&M



Qualification theory 1/2

- **Callon, Méadel, and Rabeharisoa (2002)**

All quality is obtained at the end of a process of qualification, and all qualification aims to establish a constellation of characteristics, stabilized at least for a while, which are attached to the product and transform it temporarily into a tradable good in the market. (p199)



Qualification theory 2/2

- **Involve producers, distributors, and consumers**
- **Includes even storage, resale, repair, recycling, and disposal**
- **Fights over the meaning of things: trials**
- **“techniques through which value and quality are enacted, and the ways in which qualification is always relational” (Hawkins et al., 2015, p. 69).**



Qualifying take-back systems

- Responsible
- Amorous
- Convenient
- Circular
- Pedagogic
- Reticular: nodes in a net of circular actions



What take-back systems do

- Communicate to employees, customers, competitors, and other stakeholders that the fashion industry can actually be sustainable
- Initiate circular material flows
- Introduce new patterns of behavior, responsibility, commitment, obligation, and accountability



Defensive Institutional Work

“The purposive action of individuals and organizations aimed at countering disruptive institutional work.”

(Maguire and Hardy, 2009)



Commercial activism

Take-back systems:

- *Fait accompli* provide a performative definition of circular economy
- Allow corporations to supplant authorities
- Pre-empt environmental policy: successfully in view of current plans of corporate-led extended producer responsibility system that give retailers an access to used textiles material



References

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See also:

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**Thank you for your kind
attention**

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