Children helping children?

Values and concerns in corporate charity

Yelyzaveta Hrechaniuk

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Introduction

This thesis is about charity. It begins on an ordinary day on my way to work when I go past a petrol station and stop to buy a large cup of coffee. The company donates two Swedish crowns per cup to a children's support line.¹ At work, I accidentally get a paper cut, but luckily I have a pack of band-aids I bought earlier from a home goods store. The profit from the sales is donated to an international children's charity.² I take a break at work to buy another coffee and settle for a good coffee-and-cake deal because the coffee shop donates five crowns to the Childhood Cancer Fund.³ On my way home, I walk past a chain store that sells children's clothes and toys, and remember that I need to buy a birthday gift for a friend's baby. Luckily, they are still selling those cuddly stuffed bunnies where 20 Swedish crowns from each toy sold go to a children's charitable organization.⁴ I also go to buy some groceries and pick up a few packs of chewing gum advertised as "chewing for change"⁵ – part of the proceeds from these also go to children in need. It is not that each of these purchases contributes with a lot of money, but no good deed is too small, I think to myself. Every contribution counts, especially for children! Besides, I needed to buy the gift and my morning coffee anyway, so there was no extra effort or time invested in doing a good thing. And now that I know all of these small purchases support children, they feel like a much better bargain compared to other kinds of chewing gum, coffee, or toys. But not better in that shallow market-competition-between-companies way. It is as though something as mundane as a cup of coffee has suddenly become more meaningful, part of something bigger.

¹ Campaign by the chain of petrol stations "Circle K", the proceeds go to the children's rights organization BRIS: <https://www.circlek.se/bris>

² "Children's rights band-aids" produced by the non-profit organization Childhood and sold in Clas Ohlson stores: <https://www.clasohlson.com/se/Pl%C3%A5ster-Childhood%2C-30-pack/p/Pr443772001> and <https://childhood.se/stod-oss/gavoshop/barnrattsplaster/>

³ Campaign "An extra good espresso" at the "Espresso House" chain: <https://espressohouse.com/nyheter/espresso-house-stodjer-barncancerfonden/>

⁴ Soft toy bunnies sold in the "Polarn o Pyret" stores in 2019 and at the time of writing also children's t-shirts, with the proceeds going to Save the Children Sweden: <https://www.polarnopyret.se/pop-cares/var-policy/radda-barnen>

⁵ Brand EXTRA's campaign "Chew for change!" ("Tugga för skillnad!") with the proceeds donated to the non-profit organization SOS Children Villages Sweden: <https://tuggaförskillnad.se/>

The day I have just described is fictional, but the campaigns I have mentioned, and my thoughts and questions about them, are quite real. The ways in which contemporary charity blends into so much of our purchasing of goods has fascinated me for some time. I was captivated by the seeming effortlessness of this way of giving to charity: as a consumer, I am not required to do anything more than buy. The company whose product I purchase and the non-profit organization that receives the donation will take care of the rest.

I also wondered about its omnipresence and mundaneness: there is something particularly fascinating about charity creeping into bags of salad or juice bottles at the supermarket, cups of coffee at a café, mass-produced clothes and toys. Since I do research in the field of Child Studies, I could not help noticing how many of these campaigns claim to make a change for children. Children here in Sweden and in countries far away, children suffering from diseases and mental health problems, bullying and poverty. At a glance, this is a staggering range of huge problems. Why is it that children seem to be most in need of campaigns selling charitable chewing gum and coffee?

According to Giva Sweden, three of the top five charitable organizations that received most donations from companies and private individuals in Sweden in 2017 are charities that work with children: UNICEF Sweden, Save the Children Sweden, and SOS Children's Villages Sweden.⁶ In this thesis, the focus is on what is sometimes called corporate charity: initiatives arranged by for-profit companies in collaboration with non-profit organizations, and in particular campaigns such as those I listed earlier, where sales of the company's products are said to generate a charitable donation. Such campaigns are also referred to using terms such as "purchase-triggered donation" and "cause related marketing" (Einstein, 2017; King, 2006, 2010a, 2010b; Li, 2017). Compared to initiatives where for-profit companies donate a pre-determined sum to a charitable organization, consumption-driven campaigns such as these offer an even more apparent intertwinement of commerce and charity, for-profit and non-profit actors. I argue that

⁶ According to the fundraising report made by Giva Sweden, earlier the Swedish Fundraising Association, Frivilligorganisationernas Insamlingsråd, about its member organizations, <https://www.friise.cdn.triggerfish.cloud/uploads/2018/05/insamlingsstatistik-2017-rapport-final.pdf>. Accessed May 6, 2019.

examining these complex entanglements can tell us something about what counts as charitable today.

As much as the “children’s rights band-aid” and “chewing for change” interested me, one campaign stood out because it claimed that *children co-create* the products sold to raise money for children’s charity. The initiative is thus promoted as “by kids, for kids.” It is run by the international furniture and home design company IKEA and the total revenue from the sales is donated to the international non-profit organization Save the Children. I chose this campaign as the empirical case to explore and examine because it poses many questions about children’s charity today. In the following section, I will introduce some of these questions while also briefly presenting the campaign, and the aims and setup of the thesis.

“By kids, for kids”

Figure 0.1. Tweet from December 20, 2017, Twitter account of IKEA USA.⁷
©Inter IKEA Systems, B. V.

⁷ <https://twitter.com/IKEAUSA/status/943632161583669249> Accessed April 19, 2018.

“Designed by a kid, for a kid.” This phrase stands out as I examine my research material. It is used in several online articles and social media posts that promote this IKEA campaign. In this particular instance, the phrase comes from a tweet published on IKEA USA’s Twitter account, accompanied by the image of a green stuffed toy looking somewhat like a crocodile (Fig. 0.1). Later, I would learn that this toy represents the character called the “hippo-crocodile,” a combination of a crocodile and a hippopotamus. The tweet says: “The SAGOSKATT collection serves a much greater purpose than any normal soft toy.” This statement is followed by an invitation to click on the link and learn more about the role that this and other soft toys in the collection are said to play for children. I follow the link, which leads me to IKEA USA’s homepage and the heading: “SAGOSKATT – it all goes to charity.” However, my mind wanders back to the image in the tweet, and the words “Designed by a kid, for a kid.” Who are these children, and what goes to charity? What is the great purpose served by the green toy, and how is this purpose more important than others?

The hippo-crocodile is part of a collection of 10 soft toys produced and sold by the Swedish company IKEA. This collection, called “Sagoscatt,” which can be translated from Swedish as “fairy-tale treasure,” came out in late 2017. This 2017 collection is the focus of this thesis and is one of the range of IKEA’s “Sagoscatt” collections, the first of which was released in 2015. The 10 soft toys are based on children’s drawings selected through an annual international drawing competition organized by IKEA. Children up to 12 years of age are invited to draw their “dream soft toy” and the winning drawings are then manufactured as soft toys and sold in IKEA stores worldwide. To give you an idea of the scope of the campaign, according to IKEA, the drawing competition held in 2016 attracted about 70 000 entries.⁸ Since only one drawing per person was accepted, this is also roughly the number of children who participated.

This brief overview somewhat clarifies the meaning of “by a kid,” but what does “for a kid” stand for? Besides the fact that the “Sagoscatt” collection is included in Children’s IKEA’s range of products, the company also donates money from the sales to charitable organizations

⁸ “Sagoscatt” 2017 press kit, IKEA Sweden’s website http://press.ikea.se/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/IKEA_SAGOSKATT_pressmaterial_oktober_2017.pdf (link no longer active). Accessed December 6, 2017.

that work with children. In the thesis, I analyze the “Sagoskatt” campaign held in Sweden in 2017. In this specific case, the partner organization was Save the Children Sweden, and the donation went to support this charity’s educational and support program, called “High Five.” It is offered to sports clubs for children and young people around the country and aims to prevent and deal with bullying and discrimination. Thus, the “Sagoskatt” collection is marketed both in IKEA stores and online as “designed by a kid, for a kid” and as “by kids, for kids” (Sw. “*av barn för barn*”), “by a kid, for kids” (“*av ett barn för barn*”), and “for children to help other children” (“*för barn att hjälpa andra barn*”).

My initial curiosity about the “Sagoskatt” campaign gained another dimension as I familiarized myself with corporate charity through academic research and occasional controversies in the media.⁹ There seems to be a lot of uncertainty about such campaigns, which breed debates and discussions about whether corporate charity counts as “real” charity. Studies on corporate charity, cause-related marketing, and corporate social responsibility (e.g. King, 2006, 2010a, 2010b; Powell, 2019; Rajak, 2011; Tornhill, 2019) all interrogate for-profit companies’ engagement in non-profit work. Discussions concern both the motivations behind and the outcomes of such corporate charity campaigns: whether they are intended to help, support, and bring about social change, or rather to strengthen brand identity, improve reputations, increase sales, or attract tax incentives (Einstein, 2017; Faber et al., 2017; Foster, 2014; McGoe, 2015; Powell, 2019; Rajak, 2011; Tornhill, 2019). Non-profit organizations also attract scrutiny concerning both what they gain through corporate charity campaigns and the compromises they are potentially required to make (Foster, 2014; Kopnina, 2016; Moor, 2007; Tornhill, 2019). The question underlying these discussions seems to be: what makes charity – charity?

Questions about what counts as charity, and how to make sense of corporate engagement in charity, seem to be prominent in children’s charity. *Children’s charity* is a notion that I will use throughout the thesis since it can refer to charity for children, meaning initiatives where

⁹ E.g. media articles about IKEA from 2014 <https://www.svd.se/ikea-nekas-avdrag-for-valgorenhet> and <https://omni.se/ikea-medger-skanker-pengar-for-reklamens-skull/a/cc05b59e-d78d-4233-ad79-1eaf80d76641> ; “IKEA – Flat pack tax avoidance”, a report published by Greens/European Free Alliance in 2016 <https://www.greens-efa.eu/en/article/document/ikea-flat-pack-tax-avoidance-5960/>

children are the supposed beneficiaries of charity, as well as charity by children, meaning initiatives where children are engaged as givers of charity to others. The question mark in the title of the thesis – “Children helping children?” – is intended to indicate that the issues of the roles that children play in charity campaigns, who helps whom, and what constitutes “helping,” are far from settled.

Thus, this thesis offers an exploration of an empirical case of children’s charity. Theoretically and methodologically, it draws on the interdisciplinary field of Child Studies and on the emerging field of Valuation Studies informed by Science and Technology Studies (STS). Child Studies has roots in the sociology of childhood which emerged in the 1980s and the 1990s (James et al., 1998; James & Prout, 1997, 2005; Jenks, 1996/2005). In dialogue and debate with the then dominant developmental psychology, the sociology of childhood made a case for studying children as social actors here and now and in their own right (as so-called “beings”), rather than only as developmental projects, future adults, or as part of families (“becomings”) (e.g. James & Prout, 1997; Lee, 2001; Prout, 2005). Child Studies argues for the importance of attending to children’s own experiences, voices, and practices. But they also call for a thoughtful interrogation of how and to what ends notions of children and childhood are used by state, public and private, individual, and corporate actors. In particular, I am inspired by the critical strain of Child Studies (Alanen, 2011; Cardell, 2015; Prout, 2019; Sparrman & Aarsand, 2009; Spyrou, 2020), which encourages us to examine the taken-for-granted values of children. Examining values of children in corporate children’s charity could help us to interrogate how charity campaigns are made and what is at stake.

But what do I mean by “values”? Here, it is important to note that “value” has a range of definitions across disciplines and fields of knowledge. Later in the thesis, the concept will be elaborated in more detail, but to launch this discussion we could first turn to more colloquial definitions. The top three dictionary definitions of “value” are: (1) “how much something is worth,” (2) “the quality of being useful or important,” and finally (3) “the beliefs that people have about what is right and wrong and what is important in life.”¹⁰ Child Studies has primarily taken an

¹⁰ Oxford dictionary

https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/value_1; cf.

interest in the last of these: that is, the norms and ideals of children in society (e.g. Cardell, 2015; Lee, 2003; Sparrman & Sandin, 2012; Zelizer, 1985/1994).

Values in the sense of beliefs have much to do with charity. Companies and non-profit organizations present their campaigns as important and good for certain social groups, as well as the entire society. Even the Swedish word for “charity” (“*välgörenhet*”) contains two words which could be translated as “well” and “deed.” However, what counts as “good” is not a given but varies across time and situations. As I will elaborate in the following chapters, studies on corporate charity frequently invoke norms and ideals, but not always explicitly. I argue that understanding how values are mobilized in charity campaigns will require analytical tools and thorough analyses.

Since Child Studies does not specialize in studying values, to elaborate on this concept, I engage Valuation Studies. The emerging field of Valuation Studies encourages the rigorous examination and questioning of what comes to count as valuable in practice, to whom, and through what means something is assigned value (Doganova et al., 2014; Helgesson & Muniesa, 2013; Kjellberg, 2013; Muniesa, 2011; Dussauge et al., 2015). The term “practice,” as I will explain in greater detail later, is used to mean the concrete actions and activities in which individuals and organizations engage. However, as I will argue later, the practices to which Valuation Studies has so far paid the most attention are formal procedures through which values are assigned to things. This is closer to the first definition of value, and different from the focus on norms and ideals prevalent in Child Studies.

Situating the thesis at the intersection of Child Studies and Valuation Studies makes it possible to study values, and specifically values of children in children’s charity. The contribution of Valuation Studies to Child Studies is the understanding of values as produced *in practice*. Meanwhile, Child Studies allows us to take seriously the particular values of children, which entail different practices and rhetorical techniques and their role in children’s charity.

Cambridge dictionary <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/value> ; Merriam-Webster dictionary <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/value>. See also Dussauge et al. (2015) for an overview and discussion of dictionary definitions of value.

Aim and research questions

The aim of this thesis is to explore corporate children's charity in practice. To accomplish this aim, I analyze one empirical case: the Swedish "Sagoskatt" campaign from 2017 organized by IKEA in collaboration with Save the Children. Two overarching questions guide this exploration. The first question is: *How is children's charity made as charity by for-profit companies and non-profit organizations?* Although a single study is far from enough to answer the question of what makes a charity – charity in general, by examining an empirical case in detail I will offer a few key insights into the matter.

The other question feeds into the first one and is as follows: *How do for-profit and non-profit actors mobilize values, and specifically values of children, in children's charity?* Throughout the chapters of this thesis, I will gradually clarify and expand upon how we can make sense of something as abstract and vague as values and how we can think about corporate charity with values.

Overview of the thesis

The first four chapters situate the thesis by introducing the theoretical and methodological framework and the empirical material. **Chapter 1** offers an overview of previous research and discusses multiple approaches to children's charity and charity more generally in order to show how I arrived at the decision to explore the topic using the notion of values. I argue that, while implicitly linking charity to norms and values, existing studies do not analyze in detail *how* values are mobilized by actors doing charity in their campaigns. In **chapter 2**, the field of Valuation Studies and the approach to understanding and studying values in practice are introduced. I also introduce the concept of concerns and argue for an understanding of charity through the coordination of values and concerns. **Chapter 3** introduces the "Sagoskatt" campaign as the empirical case and **chapter 4** describes how the empirical material was collected and analyzed. Here, I expand on the question of how we can study values and concerns in a variety of empirical materials, including digital images, videos, texts, and interviews.

Four empirical chapters follow. **Chapter 5** takes a closer look at the charitable cause to which the campaign aims to contribute and at Save the Children Sweden's program called "High Five" that receives the donation. This program centers around what are called "safe sports" for children and aims to prevent and manage bullying and discrimination within sports associations. The focus is on how IKEA Sweden and Save the Children Sweden merge two pre-existing projects into a shared campaign through the pairing of values and societal concerns. **Chapter 6** draws attention to the charitable donation itself. Because it was raised through the sales of IKEA's "Sagoskatt" soft toys, the donation becomes an interplay between commerce and charity. I analyze how IKEA presents the donation as charitable, in particular by demarcating potentially conflicting values.

From focusing on values related to charity and commerce in chapters 5 and 6, in the last two empirical chapters I shift attention to values of children. **Chapter 7** zooms in on the products that IKEA sold to raise the donation, namely the "Sagoskatt" soft toys. I examine IKEA's claims to ensure the safety of their soft toys, in particular by anticipating potential concerns. Not only does IKEA present itself as a responsible company through these claims, but it also invokes very particular values of play and of children. Finally, **chapter 8** focuses on the drawing competition and the child winners upon whose drawings the "Sagoskatt" toys are based. IKEA presents these child winners of the competition as the "designers" of the toys. In this chapter, I examine how, by ordering potentially conflicting values, the company produces the ideal of the child designer who is said to be helping other children through the campaign.

Chapter 9 offers a concluding discussion and final reflections upon how values and concerns can help us to explore corporate children's charity. Namely, that the need to negotiate various types of values – such as values in the sense of assigning worth and appraising and values in the sense of norms and ideals – drives much of corporate charity today. Combining Child Studies with Valuation Studies offers strategies for examining values, in particular values of children, and the informal valuation practices that are ubiquitous in children's charity.

Chapter 1. Previous research: Charity and children

Introduction

In the introduction, I have briefly mapped out the empirical case of children's charity with which this study deals. IKEA's initiative is a collaboration between a business and a non-profit organization. It combines selling commodities with raising a charitable donation. It engages children both as supposed givers and as beneficiaries. How does one go about making sense of a case like this? Likewise, how can we answer one of the main questions in this thesis: what makes children's charity – charity?

There is no one field of research that can help to address these questions, so the thesis, and this literature review, draws upon several relevant areas of scholarship. It is important to consider studies of socially responsible business and socially responsible consumption when analyzing charity today as part of market relations when commodities are bought and sold for charitable causes (Berlan, 2012, 2016; Foster, 2014; King, 2006, 2010a, 2010b; Kopnina, 2016; Rugg, 2020). This literature also discusses the tensions that arise in collaborations for good causes between for-profit and non-profit actors (Powell, 2019; Rajak, 2011; Tornhill, 2019). Anthropological gift theories will also be discussed, which help thinking about charity and charitable donations in terms of social relations (Douglas, 2002; Godbout, 1998; Graeber, 2001; Kowalski, 2011; Laidlaw, 2000; Mauss, 1925/2002).

For the most part, these bodies of literature are not specifically about *children's* charity, so in order to think about children and their roles in charity I will also engage with three more areas of scholarly work. One is historical studies of campaigns that engage children in fundraising, giving, and receiving (Fitzsimmons Frey, 2017; Mayall & Morrow, 2011; Sköld & Söderlind, 2018). Another is visual culture studies of contemporary fundraising campaigns that use an abundance of images of children (Burman, 1994; Chouliaraki, 2010; Dubinsky, 2012; Manzo, 2008; Wells, 2008; 2009, 2013; Zarzycka, 2016). Both these bodies of literature specifically address children's roles in charity and scrutinize the ideological underpinnings of state, public, and private actors doing

charity for children, with children, and in the name of children. Finally, studies of children's consumer culture (Buckingham, 2007; Cook, 2004b, 2008; Sparrman & Sandin, 2012) are important to consider in order to make sense of children's roles as consumers in corporate charity.

Throughout the chapter, I will present each of these frameworks in turn and relate them to the empirical case explored in the thesis. I will argue that, while charity is often explicitly or implicitly linked to norms and values across the reviewed studies, scholars often draw upon unexamined values to critique and analyze charity campaigns. I suggest that examining exactly how values are mobilized in practice by for-profit and non-profit actors is a more fruitful way of making sense of charity.

Socially responsible business

In recent years, businesses, especially large multinational corporations, have experienced pressure from activists, politicians, and consumers to act in socially responsible ways (Berlan, 2016; Dillard & Murray, 2013). Calls for more sustainable production, packaging, and transportation of products; fair wages for workers; and the elimination of exploitative labor conditions are a few of the issues that have been most visible in the media. Although exactly what notions such as corporate social responsibility (CSR) entail is unclear and contested (Dillard & Murray, 2013), it often involves changing the ways in which companies work and act, or the undertaking of "extra" initiatives such as information and charitable campaigns, the latter of which is the focus of this thesis.

This section offers an overview of literature discussing partnerships between for-profit companies and non-profit organizations as well as cause-related marketing as a tool used in such collaborations for "doing good" by selling commodities. Given that the "Saguskatt" campaign is a collaboration between IKEA and Save the Children, this literature is highly relevant, as is the literature on philanthrocapitalism (Lee, 2013; McGoey, 2012, 2015).

Philanthrocapitalism is a notion that is primarily used to refer to individual donors and their foundations, interventions with a broad scope, and large donations. One prominent case discussed in the literature is the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (Lee, 2013; McGoey, 2012, 2015), whose annual budget is close to that of the United Nations'

World Health Organization (WHO) (Lee, 2013). I was initially interested in the term “philanthrocapitalism” because it combines philanthropy and capitalism, blurring or even dissolving the boundaries between what can be called the for-profit and non-profit sectors (Powell, 2019). These discussions emphasize that, although commerce and charity seem to be two irreconcilable spheres, much of today’s charity is undertaken by companies, particularly large multinational corporations. But it is worth keeping in mind that the notion of philanthrocapitalism was coined and popularized by its proponents Matthew Bishop and Michael Green (Bishop, 2013), who speak more or less in favor of managing philanthropy using a similar logic as a for-profit business (McGoey, 2015). In contrast, the studies reviewed here critically interrogate for-profit companies’ engagement in philanthropy and the consequences of this work for both the supposed beneficiaries and the companies themselves (Lee, 2013; McGoey, 2012, 2015).

One argument that studies of public-private partnerships and philanthrocapitalism both make is that businesses put themselves in a position to solve, aid in cases of, and prevent social problems (Foster, 2014; McGoey, 2012; King, 2006; Li, 2017; Neyland et al., 2019; Powell, 2019; Tornhill, 2019). Such problems include child obesity (Powell, 2019), health and healthcare problems on a global scale (Lee, 2013; McGoey, 2012, 2015), breast cancer (King, 2006), poverty and gender inequality (Tornhill, 2019), and poverty and hunger (Li, 2017). These problems would previously have been seen as the responsibility of the state. Now, instead, and especially in initiatives where commodities are sold to benefit a charitable cause, companies present the market as an effective space for taking action and creating political and social change (Li, 2017). Consumption is then offered as a convenient way for the public to engage, help, and contribute to social change (Li, 2017). Thus, these authors argue that, while doing good, corporate charity simultaneously enforces normative positions about the role of for-profit businesses, the markets, and consumption in society.

For-profit companies and non-profit organizations

One common way in which businesses address the demands for social responsibility is by partnering with non-profit organizations. Long-term or short-term partnerships, awareness campaigns, companies giving

financial donations to the non-profit partner, companies donating their products – these collaborations come in a variety of shapes and sizes (Foster, 2014; Kopnina, 2016; Li, 2017; Powell, 2019; Thornhill, 2019). The fast-food chain McDonald's, for example, has arranged and supported a number of healthy lifestyle initiatives for children. It is worth noting that McDonald's has been at the center of controversies and public outrage around health and obesity, some specifically concerning children (Botterill & Kline, 2007; Brembeck, 2007; Kline, 2005). That McDonald's, whose credibility as an actor promoting healthy and active lifestyles has been compromised by its fast food being linked to a range of health concerns such as obesity and heart disease (Botterill & Kline, 2007), would arrange specifically health-related initiatives makes these initiatives particularly interesting. In Sweden, McDonald's has organized a running contest for children called "Happy Mile" ("*Happy Mil*" in Swedish) in partnership with the Swedish Athletic Association (Svenska Friidrottsförbundet), the Swedish Olympics Committee, and local sports associations (Brembeck, 2007; Cardell, 2008). The title of the competition is a play on McDonald's "Happy Meal" for children, and a free "Happy Meal" is part of the prize that all child participants receive. The local sports club that organized the "Happy Mil" running contest in a large city in Sweden, considered partnering with McDonald's a necessary and overall positive step (Brembeck, 2007). Although aware that the company gains a good reputation by being associated with an active social event such as this, the club's representative emphasized both the company's goodwill and the fact that, in order to carry out the important work of making sports accessible to girls, the club needs funding. The club had struggled to secure this funding elsewhere, and it would have required a great deal more work than the McDonald's sponsorship to organize its own fundraising events or secure economic support from the government (Brembeck, 2007).

In New Zealand schools, McDonald's has sponsored a health education and physical activity program arranged in partnership with the New Zealand Olympic Committee (Powell, 2019). The program provides teachers with free pedometers and a webpage to document the number of steps the students have completed to encourage daily exercise and a healthy lifestyle. Despite some skepticism from school principals and students about whether the company's motives for doing charity

were altruistic, they nevertheless saw the initiative as useful and McDonald's as a caring and involved company (Powell, 2019). The staff justified McDonald's sponsorship because it did not involve direct advertising to children and contributed to children's health education (Powell, 2019). If we consider Brembeck's (2007) and Powell's (2019) studies together, we can see that non-profit and public actors must negotiate tensions between charity and self-promotion and branding when presenting their collaborations with for-profit companies. This is something to which I will return shortly.

Unlike the sponsorship in the McDonald's initiatives described above, charity campaigns can also be based on companies selling their own products for a "good cause." One such example is an educational campaign which was a collaboration between a Dutch supermarket and the Dutch branch of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) (Kopnina, 2016). For €10 worth of goods bought at the supermarket, customers received a pack of "Animal Cards" with images and information about different animals. These became collectable items among the schoolchildren whom Helen Kopnina (2016) observed and interviewed. So, in order for their children to find out more about different animal species, the parents needed to buy more groceries from the supermarket. Kopnina (2016) argues that this aspect of the campaign does not align with the stated purpose of educating people about wildlife and the environment, but potentially encourages excessive consumption and brings consumers back to the supermarket chain.

The concept often used to describe campaigns such as the one analyzed by Kopnina (2016), is cause-related marketing (Einstein, 2017; King, 2006, 2010b; Li, 2017; Rugg, 2020). The term refers to projects in which the partner company donates a share of the revenue from selling a product to the charitable cause run by the non-profit partner. These products are often visibly marked and easy to distinguish from goods that are not part of the campaign. One example is the international breast cancer awareness campaign that takes place every October. A range of involved companies – food producers, cosmetics industries, clothing brands, and fast-food chains – wrap their products in pink packaging or mark them with pink ribbons, the symbol of breast cancer awareness month (Einstein, 2017; Faber et al., 2017; King, 2006, 2010b; Rugg, 2020). Consumers are encouraged to become engaged by purchasing

“pink” products and the company donates percentage of the revenue to breast cancer research, education, or treatment. Companies act as mediators between donors and beneficiaries who are unlikely ever to meet or even be aware of one another (King, 2006; cf. Krause, 2014). In this way, companies establish a connection between commodities and the good cause in whose name they are sold. While corporate philanthropy positions private actors as capable of addressing and solving shared social problems, cause-related marketing as a way to organize charity campaigns positions the market as a productive arena in which to deal with these problems (Li, 2017; cf. Moor, 2007). Thus, cause-related marketing campaigns normalize the consumption of goods as a means to raise awareness around breast cancer (in the case examined by King, 2006, 2010a, 2010b) or to educate children about wildlife and endangered species (in Kopnina’s 2016 study).

Given that companies sell their own products to contribute to charity, the studies that focus on public-private partnerships (e.g. Foster, 2014; Kopnina, 2016; Powell, 2019; Tornhill, 2019) and cause-related marketing (King, 2006, 2010a, 2010b; Rugg, 2020) ask: who wins and gains as an outcome of these charitable initiatives? By doing charity work, companies also potentially sell more products and make more profit, promote themselves and develop the brand, patch reputations and divert attention from past misconduct, and receive tax incentives (McGoey, 2015; Powell, 2019; Tornhill, 2019; Wirgau et al., 2010).

In her ethnography of Coca-Cola’s program for alleviating poverty and empowering women through, among other things, micro-loans and training, Sofie Tornhill (2019) gives a detailed and well-articulated example of these benefits. Tornhill (2019) argues that, by partnering with local NGOs in the global south, the multinational brand has little to lose but much to gain: through utilizing the NGOs’ competence in conducting social work, and benefiting from their legitimacy and reputation among local communities. While the NGOs gain funds, they may risk losing their autonomy, and consequently their legitimacy, in those local communities.

Another example is Samantha King’s (2006) study of breast cancer awareness campaigns. King (2006) demonstrates that corporate funding often comes with a set of requirements that entail a stark inequality between the for-profit and non-profit partners. Grants offered to breast

cancer activist groups by the international cosmetics brand Avon, for example, came with a clause that bound the activist groups to refrain from criticizing the company in public (King, 2006).

To sum up, the studies mentioned so far do the important work of showing that charity conducted by businesses is often inextricably bound up with branding and marketing. “Charity” and “commerce,” it seems, do not co-exist without friction, at least in the western context. Especially when companies seem to gain more through their charity campaigns than they give away, both in financial terms and in terms of branding and reputation, the literature implies that corporate charity becomes in fact *something other* than charity. They argue that corporate initiatives and partnerships with non-profit organizations need to be seen more as PR campaigns or a business model (McGoey, 2007; Tornhill, 2019). What the literature does not always show is *how* corporate charity initiatives achieve their status as charity, and this will be the focus of the following section. I will discuss one form of rhetoric elaborated in the literature that allows for-profit and non-profit actors to present their collaborations as both necessary and beneficial.

A “win-win” rhetoric

What is called the “win-win” rhetoric (Foster, 2014; Powell, 2019; Rajak, 2011; Tornhill, 2019) is sometimes discussed in the literature on partnerships between corporate and non-profit actors and corporate social responsibility. A clear example of the “win-win” rhetoric are McDonald’s sponsorships mentioned earlier (Brembeck, 2007; Powell, 2019). In the case of the educational program sponsored by McDonald’s, several of the involved actors, including school staff and the company, presented the program as a situation in which everybody gains, especially children (Powell, 2019). This seeming consensus implied that children receive health education; schools are gifted with resources; non-profits partners receive much-needed promotion; McDonald’s strengthens its brand following several childhood obesity scandals in the media; while the state remains uninvolved in solving the problems of childhood obesity. In the other example, the sports club organizing McDonald’s “Happy Mil” contest also presented the sponsorship as a “win” for itself and a way to ensure funding in exchange for contributing with their competence in sports for children (Brembeck, 2007).

However, the “win-win” rhetoric that emphasizes the mutual benefits of collaboration for each of the partners can conceal companies’ self-interested agendas, inequalities and “losses” by the non-profit partners or the intended beneficiaries (Powell, 2019; Tornhill, 2019). In her ethnography of Coca-Cola’s program, Tornhill (2019) argues that the “win-win” rhetoric allows the company to present the growth of its business and of the local communities as one and the same (cf. McGoey, 2015). The company claims that empowering female microentrepreneurs, in this case by providing microloans and training, leads not only to stronger sustainable communities but also to more sustainable business. However, the company’s own potential economic gain is still downplayed in the communication, and creating opportunities for women is claimed to be the priority, regardless of whether they sell Coca-Cola’s products or not. However, this is not what happens when the program is implemented, argues Tornhill (2019), and through different means women are discouraged or prevented from selling products made by other brands. Thus, there is a call for increased scrutiny of the “win-win” rhetoric, especially by non-profit actors, who should ask not only what they stand to gain but also what they and the supposed beneficiaries of partnerships may lose from corporate charity (Powell, 2019).

To sum up this part of the chapter, studies of corporate social responsibility and corporate charity shed light on market-based ways of doing charity, of which IKEA’s “Sagoskatt” is a part. However, alongside the critical analyses of these normative ways of doing corporate charity (e.g. markets and consumption as sites of charity; companies combining selling their own products with solving social problems), there seems to exist an implicit ideal of altruistic, disinterested corporate charity. The ideal seems to be of a company that gives with “no strings attached” and receives nothing in return. But is such selfless charity practically possible? To answer this, we can turn to literature that deals with questions concerning other types of giving, namely anthropological studies of gifts and gift-giving.

Charity as gift-giving

Gift theories build on Marcel Mauss' (1925/2002) anthropological work. Later scholars have used this to understand charity as a practice of giving and the implications for the relationship between givers and recipients (Godbout, 1998; Kowalski, 2011; Laidlaw, 2000; Rice, 2007). Through examples that include the North American potlatch, sacred gift giving in Polynesia and Melanesia, and Hindu law, one of Mauss' main contributions was to show that the "gift is not a thing but a social connection" (Douglas, 2002: 7). Ideally, but not necessarily, symmetrical rights and duties are maintained in gift exchange (Mauss, 1925/2002). Gift giving is not only about a transfer of goods, it is also about establishing a social relation of obligation between the giver and the recipient. Mauss (1925/2002) writes that this relation is not unidirectional from the giver to the recipient, but also creates an obligation for the recipient to reciprocate. So, giving is as much about *obtaining* or not losing (e.g. honor, prestige, spiritual authority, or wealth) as it is about *giving away*.

Post-Maussian gift research has built further on his idea of the gift as paradoxical: gifts are gifted but they are never "free" (Godbout, 1998; Kowalski, 2011; Laidlaw, 2000; see also Graeber, 2001). For charity research, Mauss' troubling of the idea of altruistic, no-strings-attached charitable giving was an important contribution and allowed researchers to interrogate the recipients' roles and positions, and the inequalities of gift relations (Kowalski, 2011; Laidlaw, 2000; cf. McGoey, 2015). Disinterested "free gifts" or gifts that exclude reciprocation are, from a Maussian perspective, impossible. Thus, as Jacques T. Godbout (1998) argues, market exchange and gift giving, which are often placed in opposition to one another, have a lot in common. In western societies, giving "free" gifts is claimed to be disinterested and morally superior, while market exchange is deemed to belong to the realms of calculated business and profit (Douglas, 2002; Godbout, 1998). Yet, Godbout (1998: 179) points out that, unlike market exchange, the "gift seeks neither equality nor equivalence"; the gift always puts the recipient in the "gift's debt." The ways in which gift theories unsettle the idea of selfless "free" gifts, and so of idealized, disinterested charity, have been

important in this thesis, allowing for a more nuanced understanding of charity.

However, understanding charity through the lens of gift theories has been problematized. For instance, Alain Testart (1998) calls for more nuance in the notion of obligation: the *feeling* of obligation that the recipient may have is different from an obligation that the giver can require the recipient to discharge (e.g. debt). Testart (1998) argues that, since there are rarely social or legal repercussions for the recipient who does not reciprocate a charitable “gift,” charitable donations need to be excluded from what he calls the circle of obligation (cf. Bornstein, 2012).

Another reason why gift theories are not entirely helpful in understanding corporate charity is because a direct connection between the giver and the recipient is presupposed. In the empirical case I analyze, and cause-related marketing campaigns such as those discussed in the previous section, giving is *mediated* by both the business and the non-profit organization. The givers and recipients neither meet, nor are they necessarily aware of each other, and this has implications for the social ties between them. In her study of humanitarian relief agencies, Monica Krause (2014) makes a similar point about using gift theories to understand charity today. The agencies she studies receive money from donors and distribute the funds to those they deem in need of humanitarian aid. So, unlike situations where individuals exchange gifts within a community (Mauss, 1925/2002), in the case of humanitarian agencies, the distribution of aid is built on mediated giving and carried out by professional, specialized actors (Krause, 2014). Since there are more people in need than those who receive humanitarian aid, Krause (2014) also argues that there is competition among recipients, which makes the parallel with gift giving even less useful.

Thinking about the empirical case I analyze, gift theories also lack space for a group that plays an important role in cause-related marketing campaigns, as well as the “Sagoskatt” campaign, namely consumers. Instead of the for-profit company sponsoring initiatives and events, as in the McDonald’s example mentioned earlier (Brembeck, 2007; Cardell, 2008), or making a donation to the non-profit partner directly, companies often explicitly engage consumers in creating the donation. If nobody purchases the commodities sold for a “good” cause, presumably there will be no donation to the said cause. But what happens when

consumption is presented to consumers as “doing good” for somebody other than oneself? To reflect on this, we need to turn to studies that focus on what can broadly be called socially responsible consumption (Berlan, 2012). I will argue that, thanks to the focus on the relationship between the consumption of commodities and social change, these studies can be useful in understanding the role of consumption in corporate charity.

Socially responsible consumption

“Socially responsible consumption” and “ethical consumption” are two concepts used in the literature to refer to consumers’ choices about what and how to consume (Berlan, 2012, 2016; Carrier, 2012; Sorum, 2020; Ulver-Sneistrup et al., 2011). Ethical consumption concerns how commodities are sourced, manufactured, transported, packaged, sold, and marketed, which may seem to have very little to do with charity. The reason why the notion is relevant is because it unites practices that attribute “moral significance” (Berlan, 2012: 44; also Carrier, 2012; Kopnina, 2016) to a product and to the act of purchasing it, much as purchase-driven donations do. So, consuming in a socially responsible way can involve preferences for products made in ways that consumers consider to be sustainable, environmentally friendly, and socially good – or at least better than other products (Carrier, 2012).

Take a bar of chocolate: Amanda Berlan (2012) argues that something as seemingly simple as buying a chocolate bar can acquire moral significance if the cocoa used to make it was, for example, harvested using child labor. Berlan (2012, 2016) is interested in how Fairtrade-labelled cocoa is presented as “ethical” and “good,” in contrast to “exploitative” and “bad” cocoa produced under abusive labor conditions. She examines what meanings and ideas are attached to cocoa in the media, “ethical” and “unethical” alike, especially media debates following reports of abusive labor conditions and the unethical production of chocolate by corporations. Berlan (2012) argues that the claims made about ethicality in cocoa rely on dichotomies of right and wrong, good and bad.

This focus on ethical and moral norms and ideals of commodities and consumption can be useful when studying cause-related marketing

campaigns. For instance, Fairtrade cocoa is conspicuously labeled as a product which contributes to social good (cf. Carrier, 2012). A pink ribbon print on a tote bag sold as part of the breast cancer awareness month, I would argue, also labels the product as contributing to social good, although in a different way – both products present particular norms and values which the product is meant to embody. Berlan’s (2012) study focuses on balancing public concerns about ethical cocoa with the perspective of a large chocolate company, Cadbury, which has been in the spotlight of these concerns, rather than accounting in detail for how “ethicality” is made discursively. Doing so, I would argue, requires examining *how* products sold for charity are presented as good and “charitable commodities” (Rice, 2007), aligned with particular norms and values.

Berlan (2016) also makes a point about the sometimes paradoxical demands placed on businesses, something that is noteworthy in relation to corporate charity. Activists, consumers, and the media have high expectations of businesses to be socially responsible, while at the same time expressing skepticism based on known past examples of unethical conduct. Social justice campaigners call for companies to change and become more ethical by, for example, joining the Fairtrade mark, as in the case of cocoa producers (Berlan, 2012). All the while, the very same move of joining Fairtrade can be dismissed by the public and the media as merely PR and branding. This leaves companies with the complex task of demonstrating proactive engagement in preventing child labor, as in the case with Fairtrade cocoa, while emphasizing that the company itself does not gain from these efforts in any way (Berlan, 2012). To be fair, however, these conflicting messages do not necessarily come from the same consumer audiences. Nevertheless, Berlan’s (2012) argument, that in matters of social responsibility businesses can find themselves between a rock and a hard place, is important and offers a different perspective to that of the literature discussed earlier.

Ethical consumption is often presented as a conscious and political choice, but is it a given that adult or child consumers are always aware and intentional about buying products that are particularly “good” or “make a difference”? This question is important to consider when discussing consumption-based charity campaigns. Earlier, I mentioned Kopnina’s (2016) study of a joint campaign by a Dutch supermarket

chain and the Dutch branch of the WWF. Kopnina (2016) interviewed children and parents about the collectible “Animal Cards” they received with every €10 worth of groceries bought from the supermarket chain (cf. Sparrman, 2009, 2010 on toys included in breakfast cereals for children). Not all of the participants were aware of the WWF’s involvement, let alone readily connected the cards with the it, linking them instead to the supermarket chain. When asked what the cards were for, some children replied that, although the cards teach about animals, by giving them away, the supermarket is seeking to get more people to come to its stores. So, the children in this study appear to be savvy consumers (see Buckingham, 2007; Cook, 2004; Sparrman, 2009, 2015). Based on interviews with parents, Kopnina (2016) shows that they did not have a clear picture of either the outcomes of the partnership or the contribution made by the cards. Instead of sustainability or animal welfare, parents connected the purchase to their children’s excitement about the cards.

Still, the majority of studies on socially responsible consumption focus on intentional choices to consume “better” products (e.g. Carrier, 2012; Sorum, 2020; Thompson, 2011; Ulver-Sneistrup et al., 2011) and to avoid “bad” products, including boycotting or “buycotting” certain companies (e.g. Starbucks in Simon, 2011). However, sustainably and ethically produced goods often cost more, which leads to consumers having to negotiate prices against the norms and ideals they link to the products (Cairns et al., 2013). Kate Cairns, Josée Johnston, and Norah MacKendrick (2013) interviewed Toronto mothers from different socio-economic backgrounds about ethical food shopping and buying organic and ecological foods for their children. These mothers, to differing degrees, have experienced responsibility for taking care of both the health and well-being of their children and that of the planet and environment through their food choices. For many of the mothers, navigating “good” and “bad” consumption in this way has been a challenge, not least in financial terms. Buying organic foods for their children was an expensive investment, and some mothers acknowledged having to sacrifice and deprioritize other things in order to do so. Yet, investing in their children’s health is something that mothers said was beyond price. “There’s no price for health though is there” Cairn and colleagues (2013: 105) quote one of the interviewees as saying. This idea

links ethical consumption with acquiring something “priceless,” or at least more valuable than the purchased product.

Children’s consumer culture

So far, I have argued that consumption makes up an important part of children’s charity campaigns where products are sold to generate a donation to charity. But most of the consumption studies mentioned thus far do not take any particular interest in children. Until relatively recently, children have been neglected in consumption theory, and those studies that did mention children focused exclusively on their consumption practices rather than how they constitute part of consumer culture generally (Cook, 2008). Daniel Thomas Cook (2008) argues that bringing the figure of the child consumer into adult-centered consumption theory not only recognizes the growing influence of children as consumers, but also makes visible the problematic figure of the independent male consumer upon which these theories largely rely.

The research area of children’s consumer culture positions child consumers and their consumption practices within the wider consumer culture (for an overview of the field, see e.g. Buckingham, 2007; Coulter, 2020; Sparrman, 2015b). Children’s consumer culture studies are relevant to an exploration of corporate children’s charity in this thesis because of how they nuance and examine the figure of the child consumer in consumer practice (Brembeck et al., 2001; Buckingham, 2007; Buckingham & Tingstad, 2010b; Cook, 2004b, 2005, 2008; Johansson, 2005; Sjöberg, 2013; Sparrman, 2009; Sparrman & Sandin, 2012). Still, there are tensions between the idea of children as incompetent consumers and the opposite, as savvy and knowing consumers (Buckingham, 2007; Cook, 2004b, 2008; Marshall, 2010; Sjöberg, 2013; Sparrman, 2009). The first perspective taken by critics of children’s growing consumption constructs them as vulnerable and naïve consumers, and the market as exploiting children’s innocence through advertising and marketing. In contrast, proponents of the other perspective, many of whom are marketers and marketing scholars, construct the figure of an active, competent, and empowered child consumer who is not easily manipulated.

The second perspective is also closer to the view of children as social actors theoretically developed in the sociology of childhood, upon which Child Studies is to a large extent based today (James & Prout, 1997; Jenks, 1996/2005; Prout, 2005). Seeing children as social actors means no longer understanding them as bound to stages of psychosocial development, but as active participants in social and collective life (Prout, 2005). However, this understanding differs from the figure of the active child in marketing research. Scholars in Child Studies and children's consumer culture have argued for a more balanced perspective than the harsh dichotomy between competent/incompetent and empowered/exploited (Buckingham, 2007; Cook, 2004b, 2008; Sparrman & Sandin, 2012). This perspective acknowledges children as subjects with consumer desires and economic opportunities to consume *at the same time as* being dependent on parents and families financially and in terms of decision-making, rather than isolated individual consumers (Cook, 2008). This stance remains open to the complexity of children as consumers and of children's consumer practices.

In this thesis, I build on the discussions about the child consumer in children's consumer culture in several ways. Firstly, in relation to charity campaigns, where children are said to participate as both contributing to giving *and* as recipients, the concept of the "prosumer" is of interest (Ritzer & Jurgenson, 2010; Ruckenstein, 2011, 2015). "Prosumption" is a term used to refer to the intertwinement of consumption and production; for example, in online games where the users both play a set game and at the same time create content by developing their avatars and building communities (Ruckenstein, 2011). Consumption studies argue that prosumption is complex and filled with tensions because, alongside the resulting product that is customized to the prosumers' interests and desires, it is also intertwined with the users' unpaid work and with the companies' profit-making goals (Ritzer & Jurgenson, 2010; Ruckenstein, 2011; cf. Buckingham & Rodríguez, 2013).

Secondly, discussions about children's competence actively engage with the ideals and values of children. For instance, conflicting views on what is considered "good" and "bad" for children are employed by both sides in the exploitation/empowerment debate. Debates concerning children's protection from harmful consumption can reach the grade of moral panics centered on objects and media such as war toys for boys

(Hutchinson, 2012) and comic books (Strandgaard Jensen, 2012). Anna Sparrman and Bengt Sandin (2012) argue for the need to situate and examine moral panics around children's consumption as negotiations over values claimed by the proponents and opponents. Using the examples of debates over toy soldiers (Hutchinson, 2012) and comic books (Strandgaard Jensen, 2012), Sparrman and Sandin (2012) argue that moral panics display struggles not only about children's well-being but also about wider societal values and political agendas, such as peace activism deployed by the opponents of toy soldiers in Canada during the 1980s (Hutchinson, 2012). This attention to values and values of children in children's consumer practices not only shows that there are overlaps with corporate children's charity but also perhaps that the notion of children's consumer culture needs to be extended to include such charity campaigns.

To bridge the gap between consumption and charity, however, we need to look into research on children and charity. Firstly, I will discuss historical studies of initiatives that actively engage children in fundraising and giving (Fitzsimmons Frey, 2017; Mayall & Morrow, 2011; Sköld & Söderlind, 2018). Then I will turn to visual studies of contemporary campaigns run by non-profit organizations that use an abundance of images of children to raise funds for children (Burman, 1994; Chouliaraki, 2010; Dubinsky, 2012; Manzo, 2008; Wells, 2008; 2013; Zarzycka, 2016). Building on discussions about the child consumer, the goal of bringing these two areas of research together is to gain insights from the literature on children as active participants and givers of charity (historical fundraising campaigns) as well children as passive recipients and symbols (contemporary fundraising campaigns by non-profit organizations). In particular, I will focus on what these areas of research can tell us about children and values in charity.

Charity by children

One body of literature that deals with children's charity consists of historical studies of wartime fundraising undertaken by children (Fitzsimmons Frey, 2017; Mayall & Morrow, 2011; Sköld & Söderlind, 2018). It also includes historical explorations of charitable and children's rights organizations, such as Save the Children (Nehlin, 2009; see also

Löw, 2020). Engaging with empirical studies of historical campaigns when studying today's children's charity can show us that children's engagement as givers is not "new" per se and encourages us to ask how norms and values around children's roles in charity have changed over time.

The historical studies discussed here explore representations of children in texts and images in printed media (Fitzsimmons Frey, 2017; Sköld & Söderlind, 2018). Different presentations of children's contributions, and how it is and is not appropriate for children to engage in fundraising, are the focus. Johanna Sköld and Ingrid Söderlind (2018), for example, analyze and compare how Swedish newspapers portrayed Finnish children evacuated to Sweden during WWII and those who stayed in Finland. They show that the Swedish newspapers portrayed children as actively committing and contributing to the war effort, although in different ways. Finnish children in Finland were shown taking on adult roles and responsibilities, such as working in factories, joining the army, and taking over family duties. At the same time, the Swedish media portrayed Swedish children and those Finnish children evacuated to Sweden as being able to "maintain" their childhood and status as children. These children's contributions to the war effort are presented in terms of play and voluntary work and include writing letters, performing, and donating their pocket money. Both portrayals were used by the newspapers to mobilize adult readers to contribute to the Finnish cause, argue Sköld and Söderlind (2018). By demonstrating that children's engagement in wartime relief entailed performing different kinds of work, they also show that the situation of war and crisis put to the test ideas and ideals about children, what they can do and what it is appropriate for them to do.

In her study of children's war efforts in Canada during WWI, Heather Fitzsimmons Frey (2017) argues that these efforts need to be understood as work. She analyses how, during WWI, newspapers portrayed the charitable singing, dancing, comedy, and theatrical performances of professional and amateur children's groups. One example is the Winnipeg Kiddies, a professional vaudeville group consisting of children aged 4–14 years, who toured in Canada and the USA, performing both for "good causes," such as recruiting soldiers, and for profit, earning weekly wages. In the newspapers, the Winnipeg Kiddies' touring was

presented as play, and it was emphasized that the children were not deprived of a wholesome childhood by their touring lifestyles. Because their performances were labelled an “act of caring” (Fitzsimmons Frey, 2017: 44), this legitimized an otherwise problematic practice of buying tickets to watch children perform on stage (cf. Zelizer, 1985/1994). As a result, the children were presented as competent and hard-working performers, but also as innocent children who treat performing as play rather than “real” work (Fitzsimmons Frey, 2017). Such paradoxical roles ascribed to children is something to which I will return later in the analysis.

The tension between children helping out and working for charity is not unique to wartime fundraising, but continues in contemporary campaigns. One notable example is of the Swedish Mayflowers (*majblommor*) initiative, in which children across Sweden have participated since the early 20th century.¹¹ Every spring, schoolchildren across the country aged between 9 and 12 years sell small artificial flower pins to collect money for the charitable organization Majblommans Riksförbund which aims to reduce child poverty in the country (Samuelsson, 2008, 2012; Halldén et al., 2008). Thus, children collect money “to help other children” (Samuelsson, 2012: 86). But there are also incentives for Mayflower sellers to perform well. Firstly, children get to keep ten percent of the collected money. Secondly, there is an element of competition: children who have sold the most flowers and collected the most money can win gifts, including a trip to Stockholm to receive a diploma from the Queen of Sweden (Samuelsson, 2008). As Tobias Samuelsson (2008: 141) notes, the selling of Mayflowers “is one of the work activities mentioned in the Swedish labour regulations as *particularly suitable for children* under the age of 13” (my emphasis).

The studies mentioned so far in this section draw attention to children contributing to charitable giving, and highlight the tensions and conflicts associated with this status. What *can* children donate since in the global north they rarely have any income? How is it deemed appropriate for children to be involved in charity? These questions are important when examining the case of the “Sagoskatt” campaign, although there are limitations to the parallels that can be drawn with historical cases. For one thing, both Sköld and Söderlind’s (2018) and Fitzsimmons Frey’s

¹¹ Majblommans Riksförbund website <https://majblomman.se/om-oss/historia/>

(2017) studies understandably focus on the role of the state and non-profit organizations rather than for-profit companies. But, as I argued in the previous sections of this chapter, in order to understand corporate charity we need to consider the relationship between for-profit and non-profit actors, with a focus on how charity campaigns and the commodities sold to raise money are part of market relations.

Studies of contemporary fundraising campaigns that involve children tend to focus less on what newspapers, for example, report children as doing for charity and more on how they are visually displayed in fundraising campaigns. These studies analyze images and videos of children used by non-profit organizations to collect money *for* children; hence, rather than being engaged as active participants in charity campaigns, in such cases children are (passively) displayed in fundraising appeals to potential donors.

Images of children in charity

Studies in visual culture and iconography examine photographs of children used in charity campaigns online, on posters and billboards, in newspapers and magazines, and in fundraising films (Burman, 1994; Chouliaraki, 2010; Dubinsky, 2012; Manzo, 2008; O'Dell, 2008; Wells, 2008, 2009, 2013; Zarzycka, 2016). Scrutinizing both historical materials (Dubinsky, 2012; Wells, 2008, 2013) and mainly contemporary campaigns driven by international NGOs such as Save the Children and Oxfam (Chouliaraki, 2010; Manzo, 2008; Wells, 2008, 2009, 2013; Zarzycka, 2016), they tend to focus on the affective dimensions of images of children. That is, they examine what the use of images of children is aiming to *do* in public fundraising appeals. They also raise questions about the potential consequences of attempts to appeal that persistently portray children as either passive, vulnerable, and suffering or happy and grateful and use these images to represent the collective need of all children or an entire nation (Chouliaraki, 2010; Manzo, 2008). Such consequences include the ability of these images to appeal to potential donors (Chouliaraki, 2010) or the creation of persistent cultural meanings, norms, and ideals of children that NGOs mobilize by using images of children (Burman, 1994; Chouliaraki, 2010).

Two recurring narratives might be called the “suffering child” and the “happy” child (Chouliaraki, 2010; Manzo, 2008). The first is a melodramatic child-saving discourse (Wells, 2008, 2009, 2013), epitomized by images of starving dark-skinned children, which bears the colonial legacy of charity. It tries to appeal to the public and motivate people to act through pain, horror, shock, and pity (Chouliaraki, 2010; Wells, 2009). The problem, Karen Wells (2013) argues, is that charity appeals dominated by this narrative usually do not provide much insight into the crisis situation or its causes. Instead, they simplify both the conditions and the possible solutions to the crisis.

The other dominant visual narrative is that of “happy” children: positive messages, imagery, and “success stories” are used to illustrate the positive results of the NGOs’ work and the donors’ contributions (Chouliaraki, 2010; Manzo, 2008). These images communicate hope, joy, and gratitude. Unlike campaigns that turn prospective recipients of charity into “others,” these images create a tighter bond between the distant child and the viewer. This more contemporary approach to fundraising campaigns individualizes both the recipient and the giver, creating the impression of a personal connection between them (Chouliaraki, 2010). In these visual appeals, children are given more dignity and competence, argues Lilie Chouliaraki (2010), rather than being portrayed as passive victims. At the same time, positive imagery has been met with critique for appearing too staged and thus glossing over and concealing the realities of poverty, need, and suffering (Chouliaraki, 2010; Manzo, 2008). Despite offering a more personalized appeal, the “happy child” images may not encourage audiences to act or instill a sense of urgency. Rather, they create the impression either that the problems have already been solved by the NGO or that they are nothing for the viewer to be concerned about (Chouliaraki, 2010).

Visual studies thus offer a reflexive and critical view on how and what images of children, children’s voices, and stories in videoclips are used to appeal to wide audiences of potential donors. Not taking children’s charity for granted, but instead interrogating which children are foregrounded in campaigns, how they are shown, and which children are left out altogether is something I bring with me from these studies. Nevertheless, these studies rarely look at fundraising campaigns as a whole, beyond the visual elements. They also pay particular attention to

images of suffering – often explicit, intense depictions of suffering bodies, as well as deep emotional and mental distress (Chouliaraki, 2010; Manzo, 2008; Wells, 2013; Zarzycka, 2016). This sense of urgency and gravity in campaigns dealing with war crisis aid and disaster relief strikes me as very different from the empirical case that I analyze.

The studies discussed in the last two sections address the norms and ideals of children as active or passive participants in historical wartime efforts and contemporary humanitarian relief (Chouliaraki, 2010; Fitzsimmons Frey, 2017; Sköld & Söderlind, 2018; Wells, 2008, 2009, 2013). These intangible, larger-than-life collective entities seem to appear again and again in literature that studies charity more generally, and children's charity in particular, regardless of the discipline or field. Studies about corporate charity discuss the normative roles of businesses, markets, and consumption that such charity work establishes and enforces (Foster, 2019; Rajak, 2011; Tornhill, 2019). I have also discussed the moral superiority of altruistic gift-giving in the collective imagination (Douglas, 2002; Godbout, 1998) and moral and ethical dimensions of consumption (Berlan, 2012; Carrier, 2012). Thinking back to the multiple definitions of values discussed in the introduction, these norms, ideals, and principles could be called values since they all concern what the actors doing charity present as useful and important. Values also become matters of preoccupation for public and private actors alike and seem to “make or break” charity. Yet, after reviewing the studies in focus, the question remains *how* actors mobilize, align, and negotiate values in corporate children's charity. This is why I want to argue for closer attention to be paid to values in practice, an approach that will be presented in more detail, together with the theoretical framework, in the next chapter.

Concluding thoughts

Taken together, the studies discussed in this chapter can help to make sense of some aspects of corporate children's charity. Gift literature and understanding children's charity by means of the notion of charitable giving is important for making sense of charity as negotiating social relations. But presupposing a direct relationship, and especially one of reciprocation, between givers and recipients does not work with charity

mediated by for-profit companies and non-profit organizations. Historical parallels help to situate children's charity and show that there is nothing inherently new about involving children in helping other children. At the same time, wartime efforts or humanitarian relief fundraising have a different gravity and urgency compared to the empirical case that I analyze. Studies on socially responsible business and socially responsible consumption are most helpful in understanding corporate children's charity. They help to situate corporate charity as part of the market, and highlight the role of for-profit companies, consumers, and consumption in establishing what are considered important social problems and how they are addressed. Yet, they sometimes rely on the implicit moralistic ideal of corporate charity as altruistic, no-strings-attached giving.

However, as I argued earlier, although values seem to run as a red thread throughout these studies, they are not given enough attention. They are taken for granted as important, but it is not examined *how* for-profit and non-profit actors use and negotiate values in corporate charity. In the following chapter, I go into more detail about how to draw upon the sensibilities of the field of Valuation Studies, where values are understood as being created in practice. I will begin by discussing the concept of "values" and how it can help us make sense of children's charity.

Chapter 2. Theoretical framework

Introduction

The previous chapter ended with the suggestion that paying attention to values will help us to examine in practice how corporate charity is made as charity. But can something as abstract and difficult to pin down as values of children help us make sense of charity? In this chapter, I propose a theoretical framework to do so that draws on STS-informed Valuation Studies. The chapter begins with a discussion of how values and valuation, meaning the practice of making values (Dussauge et al., 2015; Helgesson & Muniesa 2013), are conceptualized. I then introduce the concepts of concerns and concern-making (Dussauge et al., 2015a) and argue that analyzing values and concerns together opens up space for a more nuanced understanding of children's charity.

In the introductory chapter, I pointed out that in English the dictionary definition of "value" brings together several very different meanings of the word. The top two meanings are value as the calculable worth of something ("how much?") and as people's beliefs ("what is important/right/wrong?"). As anthropologist David Graeber (2001) notes, people use the same term, "value," to talk about such distinct things as prestige and spaghetti sauce. He offers three ways in which the term value has been used in social theory: "economic value," "sociological values," and "linguistic value." The first two are most relevant here since the third comes from structural linguistics and refers to the values of semiotic signs. While value in the economic sense relates to measuring and appraisal, value in the sociological sense is defined as "conceptions of what is ultimately good, proper, or desirable in human life" (Graeber, 2001: 1). To maintain this distinction in mind, from now on I will refer to the two types as "values as appraisals" and "values as norms." Given these divergent meanings, how can we understand, and especially use, "value" as a theoretical concept? To address this question, I will first discuss the dilemma of pricing children's pricelessness (Zelizer, 1985/1994), which has also been influential in how values of children have become a part of the academic conversation.

Pricing priceless children and the social value of children

Adoption payments, insurance compensation for the death of a child, and babies sold on black markets – what do these have in common? In the work of Viviana Zelizer (1985/1994), these cases are all examples of what she calls pricing the priceless child. The notion of pricelessness refers to objects that are considered to be beyond economic calculations, such as a child's life, death, or work. Their value cannot be, or even cannot be thought of being, appropriately matched with a monetary equivalent because the act is seemingly impossible, immoral, or both. Yet, as Zelizer (1985/1994) shows, priceless objects are constantly being priced and assessed in monetary terms. For example, wages and salaries require assigning a monetary amount to work and labor, while child life insurance and adoption payments assign prices to a child's life.

Investigating historical controversies that took place in the USA during the period 1870–1930 allows Zelizer (1985/1994) to argue for what she calls the changing “social value” of children. She does not offer a formal definition of “social value,” and also uses other concepts of “value,” which makes the task of discussing the notion more challenging (“social, moral, and sacred values,” “utilitarian value,” “instrumental worth,” “human values,” “the public and the private value of children”). As I understand it, for Zelizer (1985/1994) social value entails a complex interplay between “economic value” and “noneconomic value.” An example of children's economic value is their contribution to the household, which was a norm in 19th-century America, what Zelizer (1985/1994) calls the economically useful child. During the 20th century, the emotionally priceless child becomes the norm, appreciated by parents in terms not of utilitarian usefulness but of non-economic worth, such as affection, companionship, and cuteness. Zelizer's (1985/1994) contribution was showing that children's social value is not stable but changes historically and between social groups.

Another contribution that Zelizer (1985/1994) makes to sociological studies of children and to economic sociology is arguing that economic and non-economic values are both social processes and part and parcel of each other. Rather than economic value being contained within a separate financial realm of money and markets, it is both transformed by and transforms sentimental value. This means, I suggest, that the term

“social value” is used a tool to examine the relationship between seemingly separate economic and non-economic values and to bring them together. Zelizer (1985/1994) makes the point that, when economic appraisals of things are made, norms are necessarily invoked, such as the normative “pricelessness” of children or their economic usefulness at different points in time. But how exactly appraisals and norms are intertwined is not always clear as Zelizer’s (1985/1994) focus is more specifically on the intertwinement of the economic and non-economic values.

To illustrate, we can look at the relationship between price and the sentimental value of children, in which Zelizer (1985/1994) is particularly interested and which is relevant to discussions of charity and children. She shows that actors employ two opposing strategies to deal with the dilemma of pricing the life of a child: the priceless is assigned either an extremely high or an extremely low price. Zelizer (1985/1994) shows that, historically, the prices of the priceless have increased (cf. Miller, 2008). Paradoxically, while children have been considered too valuable to be measured in anything approaching monetary terms, prices for adopting a child, buying a baby on the black market, and insurance payments for the loss of a child have grown. At the same time, the opposite can also take place: pricelessness can be marked by an absence of price or by assigning it a small, token price (Zelizer, 1985/1994; also Fourcade, 2011). Early insurance awards for the deaths of children in accidents are an example of assigning a token price to the priceless. As it was no longer considered appropriate for the priceless child to work, calculating the amount of compensation became difficult: it would no longer amount to the prospective wages the child would have earned until coming of age. But instead of a more generous sum, which one might expect in western countries today, at the turn of the 20th century, American families received symbolic payments, from a few cents to several dollars. This refusal to calculate the exact price of a child’s life signaled the beyond-profane calculation, the “pricelessness” of children.

The example of pricing the life of a child shows how Zelizer’s (1985/1994) approach to examining the value of children can be useful in studying children’s charity. She focuses on moral conflicts and controversies and analyses how the media, private, and public actors use and negotiate the value of children in charged issues such as child labor

and child life insurance. This approach has similar potential when dealing with the variety of conflicts that corporate children's charity might face: for-profit and non-profit agendas, commerce and charity, global and local scope. The focus on values creates a space to discuss these issues beyond making moral judgements or problematizing, and offers a more nuanced approach to studying charity.

There is, however, one problem with drawing entirely on Zelizer's work (1985/1994, 2002, 2005, 2012a, 2012b, 1997/2017) to study corporate children's charity, and specifically the "Sagaskatt" case: more is going on in charity than pricing. In cause-related marketing campaigns, we can talk about the pricing of the commodities sold for charity and we can explore how the donation to the non-profit partner is settled. But alongside these monetary values, which can be gathered under the umbrella of pricing, both for-profit and non-profit actors continuously deploy values in the sense of norms when they present and communicate charity campaigns to various audiences. A few examples of these values in the "Sagaskatt" campaign are play, creativity, and safe sports for children. It is these values that I am interested in examining here in order to make sense of children's charity, and not necessarily in connection with economic value, which is the focus of Zelizer's (1985/1994) work. So, the question now is: how can we think about children's charity using the concept of values? At this point, I will introduce the field of Valuation Studies, which in this thesis is combined with Child Studies. I will discuss how values and valuations, that is practices of producing values, are theorized in Valuation Studies.

Values and valuation

Valuation Studies is an emerging interdisciplinary field that draws theoretically upon Science and Technology Studies (STS).¹² STS interrogates how scientific knowledge is produced and the role of scientific instruments in the making of seemingly solid and robust facts (for an overview see e.g. Sismondo, 2010; Woolgar, 2012). Valuation Studies emerged from the STS-informed studies of markets and uses STS tools to examine how economic theory and market devices perform the

¹² Currently, Valuation Studies is centered around the journal of the same name (see also Helgesson, 2021).

market (Callon, 1998, 2007). Later, this focus developed into investigating not only how markets are performed but also how types of values other than economic ones are made in practice. This work emerged from pragmatism, and specifically the work of John Dewey (Muniesa, 2011). Thus, what distinguishes Valuation Studies from other approaches to studying values is the understanding of values as achieved through social practices. Hence, valuation is used to refer to any social practice where value and values are produced, established, assessed, contested, dismissed, and/or dismantled (Doganova et al., 2014; Dussauge et al., 2015; Helgesson & Muniesa, 2013).

From philosophy and linguistics to economics and Marxist theory, there have been propositions about how to define and understand value. Graeber (2001) argues that attempts to come up with a theory of value have to a large extent failed, in part because of the variety and ambiguity of definitions of the term. In other approaches, value is largely understood as an intrinsic quality of people and objects (Dussauge et al., 2015a; cf. Graeber, 2001). The risk in taking this essentialist perspective is the seeming fixedness of values: they are conceptualized as transferable, solid, and congealed. Even theories that posit values as socially constructed, changing, and unstable can still use ready-made theoretical classifications of values as analytical tools. For example, across several studies on values in creative industries, business anthropologist Brian Moeran (2013; Moeran & Strandgaard Pedersen, 2011) uses a classification of values that includes technical/material, social, situational, appreciative, and utility values. These different types of values are then used in the discussions of different cases: from a pottery exhibition in a department store in Japan (Moeran, 2013) to the phenomena of fairs, festivals, and competitions (Moeran & Strandgaard Pedersen, 2011). The main question is how the products of creative work are valued in creative industries, for which Moeran (2013) suggests the notion of “ensembles of worth,” whereby all the values in the classification interact to make up the overall estimation of the product. While useful to make an argument about the instability of values, deploying ready-made classifications of values stabilizes what value “is” and prioritizes theory over an empirical inquiry into how values are used.

In contrast, Valuation Studies understands values as achieved in practice: they are an “outcome of a process of social work and the result

of a wide range of activities [...] that aim at making things valuable” (Helgesson & Muniesa, 2013: 6). So, practices such as the grading design of school admission tests (Malou Strandvad, 2014) or monetary compensation to affected communities for oil spills (Fourcade, 2011) can be studied in order to understand how values are produced. Values are conceptualized as integral to social relations and come about with and through those social relations, rather than existing as pregiven and often presorted properties of objects. Likewise, any distinctions and oppositions between values come about in the particular situation of practice. Such distinctions are not intrinsic but are enacted by, for instance, individuals or organizations themselves making distinctions between economic and non-economic values. As the pregiven definitions and classifications are intentionally set aside, the central question for a Valuation Studies analysis becomes: who produces, sustains, and contests what values, and how (Dussauge et al., 2015; Muniesa, 2012)?

Studying valuation practices makes values and outcomes of valuation processes visible and discussable (Doganova et al., 2014; Helgesson & Muniesa, 2013). Besides the all-important questions about how values come about and who does the valuing, the consequences of valuation are central. Claes-Fredrik Helgesson and Fabian Muniesa (2013: 2) suggest that “the making of valuations performs certain orders,” meaning that valuations are part of arranging and organizing society. To give an example, certain activities in which children engage are valued more highly than others: sports and peer play do not occupy the same position within the mainstream discourse as playing computer games and eating chips. Thus, the “outcomes of valuations might have re-ordering effects” (Helgesson & Muniesa, 2013: 2), meaning that different modes and ways of valuing can reshape social orders, as long as these outcomes are accepted as legitimate within the social group. Notice the word *might* though; there is no attempt to establish a binding connection between ordering and the outcomes of valuation.

Formal and informal valuations

In the previous section, I mentioned that Valuation Studies takes an interest in valuation practices such as university admission tests and financial compensation for environmental damage. The focus on socio-technical devices, instruments, and metrics inherited from STS makes

sense given the ambition to examine valuation as a process, and values as achieved rather than “emerging” by themselves (Kjellberg et al., 2013). Antoine Hennion (2017) argues that Valuation Studies has focused strongly on technical devices and instruments of valuation in the sense of formal procedures carried out by people and institutions to assign values to things, mainly in the sense of appraising their “worth.”

An example of such a procedure, which we can call a formal valuation (cf. Kjellberg et al., 2013), is a children’s competition in which the most creative drawing is chosen. There are competition rules, selection criteria, a set procedure, and a jury put in place to determine how the process of sorting and arranging children’s drawings up to the most creative is organized. Set procedures such as these make the competition and other formal valuations a kind of instrument that removes responsibility from individual people: competition rules and regulations and selection can be held accountable for the outcomes instead.

Valuation can refer to a multitude of mundane practices (Helgesson & Muniesa, 2013), which makes it very appealing to various areas of social sciences, including the interdisciplinary field of Child Studies. Whenever something or somebody is produced as desirable, important, worthy, or meaningful, this action can be understood as a valuation (Dussauge et al., 2015). Likewise, when the importance, worthiness, or desirability of an entity is dismissed or challenged, these instances can also be seen as valuation (Doganova et al., 2014). For example, the situation of a teacher complimenting a child’s drawing as “very creative” can be understood as a valuation, a practice of producing values, both in the sense of appraisal (“very”) and in the sense of norm creation (creativity is produced as something good and desirable). Unlike the drawing competition, however, valuation here takes place in a much more informal way; therefore, to clarify the distinction, I will refer to this type of valuation as informal valuation.

To give a few more examples, the reader will be able to think of instances when politicians motivate policies and decisions by claims that children are “our everything” or when companies market their products as “good for children.” Instances such as these may seem insignificant and mundane but, as I will show later in the analyses, they are no less important than formal valuation procedures such as award ceremonies, school tests, or rankings. In contrast to ratings and rankings, verbal,

textual, or visual articulations may be elusive and not readily recognized as valuation practices, but this makes it all the more interesting to investigate how they produce values, appraisals, and norms, and what the outcomes are. There may be a potential risk, however, of broadening the notion of valuation too far, to the point where *everything* becomes valuation (cf. Helgesson & Muniesa, 2013). The methodological challenge of what count as values and what do not, will be addressed in the following chapters.

On the same note, it is worth emphasizing that, in practice, formal and informal valuations are not as separate as in the schematic distinction I have just made. Rather, they merge and intertwine, as will be demonstrated in detail in the empirical chapters. This is why it is important for the study of values to pay as much attention to informal valuations as formal procedures have received. Selecting creative drawings in a drawing competition, with its formal selection criteria, interacts with the valuations of the drawings made discursively in talk or texts about the competition. The relationship between these different practices and sites of valuation remains an issue to be examined by Valuation Studies (Kjellberg et al., 2013).

Another reason why the distinction between formal and informal valuations is important is because these practices produce different values, as I will argue and illustrate in the analysis. The distinction between values as appraisals and values as norms will remain schematic for now, but it is nonetheless important to draw the distinction here in order to emphasize that different valuation practices produce values in different ways. In the case of the drawing competition, the procedure assigns worth to children's drawings and produces value as appraisal – but also produces norms of creativity. In contrast, in the case of the teacher's comment, both a norm *and* an appraisal are produced. The comment draws upon societal ideals of children's creativity, at the same time as the teacher's comment is articulated as an appraisal: "very" signals that the drawing is ranked against other things that are "just" creative, or not creative at all. So, while values as appraisals and values as norms are intertwined, there remains the question of *how* they are intertwined in practice, and this will be the focus of the analysis.

Following Hennion (2017), I argue that Valuation Studies has retained an overwhelming interest in formal procedures, meaning that it

is less equipped to study informal valuations, such as those which are prominent in children's charity campaigns. This thesis draws attention to and examines values that are intangible, elusive, and slippery, and to valuation practices that are not immediately recognizable as such. But why grapple with something as blurred and elusive as "goodness," which is nevertheless omnipresent in everyday speech? In their study of valuing "good tomatoes," Frank Heuts and Annemarie Mol (2013) argue that the aspects producers and consumers consider to be "good" have effects on how and what kinds of tomatoes are bred, grown, transported, sold, bought, and eaten. Thus, even informal valuation practices have outcomes. In the case of children's charity, paying attention to informal valuations such as "children are our everything" and what is "good for children" can open up insights into how children's charity is made as charity.

Values in practice

By writing about values as "produced" or "made," I am using these two words in a specific way: I mean that values are brought into being or enacted (Law & Urry, 2005; Mol, 2002, 2010; Woolgar & Lezaun, 2013, 2015; Woolgar, 2012). Enactment is a concept used in Valuation Studies and STS instead of "constructed," "performed," or "created" (Woolgar, 2012), terms that are otherwise common in social constructionist frameworks. To say that something or somebody is enacted has ontological implications: it means that entities are brought into being in and with social practices. This entity neither has a fixed essence nor is itself stable, but its status and characteristics come about and dissolve within the situation of the social practice (Woolgar, 2012). This is where an important difference lies between the concept of enactment and the framework of social constructionism deployed by the sociology of childhood established during the 1980s and '90s (James & Prout, 1997; James et al., 1998), which has been a starting point for the interdisciplinary field of Child Studies, within which this study is situated. Social constructionism overall prevails in Child Studies, but there are exceptions where the notion of enactment is used (e.g. including but not limited to Eßer, 2017; Eßer et al., 2016; Lindgren et al., 2014; Samuelsson et al., 2015; Sparrman, 2014, 2015a, 2020; Sparrman & Sandin, 2012; Sparrman et al., 2016; Spyrou, 2019; Zotevska et al.,

2021). “Social construction” refers to practices resulting in “durable realities” (Woolgar & Lezaun, 2015), whereas “enactment” emphasizes that these realities are precarious.

Since I have talked about values as enacted through practices, a more extensive comment is needed on the concept of practice. My understanding of practice is inspired by Annemarie Mol (2002, see also Heuts & Mol, 2013), who argues that entities, in Mol’s study a medical diagnosis, are enacted in the practices in which they are handled. In practices such as patient examinations and consultations, the handling of diagnostic tools in the laboratory, and discussions about treatment at the clinic, multiple versions of the diagnosis come into being (Mol, 2002). Because the entity has no stable essence, a lot of continuous work has to be invested in supporting – or destroying for that matter – the identity of entities (Mol, 2002: 43). In practice, entities are not singular but multiple. There is not one diagnosis travelling between different parts of the hospital: the laboratory, the ward, the surgery – but the diagnosis multiplies due to the multitude of practices through which it is enacted. It is a multiplicity made up of singularities, and vice versa (Law & Lien, 2012; Mol, 2002; see also Sparrman, 2020).

Mol’s (2002) study is ethnographic, and the material she works with consists of observations, field notes, interviews, and conversations. But how does the concept of practice go together with the texts, interviews, and images analyzed in this thesis? I will discuss this in more detail in the chapter on material and methods (chapter 4), but briefly, I understand these materials as helping to constitute social practices such as reading, looking and viewing.

Careful attention to practices and the making of social relations is something that Valuation Studies shares with Zelizer’s work, discussed earlier (see e.g. Dussauge, 2015; Helgesson & Johansson Krafve, 2015). Valuation Studies has also engaged with the dilemma of pricing the priceless and shown how priceless objects are continuously being evaluated in terms of price. This may be the pricing of “peculiar goods” (Fourcade, 2011), such as death in funeral services (Trompette, 2013), or nature in compensation for oil spills (Fourcade, 2011), or wind power in public policies (Pallesen, 2016). It may be the pricing of unique goods (Pallesen, 2016: 528), such as wines (Hennion, 2007) or antiques on a TV show (Muniesa & Helgesson, 2013). Unlike the historical cases

examined by Zelizer (1985/1994), these are contemporary examples, and some of these studies are based on similar empirical material such as court cases and media debates (Fourcade, 2011).

These studies show that, rather than being a given, pricing is achieved by actors who do the work of negotiating, aligning, and calibrating monetary and non-monetary values. “[T]here is nothing natural about turning things into monetary equivalents,” argues Marion Fourcade (2011: 1727). By arguing that economic valuations are social, these studies ask how pricing and prices are negotiated and managed in practice. Fourcade (2011) examines how, in different cases of compensation for oil spills, “nature” is priced radically differently depending on who speaks on its behalf and through which devices. The pricing of priceless objects provokes multiple uncertainties and concerns about the quality and appropriateness of assessment (Pallesen, 2016), and this is where we can draw parallels with children’s charity.

The “valuation problem” is a concept I would like to bring up not least because of a recent call to move from studying valuation practices to studying “valuation as a problem” (Board of editors, *Valuation Studies*, 2020). This implies that, while still widely regarding valuation as a mundane and ubiquitous social practice, attention is drawn to problems “of those who value and are subject [sic] of valuation” (Board of editors, *Valuation Studies*, 2020: 2). Valuation itself is presented as a problem for both the social sciences and the humanities: in this piece the editors of *Valuation Studies* argue that there is a need for an interdisciplinary field that investigates the contexts and effects of valuation practices on how the social world is organized and how it functions (Board of editors, *Valuation Studies*, 2020). Attention to contested valuations and valuation mishaps (Helgesson & Woolgar, 2018) has not been lacking, however. The following of controversies has been used as a methodological tool that Valuation Studies has borrowed from STS. This is because, at points of conflict, taken-for-granted and implicit values become visible and analyzable (Dussauge et al., 2015b; see also disagreements and disputes in Boltanski & Trevenout, 2006). In my understanding, conflicts, debates, controversies, mishaps, and frictions in general have been given so much attention in Valuation Studies because they speak to what worries and concerns individual people and organizations. Worries and concerns are clearly important to the

concerned actors, as discussed earlier in the charged cases of pricing the priceless (Zelizer, 1985/1994). But the relationship between things that matter on the one hand and things that worry and concern on the other has not been fully explored in the literature. At this point, it would be useful to introduce the concept of “concerns,” which I use as an umbrella term to refer provisionally to “things” that are enacted as worries and concerns.

Concerns and concern-making

It should be uncontroversial to say that charity is built around a problem: charity campaigns appeal to the public to care, to be concerned about a societal problem and to become part of the solution. By “concerns,” I mean things, events, and situations produced in practice as worth worrying about. Rather than merely using controversies and debates as a methodological tool to access contested values (Dussauge et al., 2015b), as discussed at the end of the previous section, I argue for the importance of paying attention to concerns and how they are made in practice as objects of analysis.¹³ My understanding of concerns is both inspired by and diverges from the one suggested by Isabelle Dussauge, Claes-Fredrik Helgesson, Francis Lee, and Steve Woolgar (2015a). They articulate and further develop the relationship between concerns and values, and argue that attending to concerns is important in order to understand why some things matter, and why others matter more; why some things become

¹³ My understanding of concerns differs from Bruno Latour’s (2004, 2008) “matters of concern” (cf. Callon, 2007; Marres, 2007). Latour used the term to refer to a “gathering” of ideas, objects, and actors held together and in place because it is worried about and cared for. His argument is that, by focusing on debunking and dissecting matters of fact, social studies of science, in particular the critical strain, have established an atmosphere of disbelief, suspicion, and distrust, as occurred in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2011). Latour’s proposition is to treat matters of fact as an unstable entanglement of concerns which “encourages awareness of the vulnerability of the facts and things we set out to study and criticize” (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2011: 36). The focus on concerns adds an ethical and political dimension to critique, directing it away from mere debunking (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2011). Global warming and GMO in foods are both matters of fact and matters of concern, argues Franck Cochoy (2014), writing about Latour’s concept. This means that scientific facts need to be examined because of and including the concerns to which they give rise. For the purposes of this thesis, Latour’s (2004, 2008) concept is relevant insofar as it brings together concerns with things that matter and are important; in other words, concerns and values.

concerns and others do not. Producing an object, an idea, or an event as a concern can make it valuable, important, and worthy of the worry and work invested in it. To give an example, a video aptly entitled “Do schools kill creativity?” is among the most watched TED Talks.¹⁴ It not only articulates worries and anxieties about the loss of children’s creativity but simultaneously presents creativity as something important and worth caring about. Investigating how concerns are brought into being gives insights into how society is organized and whose concerns, as well as whose values, are made to be important (Dussauge et al., 2015a). In order to talk about the practices of producing concerns, Dussauge and colleagues (2015a) suggested the notion of concern-making. This pair of concepts – concerns and concern-making – is thus reminiscent of values and valuation, where the latter term refers to values in the making. Concern-making is useful because it draws attention to the production of concerns as precarious achievements of the work that actors invest in the establishing, maintaining, ordering, and contesting of concerns. Examining these practices is perhaps especially relevant when the concerns are made explicit and communicated to the public by international for-profit companies and non-profit organizations with a wide reach and strong presence, as in the empirical case analyzed in this thesis.

With their connotations of worry, concerns may appear negative but in and by themselves they are not exclusively undesirable events. Susi Geiger, Debbie Harrison, Hans Kjellberg, and Alexandre Mallard (2014b) make this point when writing about what they call “concerned markets” (cf. Frankel et al., 2019). The notion of “concerned markets” is used to refer to markets where conflicting economic, social, and political issues are visibly intertwined (Geiger et al., 2014b; Kjellberg et al., 2013). Contested and debated markets for palm oil (D’Antone & Spencer, 2014) and sustainable and ecological foods (Kjellberg & Stigzelius, 2014) are a few of the cases of concerned markets examined in the edited volume by Geiger and colleagues (2014a). The understanding of concerns they propose is as things and situations that are “related to us, can affect us and worry us” (Geiger et al., 2014b: 2). The notion of “concerned markets” is thus used to capture concerns that arise from, as well as about, markets (Cochoy, 2014), both of which are relevant to corporate

¹⁴ https://www.ted.com/playlists/171/the_most_popular_talks_of_all

charity. The concept of concerns can help in examining not only the social problems presented by for-profit and non-profit actors, but also worries about corporate charity voiced by consumers and activists which, as discussed in the previous chapter, are many. Yet, concerns are necessary: they determine what is important, separate the valuable from the less valuable, decide order and rank (Geiger et al., 2014b).

This last point brings us back to values, particularly values as norms. Discussions of concerns in the literature (Dussauge et al., 2015a; Geiger et al., 2014b) show that there is an important but not fully explored relationship between values and concerns. To take the example of schooling that is claimed to diminish children's creativity, can creativity be understood as a value, a concern, or perhaps both? We could also ask in what way valuation is different from concern-making if both produce what is valuable, important, desirable, and worth caring about. In the following section, I will examine the relationship between values and concerns in more detail.

Values and concerns

In the literature discussing values and concerns, two studies in particular expand upon the relationship between the two concepts (Dussauge et al., 2015a; Kjellberg & Stigzelius, 2014). Dussauge and colleagues (2015a: 11) argue for understanding the "production of concerns through the production of values." So, via valuation, actors produce matters of concern or care (Dussauge et al., 2015b). The example they discuss is the aftermath of the Chernobyl and Fukushima nuclear disasters, when a variety of valuations became matters of concern, mainly assessing whose knowledge was credible under the conditions of scarce knowledge about the radioactive fallout (Dussauge et al., 2015a).

In their study of good tomatoes, Frank Heuts and Annemarie Mol (2013) also maintain that the concerns of both producers and consumers of tomatoes are preoccupations about values. They do not extensively conceptualize the notion of concern, but distinguish different registers of valuing (the gerund "valuing" is used here to refer to practices of producing value), arguing that each of them "singles out a particular concern" (2013: 140). Producers and consumers may be concerned about the fragility of tomatoes, but for producers firm tomatoes enable

harvesting and transportation (handling register) while for consumers firm tomatoes only work for sandwiches and not sauce (sensual register, taste). These different concerns, argue Heuts and Mol (2013), have an effect on what comes to count as a “good” tomato.

While casting light on one way in which values and concerns are linked, the argument that concerns are produced through the production of values (Dussauge et al., 2015a) does not fully explain the relationship. Dussauge and colleagues (2015a) themselves call for a further careful exploration of how valuation practices and concern-making practices are intertwined in science, society, and technology.

This is where the understanding of concerns proposed by Hans Kjellberg and Ingrid Stigzelius (2014) in their study of consumers’ everyday food practices may be helpful. The focus is on how people enact what Kjellberg and Stigzelius (2014) call environmental values and act on environmental concerns. For example, concerns about the environment encourage consumers to grow their own produce or buy from local producers, which leads to people enacting what they perceive as positive “green values.” The argument in the study is that concerns arise from the actors’ “perceived disconnect between *what is good* and *what is real*” (Kjellberg & Stigzelius, 2014: 205, original italics). As I understand this conceptualization of “concern,” disconnects can emerge between the actors’ values on the one hand, that is how actors think a situation should be or it is desirable for it to be, and on the other hand the situation as they currently see it.

Kjellberg and Stigzelius’ (2014) articulation reinstates the idea that concerns and values are intertwined in a variety of mundane consumption practices. However, the notion of “balancing” introduced by Kjellberg and Stigzelius (2014) to talk about how individual consumers and groups of people navigate frictions between various concerns and between various values, raises a few questions. They primarily discuss balancing concerns (Kjellberg & Stigzelius, 2014: 229), for example, frictions between environmental concerns that push people to buy ecological foods and concerns over personal finances since these foods are usually more expensive. These concerns do not necessarily come into conflict, and for some consumers in the study concern “for reducing waste” and concern “for thrift” aligned in the practice of online grocery shopping (Kjellberg & Stigzelius, 2014: 232). The study also

mentions balancing values (Kjellberg & Stigzelius, 2014: 232) such as producing foods locally, which increases their “green value” by avoiding long-distance transportation, at the expense of using more energy or pesticides compared to imported foods, which do the opposite. In the two examples of online shopping and local foods, “concerns” and “values” seem interchangeable to me. “Reducing waste” and “thrift,” which are phrased as concerns in the study, could be articulated in terms of values, and the foods requiring more energy or pesticides to grow that were used to exemplify the balancing of values could be phrased in terms of concerns. The notion of balancing could thus benefit from being expanded to include how people and organizations manage values and concerns *together*, rather than values with values and concerns with concerns.

Looking at the two studies together (Dussauge et al., 2015a; Kjellberg & Stigzelius, 2014), the question of precisely how concerns and values are intertwined in practice still stands. In both, values and valuation produce concerns. To give an example related to children and childhood, values such as children’s play or creativity and ways of assessing them may become a matter of concern for parents, schools, and authorities. But do concerns also produce values? Such as when concerns and worries about what is “good” and what is “bad” for children establish and delimit the value of “goodness.” Or is the relationship between values and concerns more complex, necessitating that they be considered symmetrically and as producing each other? In the chapter on material and methods (chapter 4), I will expand upon this last question and discuss how we can approach the relationship between values and concerns using the notion of coordination (Mol, 2002).

Concluding thoughts

The focus of this chapter has been on values and concerns as made in practice. Looking at the literature about values, it is clear that discussing the concept, let alone defining it, which some scholars explicitly refuse to do (Dussauge et al., 2015a), is a challenging task. Both values and concerns seem to be notions that are recognized and implicitly understood but prove nebulous and elusive when it comes to defining them. Another challenge is pinpointing the relationship between values

and concerns, both of which are discussed in the literature as things, events, and situations that matter, are important, desirable, and worthy of attention. Exploring this relationship in the analyses of the “Saguskatt” case is one contribution that this thesis will make to Valuation Studies, which is the field I combine with Child Studies to explore children’s charity.

Another contribution that this thesis makes to academic discussions about values is to draw attention to informal valuation practices. I use the notion of informal valuation practices to refer to the discursive production of values as norms and values as appraisals in texts, speech, and images. Unlike formal valuation practices, such as ratings, rankings, and other instruments of assigning value to objects and situations, informal valuations have received less attention in Valuation Studies. Yet, informal valuations make up a significant part of the ubiquitous and mundane valuations on which the field of Valuation Studies focuses (Helgesson & Muniesa, 2013). How and what types of values, considering the distinction between values and norms and values as appraisals discussed earlier, are produced in informal valuation practices will be the instrumental question guiding the analyses.

Having discussed the theoretical concept of values and the related concept of concerns, I will now revisit the aim stated in the introduction to clarify and specify what was said there about values.

Aim and research questions revisited

The aim of this thesis, first stated in the introductory chapter, is to explore corporate children’s charity in practice. There, I also posed two questions that guide this exploration: (1) *How is children’s charity made as charity by for-profit companies and non-profit organizations?* (2) *How do for-profit and non-profit actors mobilize values of children in children’s charity?*

In this and the previous chapter I have offered an understanding of children’s charity using the concepts of values and concerns. Attending to what the actors IKEA and Save the Children, in the empirical case analyzed in the thesis, enact as concerns in addition to what they enact as values opens up new possibilities for thinking about how corporate children’s charity is shaped as charity in practice. But, in order to

accomplish this, two more questions need to be added. Namely: (3) *How do for-profit and non-profit actors mobilize values and concerns in children's charity?* In order for this question to guide the analyses, it also becomes important to ask: (4) *What is the relationship between values and concerns in corporate charity?* Previous research has highlighted a connection between values and concerns, but what exactly the relationship is remains somewhat unclear in the literature and will therefore be further examined in my analysis of the empirical case. Altogether, investigating the four research questions makes it possible to empirically investigate tensions and complexities in corporate children's charity.

The next two chapters, 3 and 4, offer a presentation of the empirical case and the methodological toolbox used to analyze values and concerns in practice.

Chapter 3. The “Sagoskatt” campaign

The Swedish “Sagoskatt” 2017

This chapter offers a presentation of the empirical case: why it was chosen, what it consists of and what the boundaries of the case are. The case analyzed in this thesis is what I refer to as the 2017 Swedish “Sagoskatt” campaign. Its three main elements are the drawing competition for children arranged by the multinational company IKEA, the limited collection of soft toys resulting from the competition produced by IKEA, and the donation raised from the sales of the toys which the company gave to Save the Children Sweden. The 2017 campaign was one of the annual “Sagoskatt” campaigns, which began with the first drawing competition arranged in 2014 and the resulting toy collection released the following year. At the time of writing, the latest competition was held in 2020 and the new toy collection is likely to come on the market in the fall of 2021. The campaign is an example of corporate children’s charity and is particularly interesting because children are said to both benefit from it *as well as* contribute “through their imagination and design”¹⁵ as IKEA Sweden says on its website.

This is, however, not the entire story of how I arrived at choosing this particular campaign as my empirical case. My first encounter with “Sagoskatt” toys in the (polyester) flesh was a bubblegum-pink stuffed bird with giraffe-long neck and a black-and-white stuffed skunk, two toys that I bought at IKEA as Christmas gifts back in December 2015. I had already read about the children’s drawing competition online, and recognized the toys – goofy looking and quirky, they certainly stood out from the rest of IKEA’s soft toys. As I would later discover, this was the first “Sagoskatt” collection released. Then a student on a Master’s program in Child Studies but unaware that I would ever write a PhD thesis, let alone about corporate children’s charity, I thought the toys looked *fun*. I cannot recall paying much attention to their charity aspect; rather, what made them look and seem special was the fact that the

¹⁵ Announcement of the drawing competition in 2017, IKEA Sweden’s website <https://m.ikea.com/se/sv/pages/avdelning/teckningstävling/> (link no longer active). Accessed February 2, 2018.

collection was drawn by children. This duality of the “Sagaskatt” collection and campaign, combining commodities and charity, is what I would like to bring into my presentation of the empirical case.

IKEA calls the campaign “global,” meaning that the competition is promoted and the toys are sold in all IKEA stores worldwide. For instance, in 2018 this entailed 416 stores in 49 countries.¹⁶ But since IKEA has a franchise system, there are differences between countries in how the competition is organized, and which non-profit partner and project is chosen as the recipient of the donation.¹⁷ From year to year, there are also differences such as what percentage of the sales is donated. Given these differences, it is worth emphasizing that my focus is specifically on the Swedish campaign from 2017. I settled on this particular campaign because the study was conducted in Sweden and the 2017 toy collection, along with the online and in-store campaign, was what I had access to at the time of the data collection.

The children’s drawing competition 2016

The children’s drawings that eventually became the “Sagaskatt” collection of soft toys released in 2017 had been selected via IKEA’s drawing competition for children held during the previous year, 2016. Since I started the data collection after the competition had already passed, the following summary is based on IKEA’s online promotion of the competition and interviews with IKEA and Save the Children Sweden.

In Sweden, the competition took place between October 24 and November 6,¹⁸ which in some municipalities overlapped with the fall school break. To participate, children up to 12 years old submit a drawing of their “dream soft toy” (“*drömgosedjur*”) at an IKEA store, with only

¹⁶ Tweet from January 31, 2018, IKEA Sweden’s account <https://twitter.com/IKEASverige/status/958708883815587840> Accessed: May 3, 2018.

¹⁷ “This is IKEA” October 2017, IKEA Sweden’s website https://www.ikea.com/ms/media/pdf/This_is_IKEA_Oct_2017.pdf (link no longer active) Accessed: March 29, 2018; also interview 3.

¹⁸ “IKEA mjukdjur-teckningstävling 2017: Information och villkor” IKEA Sweden’s website, <https://m.ikea.com/se/sv/pages/avdelning/teckningstavling/> (link no longer active) Accessed May 3, 2018; Facebook post from October 31, 2016, IKEA Sweden’s account. <https://www.facebook.com/ikeasverige/videos/10154254686696137> Accessed: February 7, 2018.

one drawing per participant being accepted as a competition entry. The child also has to be accompanied by a parent/guardian who is or is willing to become a member of IKEA’s customer club called the IKEA Family.¹⁹ The drawing needs to be signed with the child’s first name and age as well as the parent/guardian’s full name, contact information, and the IKEA Family membership number.

All child participants receive a diploma and a small prize,²⁰ and each of the competition winners receives a soft toy replica of their own drawing. The winning drawings are selected through several stages. A handful of drawings (e.g. 50 in 2017) are selected at the local level (at a single IKEA store) to then compete at the national level of the competition (stores across Sweden). From the national finalists from all participating countries, the international level winners are then selected. As a result of the competition in 2016, ten international winners were selected (Fig. 3.1), and these drawings were later manufactured as “Sagoskatt” toys. Different adult juries are involved in the selection process: from IKEA employees at the local and national levels to the final jury team at IKEA of Sweden in Älmhult, the “birthplace” of the IKEA company. The jury consists of what IKEA calls specialists in developing products for children, such as a product developer, a product designer, and a supply manager.²¹

¹⁹ “IKEA mjukdjur-teckningstävling 2017: Information och villkor” IKEA Sweden’s website, <https://m.ikea.com/se/sv/pages/avdelning/teckningstavling/> (link no longer active) Accessed May 3, 2018.

²⁰ “IKEA mjukdjur-teckningstävling 2017: Information och villkor” IKEA Sweden’s website, <https://m.ikea.com/se/sv/pages/avdelning/teckningstavling/> (link no longer active) Accessed May 3, 2018; interview 3, IKEA Family and Group Sustainability.

²¹ “IKEA mjukdjur-teckningstävling 2017: Information och villkor” IKEA Sweden’s website, <https://m.ikea.com/se/sv/pages/avdelning/teckningstavling/> (link no longer active) Accessed May 3, 2018.

Figure 3.1. Press photo of winning drawings, IKEA Sweden's website.²²
©Inter IKEA Systems, B. V.

According to IKEA's statistics, the drawing competition in 2016 received 70 000 entries from all over the world,²³ and the competition held the following year received even more; namely, 87 000 drawings, of which 4104 contributions were by children from Sweden.²⁴ Setting the number of 70 000 drawings against the final 10 winning entries shows that there is considerable competition. With only one entry accepted per child, this

²² Press release of the "Sagaskatt" toy collection 2017 from October 27, 2017, IKEA Sweden's website, <http://press.ikea.se/sagaskatt-mjukdjur-27-oktober-2017/> (link no longer active). Accessed: April 22, 2018.

²³ "Sagaskatt" 2017 press kit, IKEA Sweden's website http://press.ikea.se/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/IKEA_SAGOSKATT_pressmaterial_oktober_2017.pdf (link no longer active). Accessed December 6, 2017.

²⁴ IKEA Family newsletter February 12, 2018
<http://www.anpdm.com/newsletterweb/45425C4A75484A5A4A79474759/414445A4B7347425C417645455F4B71>

number also signals that, across the world, thousands of children and families took part in IKEA’s competition and charity campaign that year.

The soft toy collection 2017

The ten winning drawings were manufactured as ten soft toy characters, which make up the “Sagokatt” 2017 collection. The child winners came from Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, Germany, Japan, Poland, Russia, South Korea, the United Arab Emirates, and the USA. Among the toy characters are, for example, a dachshund with unicorn horn and wings, a blue bird with a sown-in squeaker, a rainbow cloud, and the hippo-crocodile mentioned previously (Fig. 3.2).²⁵

Figure 3.2. Press photo of “Sagokatt” toy collection, IKEA Sweden’s website.²⁶ ©Inter IKEA Systems, B. V.

²⁵ “Sagokatt” press kit 2017, IKEA Sweden’s website https://press.ikea.se/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/IKEA_SAGOSKATT_pressmaterial_oktober_2017.pdf. (link no longer active). Accessed: December 6, 2017.

²⁶ Press release of the “Sagokatt” toy collection 2017 from October 27, 2017, IKEA Sweden’s website, <http://press.ikea.se/sagokatt-mjukdjur-27-oktober-2017/> (link no longer active). Accessed: April 22, 2018.

Each character is manufactured in two sizes – large and small. The large versions vary in size, format (e.g. the rainbow cloud is a pillow), and price, costing 29, 49, or 59 Swedish crowns. The small versions are about palm-sized and cost 10 Swedish crowns each. The 2017 collection became available at Swedish physical stores and online in late November (the official date communicated by IKEA was November 27). IKEA did not clearly communicate whether the collection was to be available for purchase until sold out or if there was a set date for the end of the campaign. But the last time I saw the collection for sale in IKEA’s online store was in February 2018.

Although the “Sagoskatt” collection may seem small, putting together all the collections released until the time of writing, from 2015 to 2020, results in 47 toy characters.²⁷ Thus, drawings by 47 different children have been manufactured as soft toys and sold for charity.

The donation to the “High Five” program

IKEA donated what in the online promotion is called the “entire turnover” (*“hela omsättningen”*) from the sales of the “Sagoskatt” 2017 collection to the initiative called “High Five” run by Save the Children Sweden. The “turnover” is defined as “[t]otal value of sales excluding tax.”²⁸ The donation communicated by IKEA via the IKEA Family digital newsletter was 500 000 Swedish crowns.²⁹

Save the Children is an international non-profit children’s rights organization with roots in the UK, which is where Save the Children International is located. Local branches currently exist in 29 countries³⁰ and Save the Children Sweden (Rädda Barnen) was founded in the same year as the UK organization, making it one of the oldest branches (Nehlin, 2009; see also Löw, 2020). The “High Five” program assists

²⁷ Collections 2015–2017 consist of 10 characters each, collection 2018 had five characters, and collections 2019–2020 featured six characters each.

²⁸ I did not find a clarification of “turnover” in the Swedish promotion, so this one comes from IKEA Canada’s promotion: Announcement about the drawing competition 2017, IKEA Canada’s website https://www.ikea.com/ms/en_CA/pressroom/index.html (link no longer active) Accessed: February 12, 2018.

²⁹ IKEA Family newsletter February 12, 2018, <http://www.anpdm.com/newsletterweb/45425C4A75484A5A4A79474759/41445A4B7347425C417645455F4B71>

³⁰ <https://www.savethechildren.net/about-us/who-we-are>

sports associations around Sweden in dealing with problems such as discrimination and bullying. “High Five” has existed since 2010–2011³¹ and ultimately aims to “prevent, detect and manage” these problems and provide “safe sports” activities to children and young people.³² The program offers “support, education and advice” to sports associations³³ and uses what is called “Five steps to an action plan” method (*“Fem steg till en handlingsplan”*). The plan is put together during approximately three meetings between Save the Children Sweden’s employees and the working group representing the association. Such groups consist of at least four people: a board member, a coach (*“ledare”*), a parent, and an “active youth.”³⁴ The action plan includes concrete ways of working to prevent the problems and to address those that already exist. The action plan also provides guidelines on how to act and where to turn for information and help in cases where a coach or parent is worried about a child, including notifying social services.³⁵

Assisting sports clubs to develop an action plan is the foundation of what “High Five” offers to the associations. But the program has also been updated and adapted to emerging social challenges over the years. Since 2015, when Sweden received many unaccompanied refugees, providing these young people with opportunities to play sport has become an additional focus of the program.³⁶

Creating the case

Now that the competition, the toy collection, and the donation have been presented, I will introduce the 2017 Swedish “Sagoskatt” campaign as the empirical case studied in this thesis. A case is not an entity that exists

³¹ Interview 4, Save the Children Sweden. I was not able to establish a more precise date for when the programme was launched.

³² Save the Children Sweden’s website <https://www.raddabarnen.se/rad-och-kunskap/arbetar-med-barn/high-five-trygg-idrott/> (at the time of writing, link active but updated with new information). Accessed July 3, 2018.

³³ Interview 4, Save the Children Sweden.

³⁴ Save the Children Sweden’s website <https://www.raddabarnen.se/rad-och-kunskap/arbetar-med-barn/high-five-trygg-idrott/> (at the time of writing, link active but updated with new information). Accessed July 3, 2018.

³⁵ Save the Children Sweden’s website <https://www.raddabarnen.se/rad-och-kunskap/arbetar-med-barn/high-five-trygg-idrott/> (at the time of writing, link active but updated with new information). Accessed July 3, 2018.

³⁶ Interview 4, Save the Children Sweden.

“out there,” ready to be “found” and to which I as a researcher gain full and immediate access, but an entity that is created and built up throughout the course of study (Law, 2004; also Hine, 2000). The case has been shaped by my choices as well as external events, such as the fact that, when the 2017 toy collection was in the stores, the drawing competition preceding it had long passed, so I only had access to retroactive materials about it. It is worth emphasizing that it was never my intention to achieve a “completeness” of the case, and in this section I will explain why some other materials that could have been taken into consideration were excluded.

The intention when studying an empirical case is to take a deep dive into and learn from specificities (Law, 2004). Through studying the particular, it is possible to work with broader questions (Law, 2004), such as producing insights into how corporate children’s charity might work more generally. Studying a particular case also allows me to analyze the empirical material closely and in detail and to examine how values are made *in practice*. Since examining values can require zooming in on words and phrases in texts or parts of images, such a micro-analysis requires a focus on one case rather than several. Exploring “Sagoskatt” 2017 required situating the case as one of IKEA’s annual “Sagoskatt” campaigns and IKEA’s charity work more broadly, which meant collecting and taking into consideration additional materials about other relevant campaigns.

Constructing a case out of a campaign that does not have clear or solid boundaries can be challenging, however, and requires work. To give an example, “the ‘Sagoskatt’ campaign” is used in the thesis as a collective name for IKEA’s drawing competition for children, the “Sagoskatt” soft toy collection, and the donation produced from the sales. I referred to “the ‘Sagoskatt’ campaign” (“*Sagoskatt’ kampanjen*”) in the interviews with IKEA and Save the Children, and none of the interviewees corrected me on this. Yet, listening through the recordings and reading through the transcripts afterwards, I noticed that the interviewees did not necessarily use the same expression themselves. They talked about the toys as “the ‘Sagoskatt’ collection” (“*Sagoskatt’ kollektionen*”) and the drawing competition as an “activity” (“*aktivitet*”), raising the possibility that the two may be separate activities. However, in the promotion collected from 2017, online and in physical stores, IKEA actively connects the drawing

competition, the collection, and the donation to Save the Children. The competition is said by IKEA to create the foundation for the collection, which in turn is said to produce the monetary donation. To be able to talk about these components, and the connection between them, I have decided to use the phrase “the ‘Sagoskatt’ campaign,” even though it may not have been prominently used by either IKEA or Save the Children.

The campaign takes place both online – on the online platforms of IKEA Sweden and Save the Children Sweden – and in IKEA’s physical stores. To make sense of the campaign, I thus collected empirical materials from multiple sites, online and in an IKEA store. The online or digital materials include the promotion of the “Sagoskatt” campaign on the websites and social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube) of IKEA Sweden and Save the Children Sweden. To observe the in-store promotion of the campaign, I visited my local IKEA store, as will be discussed shortly.

The campaign online

Gathering the material online included following connections (cf. Marcus, 1995), mainly hyperlinks and textual references. Familiarizing myself with the “Sagoskatt” campaign began by using the Google search engine and queries such as “‘Sagoskatt’ 2017 ikea” and “ikea ‘Sagoskatt’ 2017 tävling” (Eng: “competition”). I also used the search field on the IKEA Sweden website and IKEA Sweden YouTube channel to look for “Sagoskatt” and “soft toy.” The next step was to manually search through the homepages of IKEA Sweden (www.ikea.com/se) and Save the Children Sweden (www.raddabarnen.se). The intention was to make sure that I collected all the articles, press releases, and images related to the campaign. In the case of social media, the search meant manually going through the posts, images, and videos on IKEA Sweden’s and Save the Children Sweden’s accounts. To be able to access these accounts on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, I created a separate personal account. I also followed hyperlinks included in the articles, social media posts, and press releases. For instance, links in social media posts about the campaign would lead to IKEA’s or Save the Children’s websites and articles about the details of the drawing competition or the “High Five” program. Following hyperlinks helped me to gradually build up an

understanding of the connections between different promotional materials and ultimately an overview of the campaign.

Choosing which online sites to focus on and which to disregard was an integral part of collecting the digital materials and building up the empirical case (Hine, 2015; Marcus, 1995). The “Saguskatt” campaign could have been followed beyond IKEA’s and Save the Children’s homepages and social media. For instance, using the search engine online to find promotions or using hashtags on social media yielded articles in news outlets and posts on private social media accounts. But since the focus of the thesis is on IKEA and Save the Children Sweden as agents of charity, I chose to restrict my attention to the sites managed by IKEA and Save the Children. This meant including only the materials produced and published by IKEA and Save the Children themselves, rather than those republished on or created by other platforms (e.g. interviews with IKEA in news outlets) or private users (e.g. people posting photos with the “Saguskatt” toys on their personal social media accounts). The only exception, as will be clarified in the following chapter, are people’s comments on IKEA’s and Save the Children’s social media posts. As reactions from direct audiences to the campaign which help to get a sense of its reception, they were included in the analyses if relevant to charity. Otherwise, the focus remains on IKEA and Save the Children as the agents of charity, rather than on the audiences or the reception of the campaign.

Store visits and soft toys

To see how the “Saguskatt” campaign is promoted in IKEA’s physical stores, I made two visits to my local store in a mid-sized city in Sweden (November 7 and 28, 2017). I made brief notes on how and where the “Saguskatt” toys were placed and took close-up photos of the price tags and the posters advertising the campaign. Later the next year, I paid two more visits (October 26, and November 4, 2018) to the same IKEA store. Since I could only collect retroactive materials about the earlier competitions in 2016 and 2017, I wanted to get an idea of how the competition *could* be arranged, since it is not strictly standardized or identical every year. I made a few pages of ethnographic fieldnotes and took photos of the soft toys and the designated competition site when it was not crowded. Located next to the main entrance to the store and the

Småland children’s playroom, the site consisted of tables, benches, and chairs, as well as large cardboard cut-outs advertising the competition and the soft toy collection. All the furniture was decorated with stickers showing the toys from the newest “Saguskatt” collection. One cut-out was equipped with a postbox for submitting drawings. Another was a photo stand-in: an image of the toy from the collection called Kotten, a green spiky hedgehog-like animal, printed life-size on a sheet of cardboard with a face hole which visitors could use to take photos. So, although not separated from the rest of the store, the space for the drawing competition was clearly visually marked.

In total, the store visits resulted in 35 photos and several pages of notes. During my first visit, I also purchased four large toys and 10 small toys from the 2017 collection. By including part of the collection in the study, although the focus is not specifically on objects or materiality, my intention was to engage with the toys as an important part of the campaign. Something that is not visible on the press images of the toys (Fig. 3.3) but is prominent in the physical toys (Fig. 3.4) is the long product tags. Besides information about the country of manufacture and safety guidelines, the tags also show IKEA’s brand logo. Cut the tag off the toy, and there is nothing that indicates who the producer is, that it is based on a child’s drawing, or that it is part of a charity campaign.

Figure 3.3. Press image of the Hippo-crocodile toy, IKEA Sweden’s webpage.³⁷ ©Inter IKEA Systems, B. V.

³⁷ Press release of the “Saguskatt” toy collection 2017 from October 27, 2017, IKEA Sweden’s website, <http://press.ikea.se/saguskatt-mjukdjur-27-oktober-2017/> (link no longer active). Accessed: April 22, 2018.

Figure 3.4. The large and small Hippo-crocodile toys. Photo taken by the author.

Sitting on my desk and bookshelves throughout the course of this study, the “Sagoskatt” toys served as a reminder that, besides being part of a campaign contributing to charity, they are also “just” soft toys to be played with. Bearing no visible markers of contributing to charity, the “Sagoskatt” toys become part of the everyday life of the children and families who buy them, who will perhaps play with them or perhaps tuck them away or re-sell them on online second-hand markets such as eBay.³⁸ Although my focus in the analyses is on texts and images of the toys, engaging with them as objects provoked questions that I would not have been inclined to ask otherwise. Placing the toys side by side with the children’s drawings on which they are based, and which IKEA published as digitized versions online,³⁹ invites questions about what counts as creativity and how children can be co-creators of mass-produced commodities. The toys’ tangible softness encourages questions about how children are expected to play with them and how children’s consumption of them is entangled with children’s charity.

³⁸ Some “Sagoskatt” 2017 toys can be found second-hand in online stores, e.g. the blue bird toy sold on eBay: [https://www.ebay.com/itm/New-IKEA-Soft-Toy-SAGOSKATT-Bird-Black-2017-Designed-by-a-Kid-for-Children/112638072904?epid=22009045019&hash=item1a39c09848%3Ag%3Ar-IAAOSwLJlaB4JH& sacat=0& nkw=ikea+\"Sagoskatt\"& from=R40&rt=nc&LH TitleDesc=0](https://www.ebay.com/itm/New-IKEA-Soft-Toy-SAGOSKATT-Bird-Black-2017-Designed-by-a-Kid-for-Children/112638072904?epid=22009045019&hash=item1a39c09848%3Ag%3Ar-IAAOSwLJlaB4JH& sacat=0& nkw=ikea+\) Accessed August 15, 2018.

³⁹ “Sagoskatt” 2017 press release, IKEA Sweden’s website [http://press.ikea.se/\"Sagoskatt\"-mjukdjur-27-oktober-2017/](http://press.ikea.se/\) (link no longer active). Accessed: March 12, 2018.

Situating the case

Earlier, I argued that studying a particular case makes possible a rich in-depth analysis, a tactic that STS, for one, heavily employs (Sismondo, 2010). This of course does not mean that the case is removed from its setting or examined in isolation. Collecting online and offline promotion strictly about the 2017 campaign was not enough to make sense of the Swedish case or, ultimately, to explore corporate children’s charity, in particular because “Sagorskatt” is a recurring annual rather than one-off event. Studying the case thus required situating the 2017 Swedish campaign among other “Sagorskatt” campaigns and collecting what can be called background materials. These materials consist of the online promotion of “Sagorskatt” campaigns arranged in 2017 in other countries, as well as campaigns arranged in Sweden in the years prior to 2017. Unlike the main empirical material, the background materials are not analyzed as closely or thoroughly. Nevertheless, being aware of *other* ways to conduct the drawing competition, diverse charitable causes, and charitable partners encouraged me to see how things “could be otherwise” (Woolgar, 2012). Rather than making extended comparisons, awareness of and attention to differences allowed me to avoid taking the main case for granted (cf. Deville et al., 2016). It also helped to direct the analytical questions I asked of the main material, helping me to understand particular parts of the campaign in more depth. To give an example, looking at the shifts that occurred between the 2015–2016 and 2017 campaigns from donating globally to donating locally, from donating a set sum per toy sold to donating the full purchase price, allows me not to take the 2017 campaign for granted. Had I remained unaware of this shift, I would not have been inclined to examine how the donation was presented in the 2017 campaign as extensively as I did.

One group of background materials is the digital promotional materials from the earlier campaigns, “Sagorskatt” 2015 and 2016. These were collected from the websites and social media pages (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube) of IKEA Sweden and the IKEA Foundation. The other group consists of promotional materials in English from the “Sagorskatt” 2017 campaigns in Australia, Canada, the USA, and the UK. For this group, I collected promotional materials from the websites and social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter,

and YouTube) of IKEA Australia, IKEA Canada, IKEA UK, and IKEA USA.

The rest of the background materials come from two other charity campaigns for children run by IKEA and/or the IKEA Foundation called “Soft toys for education” and “Let’s play for change.” The IKEA Foundation is a philanthropic organization funded by the INGKA Foundation.⁴⁰ It is presented as an actor independent of the retail company IKEA, although it is worth noting that both are owned by the INGKA Foundation.⁴¹ Besides having a few significant parallels and overlaps with “Sagoskatt,” the two campaigns that I will briefly mention here allow us to situate “Sagoskatt” within IKEA’s wider corporate charity work. For instance, “Soft toys for education” (*Mjukdjur för utbildning*; 2003–2015) is worth considering as a predecessor of the 2017 “Sagoskatt” campaign. It was organized annually by the company IKEA and the IKEA Foundation and is referred to as the “good cause campaign.” One euro/10 Swedish crowns per children’s book or “usual” soft toy sold during the campaign was donated by the IKEA Foundation to non-profit partners Save the Children and UNICEF, and their projects aiming to strengthen children’s right to education globally. During the campaign’s final year in 2015, alongside other products, the very first “Sagoskatt” toy collection was sold to contribute to the educational cause.⁴²

“Let’s play for change” (*Lek för alla barns rätt*, literal translation “play for all children’s rights”; 2017–ongoing) is another annual “good cause” campaign arranged by IKEA and the IKEA Foundation, which has direct overlaps with the 2017 “Sagoskatt” campaign. Started in 2017, it runs around November–December every year in IKEA stores and on IKEA’s and the IKEA Foundation’s online platforms, and so overlaps in time with the “Sagoskatt” campaigns. “Let’s play for change” focuses on providing children globally with safe spaces and opportunities for play and education, in collaboration with UNICEF, Save the Children, and several other children’s non-profit organizations. Unlike in the “Soft toys

⁴⁰ <https://ikeafoundation.org/about/>

⁴¹ <https://www.ingkafoundation.org/ownership-of-ingka-group/>

⁴² “Sagoskatt” press kit 2017, IKEA Sweden’s website https://press.ikea.se/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/IKEA_SAGOSKATT_pressmaterial_oktober_2017.pdf. (link no longer active). Accessed: December 6, 2017.

for education” campaign, the IKEA Foundation donates an established sum to charitable partners, for example, 45 million euros in 2017.⁴³

The reason I am discussing the “good cause” campaigns in such detail is because, from examining the promotion of the 2017 “Sagoskatt” campaign, it appears to be an integral part of the “Let’s play” campaign. For instance, the press release for the “Sagoskatt” collection in 2017 says: “Children’s drawings become cuddly soft toys. As part of our annual charity campaign ‘Let’s play for change,’ IKEA for the fourth time in a row has organized a drawing competition for children from around the world” (my translation).⁴⁴ However, in the interviews with the IKEA Foundation and IKEA,⁴⁵ it emerged that these actors consider “Sagoskatt” and “Let’s play for change” to be two separate initiatives. This is primarily because the donation from the sales of the “Sagoskatt” toys is made by the company IKEA, whereas within the “Let’s play” campaign, it is the IKEA Foundation that makes the donation to its partners.⁴⁶ Untangling who donates what and in which campaign was important not only for understanding which actors are involved in the “Sagoskatt” campaign but also for making sense of how corporate children’s charity functions more broadly.

Finally, it is worth noting that the main focus of this study is on the campaign as it is made visible to various audiences. This means that other, more “backstage,” parts of the “Sagoskatt” campaign, such as following the manufacturing process of the toys, observing the jury selecting the winning drawings, or investigating the impact of the donation for the “High Five” program, were not taken into account. Additionally, some materials that might have been available retroactively, such as the drawings that *did not* win the competition in 2016, were not available after all. In May 2018, the Swedish Archive of Children’s Art (Svenskt Barnbildarkiv)⁴⁷ contacted IKEA with a request to donate the drawings submitted for the competition to the archive. The

⁴³ “Sagoskatt” press kit 2017, IKEA Sweden’s website https://press.ikea.se/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/IKEA_SAGOSKATT_pressmaterial_oktober_2017.pdf. (link no longer active). Accessed: December 6, 2017.

⁴⁴ “Sagoskatt” 2017 press release, IKEA Sweden’s website <http://press.ikea.se/”Sagoskatt”-mjukdjur-27-oktober-2017/> (link no longer active). Accessed: March 12, 2018.

⁴⁵ Interview 2, Children’s IKEA, and 3, IKEA Family and Group Sustainability.

⁴⁶ Interview 1, IKEA Foundation.

⁴⁷ I am grateful to Karin Isaksson at the Swedish Archive of Children’s Art for getting in touch with IKEA Sweden on my behalf and making this request.

reply was that, once the finalists have been chosen, all the other drawings are destroyed. This supported the decision to focus on the promotion, the toys, and, as will be discussed in the following chapter, interviews with IKEA and Save the Children.

To sum up, the 2017 Swedish “Sagoskatt” campaign is the main empirical case analyzed in this thesis. The process of shaping the case has been ongoing throughout the study and required working my way around parts of the campaign that were no longer accessible, such as the drawing competition that had passed by the time I began work on the thesis. Setting the boundaries of the case was mainly guided by my focus on the promotion of the campaign as communicated directly by IKEA and Save the Children and visible to consumers. This meant including these actors’ official platforms but not the promotion as it was shared and republished elsewhere. It also meant prioritizing the promotion over “backstage” parts of the campaign that were not communicated to audiences either online or at the stores. The next chapter will offer a more detailed discussion of the different kinds of empirical materials constituting the case. I will also address the question of how to analyze values in such heterogeneous materials that include texts, speech, images, and videos.

Chapter 4. Material and methods

Overview of the empirical material

In the previous chapter, I presented the empirical case of the 2017 Swedish “Saguskatt” campaign, including a brief overview of the empirical material. This chapter will expand upon what the empirical material includes, the process of collecting it, and how I draw upon ethnographic sensibilities in conducting research online (Hine, 2000, 2015; Pink et al., 2016) and in conducting qualitative interviews (Back, 2007; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Gubrium & Holstein, 2001; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The empirical material was collected over the course of a year, from late 2017 and throughout 2018, although I found myself coming back to the website at later dates to complement the material, add things that I had missed earlier, and check for inaccuracies. The table below (Table 1) gives a quick overview of the material; more clarifications will follow later in the chapter as I go through each type of material one by one. In the later part of the chapter, I will also discuss how the material is analyzed using the concepts of values, concerns, and coordination (Mol, 2002) as methodological tools.

<i>Type of material</i>	<i>What did I collect?</i>	<i>How much?</i>
Digital materials	Promotional materials for the 2017 Swedish “Saguskatt” from the webpages (IKEA Sweden and Save the Children Sweden) and social media pages (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube) of IKEA Sweden and Save the Children Sweden	200 items, such as social media posts, press releases, articles, images, and videos
Interviews	With employees at: Save the Children Sweden, IKEA Foundation, Children’s IKEA, IKEA Sweden, IKEA Family and Group Sustainability	Five interviews

Store visits and soft toys	Soft toys from the 2017 “Saguskatt” collection	Four large-sized toys and 10 small-sized toys with accompanying textual and visual materials
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Table 1. Overview of the empirical material

In the discussion about building the empirical case in the previous chapter, I mentioned that my interest in the campaign as communicated to consumer audiences led me to collect promotional materials online and at the local IKEA store. Interviews with managers at IKEA and Save the Children Sweden, which constitute another part of the empirical material, were initially motivated by the many questions left unanswered after observing the campaign online. Seeking clarifications and additional information about how the campaign was organized and run, and about children’s roles in it, was the initial reason, but the resulting five interviews became a vital part of the material. The interviewees hold different managerial positions and three of them are communication managers, meaning that, in one way or another, they work with the communication of the campaign. Speaking to them provided many insights into analyzing the promotional materials later on. I will shortly discuss the interview method in more detail, but first I will present the ethnographic method used to collect the digital promotion.

Online ethnography

Part of the main materials for this study are 49 digital items collected on the websites and social media channels of IKEA Sweden and Save the Children Sweden. “Items” is an umbrella term that I use for different formats of promotional materials for the drawing competition, the 2017 “Saguskatt” soft toy collection, and the “High Five” sports program that received the donation, such as press releases, press kits, articles, social media posts, and newsletters. As discussed in the last chapter, IKEA and the IKEA Foundation’s “Let’s play for change” campaign overlaps with the “Saguskatt” campaign, so an additional 49 digital items were collected from the IKEA Foundation’s website and social media channels. As background material, an additional 116 digital items of promotion for “Saguskatt” 2017 were collected from the websites and

social media channels of IKEA Australia, IKEA Canada, IKEA UK, and IKEA USA.

However, the number of digital items may not give a full picture of the scope of the material since what I counted as an “item” almost exclusively contains not only text but also one or several images and/or video clips. To give an example, a separate webpage on IKEA Sweden’s website dedicated to the 2017 “Sagoskatt” collection and the 2017 drawing competition was counted as one item (Fig. 4.1). In terms of text, the webpage contains the call for the 2017 drawing competition, the entire rules and conditions for the competition (3.5 pages long if copied and pasted into a document), and the presentation of the 2017 toy collection, as well as quotes by the child designers of the toys. The article also contains seven images and five external links to different sections of IKEA’s online store. As much as its different parts are important, the webpage is also important as a whole, as a promotional piece where text and images interact, which is why I chose to calculate the digital materials in items rather than by counting separate images or texts.

Figure 4.1. Announcement of the drawing competition in 2017, IKEA Sweden’s website. ⁴⁸
©Inter IKEA Systems, B. V.

Another example, the article in the online version of the 2018 IKEA catalogue, featuring the “Sagoskatt” toys contains the text of the article, seven images, and two video clips, each about one minute long. The combination of different media thus makes each of the digital items rich to analyze in detail. A single social media post was also counted as one item, and each typically contains a video or an image, a caption, and in some cases a relevant comment or comment thread was included in the analysis.

Given the focus of the thesis on the promotion visible to consumers, separate comments and discussions in the comments section of IKEA’s and Save the Children’s social media posts have been valuable as reactions from the direct audience for the promotion. Another approach would have been to carry out an audience study to explore how audiences perceive corporate children’s charity. My intention instead was specifically to focus on how the actors carrying out a children’s charity campaign, IKEA and Save the Children, enact it as charity. Similar to the function performed by the background materials in the analyses, taking into consideration occasional comments helped me not to take the campaign for granted. No matter whether supportive or critical of the campaign, they helped to direct analytical questions about the main case.

Approaching the online materials, I drew upon an ethnographic sensibility (Hine, 2000, 2015; Pink et al., 2016).

This was important because analyzing online texts requires examining not only the texts themselves but also how they connect and interact with one another (Hine, 2000). Christine Hine (2000) makes this point in relation to the media event case that she examines; namely, a court case from the 1990s that was widely covered in the media and was also, unusually for that time, prolifically debated on the Internet. I would argue this is also important in the case of “Sagoskatt,” where social media posts and press releases are not only connected with hyperlinks but are sometimes published online in a coordinated manner. I drew connections between the different sites, for example, by printing out social media posts and press releases where the publication date was stated to order them chronologically and follow how the campaign unfurled. At the same time, I also took note of what images and texts were used repeatedly on and across IKEA’s and Save the Children’s platforms and whether there were significant differences between how they were used. This work of making and following connections revealed, for instance, the variations on the “by kids, for kids” tagline that IKEA uses to promote the “Sagoskatt” collection: “designed by a kid, for a kid” and “by kids, for kids” (“*av barn för barn*”), “by a kid, for kids” (“*av ett barn för barn*”), “for children to help other children” (“*för barn att hjälpa andra barn*”). Hine’s (2000) suggestion of taking an ethnographic approach to texts, whereby texts are seen as necessarily situated within the particular sites of their production or consumption, helped me not only to trace the differences but also to make sense of them.

An ethnographic method was also helpful because collecting and documenting materials from websites and social media requires considerable time to be spent online (cf. Rutter & Smith, 2005). An ethnographic sensibility emphasizes both immersion and adaptivity, since the method unfurls as the fieldwork proceeds. Metaphorically speaking, it is a “boot-strapped” exploration, built up piece by piece as one moves along (Hine, 2015: 25). As with other kinds of ethnography, ethnography conducted online is sensitive to the situation of inquiry rather than a manual to be followed (Hine, 2000). But it is a two-way process: approaching fieldwork with an ethnographic sensibility shaped

⁴⁸ <https://m.ikea.com/se/sv/pages/avdelning/teckningstavling/> (link no longer active). Accessed February 2, 2018.

what materials I collected and how, while the sites where the campaign was located, and what was and was not available to collect, also shaped the version of the ethnographic method employed in the thesis. During this back-and-forth process, the object of the study was also taking shape, rather than it being clearly spelled out from the start (Hine, 2015). Much of my initial confusion about what “Sagoskatt” “is” and what actors are involved had led to my primary focus on IKEA’s and Save the Children’s own platforms. This focus also remained further along in the analysis as the complexity of the negotiations over values in which IKEA and Save the Children alone are engaged became more and more visible.

Adaptivity is important in any kind of ethnography, including ethnography conducted online, since websites and social media platforms are neither stable nor fixed and can be unpredictable, which poses challenges for collecting material (Hine, 2015; Rose, 2016). For example, a pop-up banner prevented me from visiting the page dedicated to the 2017 “Sagoskatt” campaign on the IKEA USA website, which I had visited a few months previously. The banner prevents visitors from accessing the page and instead suggests that the reader should register as an IKEA USA Family member to receive an update about the next competition. It was thus crucial to capture all the materials in case they changed or disappeared, or in case access to them was suddenly cut off. The documents that it was possible to download, such as press releases or press kits, were downloaded and saved. For other items that are not downloadable, such as Facebook posts, I took screenshots and saved in image format. To be able to save video clips in case they were removed from the platform, I made recordings of the screen. Challenges such as this call for the ethnographic method to be mobile, open, and malleable to the conditions of the research situation, rather than a solid methodological framework to be applied to the empirical material (Hine, 2015; Pink et al., 2016). Pink and colleagues (2016) call digital ethnography a mode of engaging as well as a method, meaning that these modes vary, as do the versions of ethnography, depending on the research situation.

Interviews with managers

Another part of the empirical material consists of semi-structured qualitative interviews (Back, 2007; Gubrium & Holstein, 2001; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Interviews are often part of ethnographic studies (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007) and, as with collecting the online materials, the focus on how IKEA and Save the Children present the campaign remained primary in thinking about the interviews. Conducting them was originally intended to fill in gaps in the digital materials that appeared significant and seek to clarify any confusion. For instance, online information about the “High Five” program is sparse, so the interview with Save the Children Sweden gave both general information about the initiative and how it came to be selected for the 2017 “Sagoskatt” campaign. I conducted five interviews with professionals who were involved in one way or another in the production of the toys, the organization and communication of IKEA’s drawing competitions, and online or in-store promotion of the “Sagoskatt” campaigns. I spoke to employees at three organizations: Save the Children Sweden, the IKEA Foundation, and the IKEA company. The table below (Table 2) presents an overview of the interview material: the interviews in the order I conducted them, interview formats and length, and the positions of the participants. All but one (interview 1, which was conducted in English) were conducted in Swedish.

	<i>Interview ees, pseudony ms</i>	<i>Organization</i>	<i>Position at the time of interview</i>	<i>Interview format & duration</i>
1	Michael	IKEA Foundation	Communications manager & deputy head of communications	Skype, 1h
2	Stina	Children’s IKEA	Communication manager	Skype, 1h
3	Sara	IKEA Family Global	Communication leader	In person, 1h as well as 30 min informal unrecorded conversation with Charlotte
	Charlotte	Group Sustainability	Global campaign manager	

				before the interview
4	Helena	Save the Children Sweden, financing and partnership department	Key account manager at the section for business collaboration	Skype, 1h
5	Tim	IKEA Sweden, loyalty team at the marketing department	Benefit and rewards leader	In writing, 12 questions and 6 sub-questions

Table 2. Overview of the interview material

The majority of the interviewees knew each other or worked closely together. Charlotte and Michael have worked with the “good cause” campaigns where IKEA and the IKEA Foundation are partner organizations. Charlotte and Sara worked in different IKEA business areas but have worked closely together, so at their suggestion I interviewed them together. At first glance, this may seem like a very modest number of interviews. So it is worth reiterating that, in determining this number, the key intention when conducting the interviews was to speak to professionals who were involved in the campaign and to explore, in more depth than the digital materials allow, how the for-profit and the non-profit partners present it.

Establishing who the partners organizing the “Sagaskatt” campaigns are was not self-evident and required work. That the IKEA company has a complex structure is a point also raised by other studies of IKEA (Andersson, 2009; Garvey, 2018; Kristoffersson, 2015) and something that the majority of my interviewees mentioned when asked to introduce the area of the company within which they work. Grounded in my observations and initial analyses of the digital materials, I had an impression that the drawing competition was an inextricable part of the “Let’s play for change” campaign, managed by IKEA and the IKEA Foundation. This led me to contact the IKEA Foundation, although, as the resulting interview showed, the organizations make a clear distinction between the two campaigns.

Another instance of the initial preparation work was a visit and a presentation of the thesis project at Save the Children Sweden’s head

office. This meeting was not recorded and is not included in the empirical material, but nevertheless it was important in situating “Sagoskatt” 2017 as run by the company IKEA, and Save the Children Sweden as the recipient of the total revenue from the sales of the toys in 2017. Neither was it self-evident from the start who within the partner organizations has particular expertise relating to “Sagoskatt.” The “snowball” method played an important role in finding the right people to interview, although some people whom I was advised to contact replied that they personally were not involved with “Sagoskatt,” while others had changed their place of work or did not have an opportunity to do an interview.

Interview formats

As can be seen from Table 2, the interviews were heterogeneous in format: three were conducted over Skype, one in person, and one in writing. The reasons for this diversity of interview formats were partially practical, such as the participants’ time constraints, or distance. Tim’s time constraints led to the interview being conducted in writing (cf. Martinez, 2017); and the fact that the IKEA Foundation is based in the Netherlands led to the interview with Michael being conducted over Skype. In weighing up the different interview formats, I prioritized getting to speak to the professionals involved in the campaign, and whether this was a conversation in person or over Skype was less important, except for one interview, as will be explained shortly. The literature on interview methods problematizes the boundary between the so-called “online” and “offline,” arguing that the boundaries are highly porous and unstable, and are made over and over again in and around the interview (Adams-Hutcheson & Longhurst, 2017; Pink et al., 2016). That is to say that, although there is certainly a disjuncture of interviewing over Skype, and not sharing the same physical space can influence the rapport between the interviewer and the interviewee (Adams-Hutcheson & Longhurst, 2017), as Gail Adams-Hutcheson and Robyn Longhurst (2017) argue, the same distance can create a greater sense of safety for the interviewee and put them at more ease.

For each interview, I compiled a list of open questions (see Appendix). A few general questions were included in each interview, primarily concerning general information about the “Sagoskatt” campaign, and the interviewee’s role and involvement in it. Other questions were more

specific and tailored to each person, such as the organization of the drawing competition (interview 3), the reason why the “Sagoskatt” toys are manufactured in two different sizes (interviews 2 & 3), and the “High Five” program and the partnership between IKEA and Save the Children Sweden (interview 4). Apart from interview 1, where the interviewee requested this of their own accord, participants did not receive the questions beforehand.

Three interviews (interviews 1, 2, and 4) were conducted using Skype software and lasted about one hour each. These conversations were video-recorded using an option available through Skype and additionally using a digital audio recorder as a backup. Interview 5 was conducted as a written interview at the participant’s suggestion. Tim filled in a form created in a word-processing software which consisted of 12 main questions and 6 sub-questions and emailed it back to me.

Finally, interview 3 was conducted face to face and is the only one where I spoke to two participants. Sara suggested that, since she and Charlotte work closely together, I could interview them both at their workplace, at the IKEA office building called Hubhult which is located in southern Sweden. Conducting this interview in person also made possible to incorporate the soft toys into it. I took two “Sagoskatt” toys, the large and small versions of the Hippo-crocodile, along with the printed press images of the toy and the child’s drawing on which it is based ⁴⁹ (the toys and the image of the drawing can be seen in Fig. 4.2).

Figure 4.2. A cropped still from the video recording of the interview 3

⁴⁹ “Sagoskatt” 2017 press release, IKEA Sweden’s website, <http://press.ikea.se/”Sagoskatt”-mjukdjur-27-oktober-2017/> Accessed: March 12, 2018.

I drew inspiration for this approach from the elicitation method that Sophie Woodward (2016) calls object interviews. As Woodward (2016) notes, object interviews aim to explore what people do with things, how they speak about them, and in this way how they create meaningful relationships with things. My aim when taking the toys to the interview was to explore whether interacting with them could lead to a more engaged conversation since it primarily concerned the toys and the children's drawing competition. This interview was video-recorded because we were looking at and discussing the toys (Fig. 4.2) and audio-recorded for backup. In hindsight, I did not make as much use of the format as I had expected. Still, using this method helped me to realize that objects are always accompanied by talk, texts, and images, which is a vital part of how these objects are made meaningful. While early in my work on the thesis I had a strong interest in the toys as material objects and in visual analysis, gradually texts and interviews have occupied more and more space in the analyses. This in itself is interesting and can potentially speak to the challenge of examining values in empirical materials *other than* texts and talk.

The analytical work with the interviews began with transcribing and anonymizing. When analyzing, I primarily worked with the transcripts, but also relistened to the recordings in order to proof-check the transcripts. The excerpts analyzed in the empirical chapters are my translations into English, apart from interview 1, which was conducted in English.

Anonymization and pseudonyms

Ensuring that the participants gave their informed consent to the interview and that the study follows ethical guidelines and good research practice (Swedish Research Council, 2017), was an ongoing process throughout conducting the interviews. It included sending each participant an information letter and consent form ahead of the interview via email, which was also the main method of recruiting and communicating. Each interview began with a presentation of the idea for the thesis, clarifying the reason for the interview, and addressing the interviewee's own questions if there were any. Each interview, apart from interview 5 where this information was communicated via email, also started by informing the participant about consent and anonymity. In all

the interviews, except the in-person interview 3, the signed consent forms were either scanned and emailed to my work email address or posted to my office at Linköping University.

The issues of (in)visibility and anonymity are worth mentioning in relation to the interview methods and technology. Throughout the Skype interviews, all participants had their cameras turned off. One person mentioned that having the camera on could interfere with the bandwidth connection or that the technology never works smoothly for them with this device; another participant also referred to a potentially weaker internet connection.⁵⁰ Having assumed that the interviews would have a visual element, I chose to leave my camera on throughout the conversations. I never asked the participants to turn on the video setting, in part because I felt nervous conducting interviews for the first time, and in part because I did not want to impose a more specific format for the interview on the participants than was already the case. At the same time, I also wanted the participants to be able to see me and to show them the digital tape recorder that was used for audio-recording as a backup. When functioning well, technology remains invisible, but when it does not work properly or breaks down, it becomes visible, as a “technological gatekeeper” (cf. Beck, 2014; Cardell & Sparrman, 2012), sometimes even leading to the loss of the material that it helps to collect. Only once, during interview 1, did I need to turn off my camera to avoid disruption and maintain the quality of the sound when the internet connection weakened. In this way, I want to acknowledge the often-overlooked “centrality of instruments to social research” (Lury & Wakeford, 2014: 9).

The camera used to record the in-person interview also played a part because initially, to be frank, neither of the participants nor I appeared comfortable with the camera. What seemed to create more ease was to direct the camera onto the table where the “Saguskatt” toys and printed images lay. So, the focus is on our arms and the objects we are discussing, touching, and moving around (see Fig. 4.2).

These reflections also encourage questions about the tensions between the chosen invisibility of the participants and the visibility of

⁵⁰ It is worth pointing out that the interviews were conducted before the Covid-19 pandemic and, while widespread, digital meetings and interviews were not as common and everyday for many people as they are now.

both the IKEA and Save the Children brands (Harvey, 2010; Mikecz, 2012). Since I was interviewing the participants in their professional role, the question of identification and anonymity arose early on. In the information sheet and the consent letter, I noted that full anonymity could not be guaranteed and made sure to discuss this with the interviewees. Naming their work positions and the organizations for which they work is key to this study, but it also makes these people potentially more identifiable. There was thus a dilemma about whether to use pseudonyms or the participants' real names, an issue which reveals a conflict between the commitment to protect research participants and their own preference to remain named. On the one hand, the participants did not necessarily view potential identifiability as a problem, and two gave permission to use their real names in the text (cf. Saunders et al., 2015). Supporting the decision to use the participants' names was also the impression I gained during the interviews that these engaged professionals are proud of their work, of being connected with the brand and the organization they work for, and that they deserve to be given credit for their work.

However, other participants did not give explicit permission, which is why I decided to anonymize all the interviewees. What additionally influenced this decision is that, similar to Carolina Martínez' (2017) study, a few of the participants expressed caution about being interviewed and worry that the interview might be used by the media. In her study on children's relationship with online advertising, Martínez (2017) describes interviewing marketers and advertising agency professionals who were concerned about the company's reputation and thus their own responsibility for the information they provided. Martínez (2016) deals with this issue by using neither real names nor pseudonyms and instead referring to the participants by their professional titles. To my mind, pseudonyms are an important reminder that, although interviewed in their professional role, the participants do not equal their positions. Instead, there is an intertwinement, which is not always frictionless, between the participants' professional and private identities (Harvey, 2010; Lippke & Tangaard, 2014; Mikecz, 2012). This intertwinement became particularly visible when, during the interviews, the participants explicitly marked some of their statements as a personal opinion (e.g. "on a personal level ... I thought that").

In addition to anonymizing the interviewees, pseudonyms are also used in this thesis to refer to adults and children featured in promotional videos, as well as people whose comments on IKEA's and Save the Children's social media posts are employed in the analysis. However, the first names of the child winners are retained in the analyses of social media posts where the child or the child's drawing are featured. My intention in using real names is to give the children credit as creators of the drawings, and as individuals who have the right to have their name mentioned in relation to their work.⁵¹ The importance of the children's right to be named as creators was emphasized by one of the university's legal specialists whom I contacted on this matter ahead of another publication in which I analyze an example from "Sagokatt" in relation to children's creativity (Hrechaniuk, 2019).⁵² This is certainly an example of a conflict between protecting the children in the study yet acknowledging them as authors of the drawings. Although this conflict may seem similar to pseudonymizing the interviewees discussed above, there are several significant differences. Unlike the interviews, the child winners' quotes, drawings, or any other text and talk are not the *main* object of the analysis. The drawings and quotes presented in the empirical chapters are included in the analyses because they are used as an integral part of the online promotion, but the main focus is on the values of children being mobilized by IKEA and Save the Children in the campaign.

Another reason for retaining the children's first names was that, in IKEA's promotion of the campaign, the children are already partially anonymized: all that is mentioned is their first name only, their age, and country of residence, but seldom the city of residence, which I did anonymize in the analyses. These details have also already been made public as part of IKEA's promotion, and further details, such as last names, are unknown to me. This said, the decision to include a Facebook post in the analysis in chapter 8 required careful consideration because it shows a photograph of Greta, one of the winners of IKEA's drawing competition, and her drawing. There are ongoing discussions about ethics and visual images, both those created specifically for a research

⁵¹ <https://www.prv.se/sv/kunskap-och-stod/vanliga-ord-och-begrepp/upphovsratt/>

⁵² I would like to thank Kristina Sundström, legal specialist at Linköping University for providing important input on this matter.

project and those “found” online (e.g. Harris, 2016; Jordan, 2104; Jerolmack & Murphy, 2019; Rose, 2016), so there are no clear guidelines for how to treat materials such as this Facebook post. My first thought was to avoid using this example so as to anonymize Greta. On the other hand, unlike IKEA’s website, which has been updated multiple times since the fieldwork began, IKEA’s Facebook page has not. This means that at the time of writing this and other posts about the campaign are available to the reader anyway via the hyperlinks in the references. Manipulating the photo to make the person in it less identifiable was not something I considered. Blurring or pixelating not only distorts the image, making it potentially disrespectful to the people in the image, but it is also another way of pseudonymizing that would infringe on Greta’s right to her drawing.

Eventually, I decided to use the example in the analyses because not only can it tell us something important about values of children in charity, but it also does this precisely *because* IKEA’s post features the photo of Greta showing her winning drawing to the camera. Scientific conclusions and claims may require identifying people or places in order to make a convincing case (Jerolmack & Murphy, 2019). While neither the photo nor the drawing are themselves analyzed in detail, in order to make sense of IKEA’s caption in the post and the discussion unrolling in the comments section, it is important to see the post as a whole. The intention to give the child winners of IKEA’s competition credit for their drawings and to illustrate analytical points where necessary were thus the main reasons for retaining the children’s first names and, in this one case, a photo.

To sum up the first half of this chapter, which focuses on the methods of collecting the empirical material, they are a combination of ethnography conducted online and conducting qualitative interviews with the key professionals in the campaign, the majority of these conducted via Skype. While encouraging reflexivity about the role of technology and digital platforms, the fieldwork has also repeatedly shown that the boundary between the “online” and the “offline” is unstable and porous.

Analyzing values

In order to understand the “Sagokatt” campaign as a whole, it has been my intention and ambition from the start to treat all the empirical material as being of potentially equal relevance and not to prioritize any kind of material over the rest. Yet, while dealing with the heterogeneous material, I often found myself gravitating more towards texts and interviews, less towards images, and even less towards the toys. This raised two main questions that will be fleshed out in this section of the chapter, which focuses on the method of analysis. Firstly, how can one “recognize” and analyze values in cases where there is no obvious formal valuation procedure, in, say, a text or an image? And then, secondly, how can one analyze values and do justice to the heterogeneity of the empirical materials? To address these questions, and to describe and reflect upon the analytical process, I will first discuss in more hands-on terms what it means to understand empirical materials as “text” when examining values in practice.

Texts and images and values in practice

As discussed earlier in the chapter on the theoretical framework, the notion of practice is central to Valuation Studies, where “valuation” is understood as the practice of making values (Dussauge et al., 2015a; Helgesson & Muniesa, 2013). But, since the notion of practice can be used in a variety of ways (Gad & Bruun Jensen, 2014), it is worth specifying that this exploration of children’s charity in practice is guided by Annemarie Mol’s (2002) understanding. Mol (2002) argues that objects come into being in, and disappear with, practices. In her example, a medical diagnosis does not exist independently “out there” but comes into existence only through a variety of practices. Different practices enact different versions of atherosclerosis (Mol, 2002), salmon (Law & Lien, 2012), or child culture (Sparrman et al., 2016), and it then requires work to align these multiple, sometimes conflicting, versions of an object into a single object.

What Mol (2002) studies in her work on atherosclerosis are day-to-day practices, including patient consultations and examinations at the clinic, discussions about treatments at the meetings in the clinic and the laboratory, and interviews with doctors and patients. Another of Mol’s

studies, the study about good tomatoes (Heuts & Mol, 2013), on the other hand, is based entirely on interviews. Heuts and Mol (2013) note that, while shadowing the participants would have been ideal, it was not possible, so instead the producers and consumers were invited to be ethnographers of their own practices: to talk about the routine and mundane practices of growing, buying, and eating tomatoes. One could question whether interviewing people provides “real” access to practices such as those that Mol (2002) observes in hospital and laboratory settings. Heuts and Mol (2013) argue, however, that they treat producers and consumers of tomatoes as experts in their own practices, which makes their accounts worth analyzing in order to explore how tomatoes are valued in practice.

Interviews with professionals are part of the empirical material analyzed in this thesis, but so are texts, images, videos, and toys, which raises the question of how these relate to practices. Written and verbal texts are not only made by somebody, but they also speak to readers and listeners, which is perhaps especially clear with promotion and publicity pieces. In her proposed method of textual analysis, Dorothy Smith (1978, 1983, 1990) refers to texts as “documents” (1990) and “accounts” (1978). She argues that, since all texts have readers or listeners, they help to constitute social practices with which people engage via reading and listening (Smith, 1990). Thus, Smith (1978) encourages us to approach texts with the intention of understanding how they are socially organized, which can tell us something about how the practices these texts underpin are socially organized. This entails looking into aspects such as word choice, syntactic arrangements, and the sequential structure of a text to see how this text organizes its reading (Smith, 1990). For example, an opening sentence or a paragraph can, in Smith’s terms, “instruct” the reader on how to make sense of the rest of the text. Smith’s analysis thus urges us to examine “*how* the text makes sense” (Smith, 1990: 91, italics in original), rather than what it means.

The word “account” also appeals to me because it can be used to refer to interviews, texts, and images alike, emphasizing their sociality: that texts and images are accounts of something given to somebody and thus are constitutive of, and are constituted by, social relations. Following this line of thinking, images can also be seen as “text” in Smith’s sense. Images are “accounts” that have viewers and help to constitute social

relations by engaging in the practices via looking and viewing (cf. Rose, 2016). Moreover, in my empirical material, images and videos do not appear alone, but are accompanied by text and talk (e.g. captions, narration), which means that all these elements must be analyzed together (Rose, 2016). It might even be possible to understand soft toys as “text” in the sense that their softness and squishiness shape and are shaped by the practices in which they are involved (e.g. playing, cuddling). Since I do not analyze the “Sagoskatt” toys in detail, I will not take this argument further, but it has been made in STS in relation to technology (“the machine as text” in Grint & Woolgar, 1997).

Certainly, interviews, social media posts, and online articles are not the same kind of accounts. A marketing piece on IKEA’s official Facebook page with thousands of subscribers does not speak to the same potential audience as the one-to-one interview I conducted with the IKEA manager over Skype. At the same time, I also observed that the line between these different types of materials can be porous and unstable. To continue with the comparison between online promotion and interviews, I have noticed phrasings and formulations, such as the motto that children are “the most important people in the world,” used in IKEA’s marketing and interviews alike. Since I have used the notion of an “account” before, it is worth mentioning that interviews with professionals about the campaign, as well as IKEA’s reports on the company’s work with children’s rights or the safety of their products for children, can also be called “accounts” in the sense of being a “report.” In these accounts, IKEA reports on the company’s practices, such as the work performed and the campaign conducted.

Images or videos can be understood as yet another type of account, but these are not something that Dorothy Smith discusses in detail. With a few notable exceptions, such as TV programs, films (e.g. Helgesson & Woolgar, 2018; Muniesa & Helgesson, 2013), and price displays (e.g. Cochoy et al., 2018), images have not so far received extensive attention in studies of valuation either. Studies of valuation tend to prefer interviews (Heuts & Mol, 2013), interviews and seminar as a method (Krogh Petersen and Ren, 2015), interviews and document analysis (Fourcade, 2011; Pallesen, 2016), and non-participant observations (Malou Strandvad, 2014). However, of the digital items collected for this thesis – online articles, press-kits, social media posts – I cannot think of

a single one that does not include one or more photograph and/or video. So, although not the main focus of this thesis, the question of the role of images in producing values is worth thinking about.

In more hands-on terms of analyzing the empirical material, I would read and reread the transcripts, listen and relisten to the recordings, zoom in and out of the digital images. The way in which the visual materials specifically were analyzed was to begin with describing what I am able to see in the image, parts of a video, or individual stills from the videos, taking note of the elements, the composition, and the placement of text if any. I would also organize displays on the wall of printed out images, interview excerpts, and stills from videos in order to examine and follow how things connect.

Juxtaposing empirical materials

Valuation Studies tends to avoid giving a general definition of what values “are,” preferring to focus instead on what values do – what potential social effects the production of entities as desirable and worthy may have (Dussauge et al., 2015). While empirically sound, practically speaking this poses a few challenges. How does one “recognize” – see, locate, spot, or grasp – something as elusive and ephemeral as a value? This is especially true in cases of values that are produced through informal valuations which, unlike ratings and rankings, cannot always be clearly identified, as discussed in the theory chapter. To give an example, in its promotion of the “High Five” program, Save the Children claims that safe sports are “very good” for children. Both the word “good” and the relative qualifier “very” led me to consider the statement as having to do with values in the sense of appraisal. “Very good” is an attempt to measure along a scale where other, unarticulated things are more or less “good” for children than safe sports. Needless to say, the organization does not present a formal procedure for how it has come to prioritize sports, and safe sports specifically. So, at one level, the valuation procedure in this case remains invisible, which begs the question of how one analyzes values that appear to be “just there.”

The analytical tool that proved most useful for me as a means of analyzing values was juxtaposing empirical materials. I intentionally use the word “juxtaposing” to refer to this tool instead of “comparing,” which can refer to very different sets of actions (Deville et al., 2016). Joe Deville,

Michael Guggenheim, and Zuzana Hrdliková (2016) argue that, in the social sciences, comparison has often been critiqued as essentialist. For example, cross-country comparisons often presuppose that the differences can be explained by something intrinsic to the countries or the national context (Dewille et al., 2016). Comparison has also been dismissed in the social sciences as reductionist in the sense that it simplifies complex phenomena in order to make them comparable (Dewille et al., 2016). However, Dewille and colleagues (2016) suggest that this partiality is not particular to comparison alone but inevitable to any method of studying social practices and social relations. However, because comparison is a tool for making distinctions, it can be productive and can help us remain alert to the reductions and cuts made in the process of comparing.

Comparing has also been suggested as a tactic for studying values: Dussauge and colleagues (2015b) argue that comparative studies where different empirical cases, sites, or situations are compared and contrasted can help us explore the different values that are at play in similar settings and how they are mobilized. Comparing situations that are related or similar, but where different values are enacted, demonstrates that values are not embedded in the setting itself (Dussauge et al., 2015b), such as in Fourcade's (2011) study, where two distinct appraisals of the economic value of nature are enacted in two separate court cases.

In my analysis, however, the focus is on the single empirical case as opposed to, say, comparing two cases. So, to emphasize this, I use the notion of "juxtaposing," which in English has the meaning of putting things next to each other.⁵³ This is also how in hands-on terms I worked with the empirical materials throughout the analyses. Juxtaposing meant placing physical copies/printouts of social media posts next to interview transcripts, or transcripts from different interviews that seemingly talk about the "same" thing (cf. Vogel, 2021). Primarily, the main empirical materials would be juxtaposed with each other as well as with the background materials, that is materials from other "Sagokatt" campaigns than the 2017 Swedish case. It is worth reiterating that the intention was never to use contrasting to establish the most "accurate"

⁵³ E.g. Oxford dictionary <https://www.lexico.com/synonyms/juxtapose> ; Cambridge dictionary <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/juxtapose>

or “truest” narrative (Dussauge et al., 2015a; Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017). Instead, it is to treat two or more accounts that talk about the same topic or use the same notions symmetrically, even between main and background materials, as equal versions of events. Taking inspiration from Mol’s (2002) argument about different practices enacting different objects, it was important to take seriously the multiplicity of accounts in order to explore the complexity of values as made in practice.

What juxtaposing and comparing (Deville et al., 2016; Dussauge et al., 2015b) have in common is enabling the STS move to denaturalize and “otherwise” the seemingly stable, naturalized, and taken for granted (see Woolgar, 2012; Woolgar & Lezaun, 2013). Denaturalizing seemingly ingrained values as norms in one account by juxtaposing it with another account made it possible to interrogate what actors enact as valuable, and especially as self-evidently valuable, although this is not always explicitly articulated. I would also take note of markers such as “the most,” “very,” and the comparative suffix “-er” (“greater”), which could lead to values as appraisals when they enact a comparison or ranking. These markers could also lead to instances where values as norms are also invoked, such as in the phrase that sport is “very good” for children mentioned earlier.

However, such markers of appraisal are not always present, so another way of analyzing values was to take note of abstractions that can be associated with norms, for example, “joy,” “community,” “safety,” “happiness,” and related by actors to children. I would then color-code what I considered to be potential values throughout the material (cf. Heuts & Mol, 2013), make lists of values, and loosely map them out so see when and how notions such as “joy” and “safety” are mobilized. By sketching free-form messy maps (cf. Clarke et al., 2018), I also strived to incorporate different empirical materials into the analysis, combining the interviews with the digital promotional materials, rather than analyzing them separately. Particularly interesting are instances where IKEA and Save the Children use values as norms to legitimize or justify their actions and choices, because by doing so they make visible not only what values are being used and how but also the outcomes of values being mobilized in children’s charity.

In short, juxtaposing empirical materials, promotional texts, images, and stills from videos made values as norms and informal appraisals

more visible and analyzable. This is particularly true of values that IKEA and Save the Children enact as collectively held and taken-for-granted. However, “seeing” elusive values is one step towards analyzing them, so the following section offers a discussion about how the theoretical concepts of values and concerns were used methodologically and as analytical tools.

Frictions between values

Juxtaposing empirical materials and observing how, for example, the seemingly “same” play as a value is enacted differently is thus one way of analyzing values. Bringing together materials that are not necessarily placed next to each other in the promotion highlighted frictions and paradoxes which were then helpful for directing the analysis. But it is also possible to follow frictions that are explicit in the material, and I made use of the tactic for studying values which is employed in STS: following controversies (Dussauge et al., 2015b). In controversies over values, be it over differing norms or over an appraisal, two or more articulations of values clash, which makes them a helpful tool for making values visible and analyzable (Dussauge et al., 2015b). This also makes it possible to attend to the values that “win over” and come to be enacted as the most important during the course, or as an outcome, of the controversy (Dussauge et al., 2015b). However, quite early in the analyses it became apparent to me that within the “Sagokatt” campaign there are very few explicit debates and controversies in the sense that Dussauge and colleagues (2015b) suggest. The partners, IKEA and Save the Children, tend to agree with one another and be on the same page, perhaps especially concerning children. The few explicit disputes, which will be discussed in the empirical chapters, are online public discussions around IKEA’s and Save the Children’s social media posts. Users comment and negotiate with one another in the comments sections, but neither IKEA nor Save the Children participate in these discussions.

Even though there were no clear controversies, there were frictions and paradoxes. Paying attention to and following these was a useful tool for analyzing informal valuation practices and taken-for-granted values. Frictions, as Dussauge and colleagues (2015b) refer to them, can occur when there is an attempt to enact different values as norms at the same time. To give an example from the case, in the interviews and online

promotion, within an account and between accounts, I observed “charity” being placed in opposition to “profit.” The next step was to examine how such frictions between values are presented as frictions by IKEA or Save the Children, and then to analyze if, and if so how, they were negotiated (e.g. by drawing a discursive boundary between “charity” and “own benefit”). Zelizer (1985/1994, 2005, 1997/2017) has pointed out the seemingly entrenched incompatibility of money and sentiment: the worry often is that, if combined, money might “corrupt” the ideals attached to intimate relationships. Potential frictions between values can thus be understood as giving rise to what I refer to as concerns. Concerns over frictions between values (e.g. what happens if “charity” and “own benefit” merge) are not always explicitly articulated in the promotion or the interviews, however. I suggest that these implicit concerns can be identified through attempts to avoid a conflict or smooth over the frictions.

Giving symmetrical attention to values and concerns unavoidably brings up the question of how they relate to one another. Earlier, in the theory chapter, I discussed how scholars have connected values and concerns. Concerns can be understood as produced through the production of values (Dussauge et al., 2015a), and concerns can be seen as a gap between values and the perceived situation (Kjellberg & Stigzelius, 2014). While emphasizing the close connection between values and concerns, in both approaches it remains unclear whether they are of equal weight and whether they need to be discussed in the same terms. My contribution to these discussions is the suggestion that values and concerns need to be addressed symmetrically. Throughout the empirical chapters, I will show that they co-produce each other. Seeing values and concerns as symmetrical is particularly necessary in exploring charity because concerns and worries (a situation presented as something that needs fixing) go hand in hand with values (to what end it will be fixed). The question remains, though, *how* do values and concerns coproduce each other? In the following section, I will explore this using the concept of coordination (Mol, 2002, 2010).

Coordination of values and concerns

Annemarie Mol (2002, 2010) uses the notion of coordination to show what happens in a hospital setting when different diagnostic techniques

of arthrosclerosis deliver different results, and how these results are aligned by various means to enact a single diagnosis. If the results are taken as signs of the same, single disease, the incoherence causes difficulties in diagnosing and treating the patient. Coordination is continuous and ongoing, rarely smooth or frictionless (Mol, 2002). To emphasize that coordination requires effort and negotiation between the actors, the concept of “coordination work” is also used (Mol, 2002; Woolgar & Lezaun, 2013). As Mol (2010) notes, the word coordination gives an impression of a single actor intentionally and strategically doing the work of coordination, which is not the intention with the concept. Instead, multiple actors engage in the messy business of coordinating, negotiating, and making things align and fit together.

Coordination work is used as a concept not only to describe how things take place in practice but also to explore the outcomes of these efforts, such as achieving a single medical diagnosis (Mol, 2002) or the sameness of the object with which the actors are engaging, such as a mundane bin bag (Woolgar & Lezaun, 2013, 2015). The reason that the literature pays careful attention to these outcomes has to do with what STS scholars call (ontological) politics (Law & Mol, 2008; Mol, 1999; 2002; Woolgar & Lezaun, 2013). Politics in this case is about interrogating who wins and loses when certain versions of reality are enacted and other versions are dismissed, excluded, concealed, or not even considered (Mol, 1999; Woolgar, 2012). What Valuation Studies does is invite us to specifically interrogate the taken-for-granted and entrenched values in order to open up other conditions of possibility and to make space for contestation (Law & Mol, 2008; Mol, 1999). My expansion of this is the argument that we need to pay symmetrical attention to the concerns and values presented by for-profit and non-profit actors in corporate children’s charity. The analysis of values mobilized in charity is not complete without interrogating concerns which often go hand in hand with values, as will be further demonstrated in the empirical chapters.

Coordination can take many forms: for example, things are added to one another or discarded to make up a singularity or coherence (Mol, 2002, 2010). To produce a coherent diagnosis, one set of results can be prioritized while the rest are discarded. Results can also be added and included together, while the differences and tensions are explained away.

Mol (2002) calls these forms of coordination work “addition.” Diagnostic techniques can also be made comparable, what Mol (2002) calls “calibrated,” so that the objects of these different techniques can then be coordinated and related to one another. Since Mol (2002) analyzes coordination work in practice, how things are coordinated will differ from practice to practice. From Mol (2002), I borrow sensitivity to how coordination work is done, yet it is worth emphasizing that the outcomes of this work can be quite distinct in different empirical situations. In a hospital setting, the goal that coordination work helps to achieve is a single diagnosis so that the patient can be prescribed treatment (Mol, 2002). Achieving singularity is not, however, necessarily the goal in the case of children’s charity.

In my analysis, the concept of coordination was used as a methodological tool that allowed me to focus the analysis (cf. Mol, 2012) and explore how IKEA and Save the Children negotiate values and concerns in the campaign. For the sake of clarity, I have named the different forms of coordination work in the empirical chapters as “pairing,” “demarcating,” “anticipating,” and “ordering.” It is worth emphasizing that the names are there to point out distinctions between different ways of doing coordination, rather than to suggest a classification or a “theory” of coordination. In more instrumental terms, analyzing with the concept of coordination work meant making lists of values and lists of concerns, which I then mapped out to gain an insight into how they relate. The maps could be drawn by hand, an arrangement of printed-out text excerpts and images, or a combination of both. The process of thinking with the concepts (Jackson & Mazzei, 2017) during this analysis, moving from the empirical materials towards theory and back, helped to make the different types of coordination work emerge.

Concluding thoughts

Analyzing a charity campaign requires engaging with different types and formats of empirical materials, in the case of this thesis texts, still and moving images, and talk. These heterogeneous materials are understood here as constituted by, and constitutive of, practices, meaning that, by attending to them, we can help explore values as done in practice. To examine values, in particular informal valuation practices and values as

norms that are elusive and not easily identified, I use the tools of juxtaposing different materials and following the frictions between values. I also suggest that potential frictions between values give rise to concerns, which means that we need to attend to both values and concerns together. Both values and concerns have to do with enacting what is important, worthy, and desirable (Dussauge et al., 2015a), which requires us to pay symmetrical attention to them. I argue that this is particularly helpful and necessary when exploring children's charity because concerns and worries go hand in hand with values. Elaborating on how IKEA and Save the Children coordinate values and concerns in practice, as well as examining the outcomes and consequences of coordination, will be the focus of the analysis in the empirical chapters.

This chapter concludes the part of the thesis where I describe and explain the theoretical and methodological frameworks and the empirical material. The next four chapters present my analyses of those empirical materials. Each chapter focuses on a different prominent part of the campaign: the charitable cause, the donation, the "Sagoskatt" toys, and the drawing competition, which taken together make it possible to examine how the campaign as a whole is enacted as charity. In the next chapter, chapter 5, the focus is on the charitable cause to which IKEA contributes by donating the turnover from the sales of the "Sagoskatt" soft toys, namely Save the Children Sweden's "High Five" program. I will examine how the two partners produce "Sagoskatt" as a shared campaign with a shared cause through articulating and coordinating values and concerns.

Chapter 5. A shared cause: “Sagoskatt” and “High Five”

Introduction

Bullying and discrimination in sports and children’s drawings turned into soft toys – how do these fit together? This first empirical chapter delves into the role of the “High Five” program in IKEA’s charity campaign. “High Five” is the initiative that received the turnover from the sales of the “Sagoskatt” toys in 2017. It is a program offered by Save the Children Sweden to sports associations (“*idrottsförening*”), or sports clubs, around the country. “High Five” deals with problems such as bullying and discrimination in sports associations⁵⁴ that prevent children from engaging in what are called “safe sports” (“*trygg idrott*”). The main question for this chapter is how IKEA and Save the Children merge these two existing projects into a single, shared campaign. IKEA organized the first children’s drawing competition to result in a “Sagoskatt” toy collection in autumn 2014. Save the Children Sweden has run the “High Five” program since 2010–2011,⁵⁵ but the 2017 campaign was the first time that IKEA and Save the Children brought together these two projects, with their initially distinct goals. Merging the “Sagoskatt” soft toys and the focus on children’s right to play together of the “High Five” safe sports program requires what I call a shared *cause*. The focus in this chapter will be on how the partners discursively present this shared cause, both in the promotion and in the interviews.

In my overview of previous research on corporate charity, I discussed *cause*-related marketing, which relies on companies donating percentage of the revenue from the sales of particular products to causes such as breast cancer awareness (Einstein, 2017; King, 2006, 2010b; Li, 2017; Rugg, 2020). But regardless of funding structure, charity campaigns always have a “cause” to which they contribute. A formal

⁵⁴ Save the Children Sweden’s website <https://www.raddabarnen.se/rad-och-kunskap/arbetar-med-barn/high-five-trygg-idrott/> (link active but updated with new information). Accessed July 3, 2018.

⁵⁵ Interview 4, Save the Children Sweden. I was not able to establish a more precise date for when the program was launched.

definition of a “cause” is “an idea of principle strongly supported by some people.”⁵⁶ IKEA and the IKEA Foundation, for instance, refer to two of their long-term campaigns, “Soft toys for education” and “Let’s play for change,” both of which have included the “Saguskatt” soft toy collections, as “good cause” campaigns. The stated causes in these two campaigns are children’s education and children’s play. Arguably, a charitable cause contains not only an idea or a principle, but also a problem that the non-profit or for-profit actor running the campaign claims to address or solve. When a non-profit organization claims that its “cause” is to support children’s education, this implies that the organization considers there to be a problem with education that needs to be addressed.

At one point in the interview with Helena, key account manager in the section for business collaboration at Save the Children Sweden, I was reminded of the significance of problems in the work of non-profit organizations. Speaking about the idea of children giving to children and Save the Children’s efforts to empower children to both ease their own situations and contribute to future change, Helena said: “in the best of worlds, we would not be needed.” This exchange made me realize that children’s charity relies on problems and what I have referred to as concerns. In this chapter, I will argue that concerns need to be considered together with values in analyzing charity campaigns. To support the argument, in this chapter four main examples will be analyzed: two pieces of promotional material – an in-store poster and a video clip – along with two interview excerpts. These examples were selected to show how the cause and the partnership between IKEA and Save the Children are presented to consumers, who are encouraged to engage with the campaign and contribute to it.

Partnerships and collective values

In chapter 1, on previous research, I discussed the “win-win” rhetoric that is mobilized in order to legitimize collaborations between for-profit companies and non-profit organizations (Foster, 2014; Powell, 2019; Rajak, 2011; Tornhill, 2019). This section elaborates on that discussion by focusing on the parts of the “win-win” rhetoric that emphasize the

⁵⁶ Cambridge dictionary <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/cause>

partners’ contributions to the “common good” of community, society, and even humanity.

Collaborations are often presented by the partners as necessary: global problems are presented as being of such a scale that they can *only* be addressed by joint action (Rajak, 2011). Addressing problems such as global poverty is said to require a combination of non-profit organizations’ local expertise and international companies’ global reach (Rajak, 2011). In her work on corporate social responsibility and international development, Dinah Rajak (2011: 57) argues that partners not only present a mutual collaboration but also “preferably a clear consensus” between the two parties. But while this rhetoric claims an agreement *between the partners*, Rajak (2011) also argues that it often extends further to accommodate a broader “societal consensus.” Corporate executives whom she interviewed claimed that, as both individuals and employees, they share the “values” of society at large. These collectively shared values are in turn reflected in the company’s values and business principles, which allow the corporate executives to create a vision of an alignment of values within the company, as well as between the company and society at large.

Rajak (2011: 50) lists a number of terms used to support the rhetoric of consensus: “‘common good’, ‘shared values’ and ‘societal consensus’” as well as a “shared vision.” All these terms (“good,” “values,” “vision”) seem to me to speak to values in the sense of the norms and principles guiding people’s actions as I have discussed them so far. Such collectively held values are interesting in relation to charity, especially when they are used to motivate collaborations and campaigns. In his study on corporate partnerships, Robert J. Foster (2014: 253) argues that “public or collective values” are invoked in order to promote partnerships. He gives the example of a collaboration between Coca-Cola and the WWF for water conservation, which was marketed as an opportunity for the WWF to carry out conservation projects and for Coca-Cola to minimize its use of water throughout the supply chain (an allegedly win-win situation). Since clean water and water conservation are the stated benefits of this collaboration, Foster (2014) argues that the partnership is difficult to interrogate because critics would need to navigate “speaking against” clean water. In his analysis of the campaign, Foster (2014) does not elaborate further on the importance of “clean water.” But since “clean

water” is linked to “collective values,” it seems to be important for presenting the collaboration as beyond controversy.

In the discussion of philanthrocapitalism, Nick Lee (2013) points out that philanthropic organizations can position children’s lives, health, and well-being as beyond debate. Writing about the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Lee (2013) analyzes an exchange that took place during a televised debate. The topic was poor conditions for vaccinating children in the majority world, a problem that the Foundation, together with its partners, has been working to solve. The representative of a social justice organization argued that implementing policies that would decrease poverty is a solution to the widespread incidence of preventable diseases and lack of vaccines in the majority world. Gates addressed the argument by steering the debate towards matters of “life and death”: his response was that millions of mothers losing their children is a tragedy that is *avoidable* and can be addressed most rapidly by providing access to vaccines in the majority world. Lee (2013) argues that, by framing the problem in these terms, Gates’ response does more than dismiss the speaker’s alternative solution. His rhetoric of “life and death” also frames the problem as beyond controversy and political debate, effectively putting a stop to the conversation.

Although the examples provided by Foster (2014) and Lee (2013) involve different kinds of partnership, a parallel can be drawn between the two in that things presented as collective values tend to stop debates and resist criticism. This does not mean that partnerships’ or companies’ efforts at corporate social responsibility escape criticism or are impossible to critique (Foster, 2014; Rajak, 2011). But, as Rajak (2011) argues, one tactic used by multinational companies to dismiss critique is by framing it as unproductive, as critique that targets the shared work conducted by companies and non-profit organizations. To illustrate her point, she describes an exchange between herself and an advertising agency executive. The agency developed advertisements for multinational corporations, including Coca-Cola, which educated consumers about ethics and environmental issues. Rajak (2011) questioned the executive about whether it was appropriate for companies whose environmental and social misconduct was well known to educate consumers about similar issues. The executive’s response was that, unlike critics, “[t]hese companies are actually trying to *do*

something” (Rajak, 2001: 56, original italics). Rajak (2011) argues that this response is an example of the rhetoric that tends to dismiss critical voices as counterproductive attempts to taint the good that companies achieve, rather than acknowledging it as a critique of the companies’ conduct. The exchange Rajak (2011) describes is interesting to observe through the lens of values. While a matter of values as norms is invoked in the question (is it “okay” for companies guilty of past misconduct to educate consumers?), in the response, value as appraisal is mobilized. “Something” can be seen here as an attempt to measure the companies’ positive contributions against those of the critics.

However, the studies just mentioned only touch briefly upon the collectively shared values that private and public actors present as motivations for their charitable initiatives. These studies do not delve into how precisely, in detail, this is done. I hope to show that, by using values, especially together with concerns, we can dig a bit deeper into how values that are presented as being collectively shared are mobilized, and what the outcomes are.

“Sagorskatt” as a collaboration

How does IKEA communicate to consumers about the cause supported by donating the sales of “Sagorskatt” toys? The example that I have chosen to analyze first (Example 5.1) is a poster promoting the “Sagorskatt” soft toys displayed at my local IKEA store during the campaign. Placed above the wooden crates filled with “Sagorskatt” toys in the children’s section of the store, this poster was the main source of information about the collection for store visitors.

Example 5.1

Promotional poster at the IKEA store. © Inter IKEA Systems, B. V. Photo of the poster taken by the author, November 7, 2017.

The poster displays all ten toys in the collection, and in the top left-hand corner it shows the toys’ price: “from 15” Swedish crowns, which is how much the small-sized toy costs. In this instance, I want to draw your attention to the bottom right-hand corner, above both the Save the Children Sweden and IKEA logos. The text under the heading “Supporting all children’s right to play” begins with an introduction to “Sagoskatt” as a toy collection based on children’s drawings. The second paragraph presents the cause to which the donation from the sales is given, and reads as follows: ⁵⁷

Selected part of the text in the poster:

⁵⁷ All translations from Swedish are mine unless stated otherwise.

Supporting all children’s right to play

[...] Money from the sales is donated to Save the Children Sweden’s “High Five” project, which works for all children and young people who play sports to be able to do so within a sports association that does not tolerate bullying and discrimination.

Besides information about the donation, this section of the poster tells the reader two central things. One is that children and young people play sports in sports associations. How and why this matters is left implicit in the account, but the phrase “children’s right to play” in the heading encourages the viewer to connect sports for children and young people to children’s right to play. The heading serves as an instruction on how to make sense of the main body of the text (Smith, 1978). Thus, we are supposed to see sports as important and desirable, although this does not mean just *any* sports for children and young people since the poster refers exclusively to sports within sports associations.

The other point implied by this section of the poster is that not all children in Sweden currently have an opportunity to play sports in associations in a safe way, without the risk of suffering “bullying and discrimination.” The viewers of the poster are encouraged to understand that bullying and discrimination are already taking place and that the situation is one of concern. The phrase “for all children and young people who play sports to be able to do so,” which in Swedish contains the verb “should” (literally “should do so,” “*ska kunna göra det*”), presents a gap between how the situation is supposed to look and what it currently is (cf. Kjellberg & Stigzelius, 2014).

In order to make sense of how the right to play and safe sports, how “Saguskatt” and “High Five” are linked, I argue that “safe sports” can be understood as a value that is enacted in IKEA’s poster. The way in which IKEA enacts safe sports as a value combines several things. Firstly, the viewer is not explicitly told about the importance of supporting children’s right to play – it is only mentioned in the title, and otherwise rendered as given. But the fact that the “Saguskatt” campaign centers on sports and play for children helps to enact them as significant, a cause worth supporting. Save the Children is one of the largest international children’s rights organizations, with a long history (Nehlin, 2009), which adds credibility to the child-related causes for which they voice support.

Secondly, “safe sports” are presented as threatened by bullying and discrimination. The claim that safe sports are under threat and in need of support helps IKEA to stabilize safe sports for children as a value. Why otherwise would viewers be asked to care about something apparently worthless? “Bullying and discrimination” are what we can understand in this case as concerns. They are, however, a specific kind of concerns, namely broader, collectively held social issues for which neither IKEA nor Save the Children are directly responsible. I would also suggest that these organizations are not expected to completely alleviate these concerns. The “Saguskatt” campaign or the “High Five” program do not make claims to entirely resolve these concerns either, but rather to contribute and make a difference. In addition to my comment above about issues being broader collective matters, another distinction between this and other kinds of concern is that issues are often in the public eye and in the media (public issues in Marres, 2005; see also collective concerns in Frankel et al., 2019). As part of IKEA’s communication of the “Saguskatt” campaign to consumers, the poster is a good example of a public display of concern.

Notice how, in the short passage on the poster, values and concerns are presented as interrelated. Children’s right to play, safe sports, and bullying and discrimination are made to connect: the poster does not give a positive definition of “safe sports” but only presents “safe sports” linked together with bullying and discrimination. I would suggest that the desirable version of sports for children and young people is defined *through the absence of* bullying and discrimination. At the same time, values (safe sports) are necessary for producing concerns (bullying). Remove the threatened value, and it becomes more difficult to substantiate the concerns – the poster’s viewers would not know what it is that needs to be cared for, what is at stake. Thus, in this case, values and concerns co-produce each other, meaning that they are mutually supportive.

I suggest that, in order to present the campaign in the poster, IKEA coordinates values and concerns in a particular way. I will refer to this form of coordination work as pairing, by which I mean an active matching and the presentation of a value and a concern, sometimes justified by the actors and sometimes presented as natural and obvious. Hence the word “pair,” which is used to refer to a set of two things joined

or used together as a unit.⁵⁸ The successful pairing of values and concerns allows charity partners to authorize their collaboration as actors who publicly subscribe to the values and concerns in question. Save the Children is an established children’s rights organization and, by association with them, IKEA, which is a home design company without a clear connection to children’s sports, is presented as a suitable actor to engage with the cause.

It is possible to imagine a range of alternative combinations of partners and charitable causes. For instance, if we look at the charitable causes supported by the sales of the later “Sagoskatt” collections in Sweden, there are a few alternatives. Just as with the 2017 campaign, IKEA Sweden presented the 2018 and 2019 “Sagoskatt” campaigns as supporting children’s right to play and develop, but the turnover from the sales of both toy collections was donated to an initiative called Generation Pep, which encourages “everyday active play and movement”^{59 60} to counter children’s sedentary lifestyles. Supporting children’s rights is matched here with different concerns (sedentary lifestyles) and different solutions (focusing on everyday play and movement). So the combination of “children’s right to play,” “safe sports,” and “bullying and discrimination” in IKEA’s poster is not inevitable. This leads to the question of how IKEA and Save the Children present it as logical and natural to pair them. To further unpack the partnership and the “safe sports” cause, I will now present Save the Children’s “High Five” program in more detail.

The “High Five” program

In Sweden in recent years, organized sports for children and young people have stirred debates due to reported cases of abuse and harassment. Several tweets promoting the “High Five” program on Save

⁵⁸ Oxford dictionary
https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/pair_1

⁵⁹ Press release October 3, 2018, IKEA Sweden’s website
<https://via.tt.se/embedded/release/sagoskatt-barnteckningar-blir-kramgoa-mjukdjur?publisherId=2111134&releaseId=3245321> Accessed: October 30, 2019.

⁶⁰ Press release October 21, 2019, IKEA Sweden’s website
<https://via.tt.se/embedded/release/sagoskatt-fantasifulla-mjukdjur-uppmuntrar-till-aktiv-lek-och-rorelse?publisherId=2111134&releaseId=3264027> Accessed: October 30, 2019.

the Children's Twitter account⁶¹ refer to a documentary series on Swedish television that brings up these problematic issues. The series, entitled "The heaven and hell of sports,"⁶² highlights a wide range of problems, from favoritism, competition, and performance pressure on children from coaches and sports-mad parents, to unequal access to sports based on socio-economic class. In 2017, the Swedish non-profit organization Children's Rights in Society (BRIS) published a report on sexual abuse and harassment in sports associations, arguing for the need to offer children and young people "safe sports." The Swedish Sports Confederation defines safe sports as "free from bullying, harassment, threats, violence, and abuse," where "everybody feels welcome and involved."⁶³ There is also a visible trend towards sports-based interventions in both Sweden and Scandinavia in general (e.g. Ekholm, 2016; Ekholm & Dahlstedt, 2020; Stenling, 2015). These interventions, for example the "Midnight Football" initiative run in many Swedish municipalities (Ekholm, 2016; Ekholm & Dahlstedt, 2020a; Ekholm & Dahlstedt, 2020b), are aimed at alleviating problems such as exclusion, segregation, and youth crime. These projects use team sports activities to bring social change to often distressed urban areas by encouraging community, participation, and inclusivity. Hence, we can see that, in public debates, organized sports for children and young people are also presented as a solution to wider social problems, such as exclusion and segregation.

The analysis in the previous section shows that the pairing of "safe sports" with "bullying and discrimination" on IKEA's poster (Example 5.1) is neither inevitable nor self-evident. But situating the "High Five" program within wider discussions in the media and research also demonstrates that neither is this pairing arbitrary. Bullying, discrimination, and abuse could have been chosen because they tie into wider ongoing discussions of sports for children and young people in the

⁶¹ Tweet from January 28, 2014, Save the Children Sweden's account <https://twitter.com/raddabarnen/status/428196321887916032>; tweet from January 28, 2015, Save the Children Sweden's account <https://twitter.com/raddabarnen/status/560449828527030272>. Accessed June 27, 2018.

⁶² "*Idrottens himmel och helvete*" on UR play <https://urplay.se/program/179526-idrottens-himmel-och-helvete-toppa-for-att-krossa> Accessed November 18, 2020.

⁶³ Website of the Swedish Sports Confederation (Riksidrottsförbundet) <https://www.rf.se/RFarbetarmed/Tryggidrott/>

media. What is clear is that the pairing requires *work*: both IKEA and Save the Children need to actively match values and concerns. In the following section, I analyze in detail how this work is done using an example from Save the Children’s online promotion of the “High Five” program.

Safe sports, concerns, and solutions

Save the Children Sweden promotes “High Five” as a program that deals with a range of concerns, all of which are said to have the same outcome, namely limiting opportunities for children to play sports in safe environments. I will now analyze a video used to present and promote the “High Five” program on the Facebook page, YouTube account, and website of Save the Children Sweden.⁶⁴ The video is an example of both how a variety of concerns are brought together as hindrances to “safe sports,” and how “High Five” is presented as a suitable means of successfully dealing with these concerns.

Save the Children Sweden promotes the “High Five” program by presenting “success stories” about two clubs that have incorporated it into their work. One of these stories⁶⁵ is a one-minute clip entitled in the caption of the Facebook post “‘High Five’ – For safe and inclusive sports.” It shows a football club in western Sweden called here “Berget” that “actively works”⁶⁶ (*“jobbar aktivt”*) with the “High Five” program. Three people, representing the different groups involved, speak in turn. Firstly, a female employee of Save the Children Sweden, then a male football coach at the club, and finally a teenage girl who is a member of the club. In between the speeches, the video shows a group of girls practicing on

⁶⁴ Facebook post from June 1, 2018, Save the Children Sweden’s account <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=10155564383451794> Accessed August 10, 2018; YouTube video from September 4, 2018, Save the Children Sweden’s channel https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=khXP8jbISXY&feature=emb_title Accessed June 10, 2019; Save the Children Sweden’s website <https://www.raddabarnen.se/rad-och-kunskap/arbetar-med-barn/high-five-trygg-idrott/> Accessed June 10, 2019.

⁶⁵ The other is presented as an interview article on Save the Children Sweden’s website <https://www.raddabarnen.se/rad-och-kunskap/arbetar-med-barn/high-five-trygg-idrott/lopande-moten-med-barnen/> Accessed: June 10, 2019.

⁶⁶ YouTube video from September 4, 2018, Save the Children Sweden’s channel https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=khXP8jbISXY&feature=emb_title Accessed June 10 2019; Save the Children Sweden’s website <https://www.raddabarnen.se/rad-och-kunskap/arbetar-med-barn/high-five-trygg-idrott/> Accessed June 10, 2019.

an outdoor football field. It is a sunny day and probably a warm one too since many are dressed in t-shirts and shorts. The practice seems relaxed and enjoyable: the tempo is slow and there are many smiles and much laughter. Below is the full transcript of the clip.⁶⁷ To avoid confusion, the different parts of the narrative are referred to as accounts 1, 2, and 3:

Example 5.2

(Account 1) Karin, Save the Children Sweden: Sport is very good for most children. But we know that harassment, abuse, and discrimination do take place. And when this happens, very few sports associations actually know how they should act. And this is why Save the Children Sweden works with “High Five” for safe and inclusive sports.

(Account 2) Magnus, youth manager, football club “Berget”: Specifically, working with Save the Children Sweden has meant having an action plan to not only educate about football but also about, for example, mental ill-health, bullying, harassment, and so on. So, we have clarity about where parents, players, and coaches should turn in the unlikely event that something happens.

(Account 3) Lina, 12 years old, football player, football club “Berget”: I feel very safe in this association, because we talk a lot about respect and that you should have a good positive attitude, how you should be a team player.

To begin with the first account, by Karin who represents Save the Children Sweden, notice the general statement with which the account opens: “Sport is very good for most children.” Much like in the previous example, the opening statement sets the tone for the whole account, giving viewers and listeners a framework for making sense of it (Smith, 1978). The account guides us to understand everything that is said and shown in the clip in terms of sport as not simply “good” but “very good” for most children to engage in. This is visually supported by scenes of the girls happily practicing leading the ball in the first few frames of the clip. One of the frames is a close-up of a girl who is smiling as she dribbles the ball. These images strengthen the idea that sport is beneficial for children: it brings children together, making space for them to both exercise and have fun.

⁶⁷ As discussed earlier, in the methods chapter, all personal and other names besides the first names of the child winners of the competition have been replaced with pseudonyms.

This is why the second sentence in account 1 comes as a strong contrast: “But we know that harassment, abuse, and discrimination do take place.” By the logic of contrast, everything listed after “but” is the opposite of beneficial for children. Contrasting structures can, again, provide the viewer with a framework for how to make sense of the narrative (Smith, 1978; Woolgar & Lezaun, 2013). It may seem that contrast is a tool for holding the two contrasted entities apart but here, I would argue, contrasting brings together values and concerns. The concerns enacted in Karin’s account are: “harassment, abuse, and discrimination,” as well as the clubs’ unpreparedness for dealing with these (“very few sports associations actually know how they should act”). The viewer is led to understand that the concerns threaten something which is good for children. Karin states: “we know that harassment, abuse, and discrimination do take place.” The affirmative “we know” nudges the viewer to treat the account as credible, as *the* picture of the situation (Smith, 1978). It is not fully clear whether “we” refers to Save the Children Sweden, an established actor in the non-profit sector with expertise in children’s rights, or whether it is supposed to include the viewers. “We know” either asks the viewer to rely on Save the Children’s expertise, or encourages the viewer to recognize this concern as a concern from their own experiences as a child, a guardian, or a coach. Either way, the statement supported by “knowing” does the work of producing the “High Five” program as credible. It replaces the need to argue in a different way about why safe sport is important, which this presentation of the program would otherwise require. The final sentence of the account: “And this is why Save the Children Sweden works with ‘High Five’” answers an implicit question: why and for whom the program is necessary at this point in time.

In account 2, the pairing of values and concerns by means of contrast continues. Magnus, the club’s youth manager (“*ungdomsansvarig*”), speaks about the practical work that the “High Five” program does for sports clubs. The opening words are an immediate follow-up to the “work” mentioned by Karin: “Specifically, working with Save the Children Sweden has meant...” Magnus explains that, as a result of its collaboration with Save the Children Sweden, the club has developed an “action plan” that makes it possible for the club to “educate” children about “mental ill-health, bullying, harassment, and so on.” Having a plan

is also said to serve all the parties involved in the club's work – children, parents, coaches – as it provides clarity about where to turn if the need arises. So, educating people about potential concerns and offering a support system are presented as the ways to address these concerns.

While the first account in the clip points out the gravity of the concerns in order to legitimize the “High Five” program, the final sentence in Magnus’ account performs a dual, somewhat paradoxical, function. Besides assuring viewers that parents, children, and coaches are offered guidance and help if needed, it also ends by saying that such a need is unlikely: “in the unlikely event that something happens.” This double-edged argument, which both emphasizes the gravity of the concerns and presents them as only potential and improbable, seems to be of particular importance for the sports associations compared to Save the Children. Sports clubs need to demonstrate why working with the “High Five” program has been important and what it has helped to achieve. At the same time, as they do not create the impression of being saddled with too many problems and thus discourage potential audiences from joining a sports club.

The third and final account in the clip is given by Lina, a teenage football player, who represents another group involved in the sports club – the children and young people themselves. This account opens with a different kind of expertise than Save the Children’s “knowing” in account 1 and the coach’s practical, in-the-field experiences of the “High Five” program in account 2. Lina’s first words are: “I feel very safe.” In this way, she refers to a subjective feeling of safety while playing sports at the club, rather than saying, for instance: “*I am* very safe in this association.” Lina goes on to clarify why she feels safe: because at the club they “talk a lot about respect and that you should have a good positive attitude, how you should be a team player.” “Safety” connects back to the aim of the program mentioned by Karin, which is also stated in the title of the clip and the caption of the Facebook post: “for safe and inclusive sports.” Lina’s account demonstrates the results of the “High Five” program being incorporated into the club’s activities: it has succeeded in making this girl “feel safe.”

When analyzing the video, I highlighted concerns and values in the transcript with different colors, which made visible a difference between accounts 1 and 2 and account 3: the latter contains no concerns. To make

sense of why this is the case, we need to take a closer look at how the pairing of values and concerns is accomplished in this promotional video.

Coordinating values and concerns for safe sports

Save the Children’s video clip is a finely-tuned and well-coordinated narrative. I would argue that part of what gives it credibility is the work of pairing values and concerns. In each of the accounts 1, 2, and 3 there is at least one central value that is contrasted against one or several concerns. The values mentioned are the norm or ideal of “safe and inclusive sports” and the appraisal of sport as “very good” (account 1), the norms or ideals of “clarity” (account 2), and “safety” (account 3). In the first two accounts, there is no lack of concerns threatening these values. The main ones are “harassment, abuse, and discrimination” (account 1) and “mental ill-health, bullying, harassment, and such” (account 2). “And such” indicates that the list is not exhaustive, and hints that there may be more, similar concerns (cf. Smith, 1978). At the same time, account 3 is concern-free: there is nothing here that undermines Lina’s safety at the club, according to the girl herself. The final frames of the clip show the group of girls happily practicing football together, walking in a line following the coach across the football field – this is an ideal image of children and young people being able to safely play team sports.

The sequence in which the three people speak in the video clip is crucial: each new account directly connects to and builds upon the previous one, clarifying, strengthening, and filling in the gaps. Account 1 lays the groundwork by pointing out the problems that the program addresses; account 2 describes how this is achieved in practice; and account 3 does the work of demonstrating that the program is successfully achieving its goals. Thus, the sequential arrangement of values and concerns, from the emphasis on concerns at the beginning to the demonstration of “safe sports in action” at the end, creates an impression that the concerns are being successfully managed. The clip offers voices from different groups involved in the work of implementing the program – Save the Children’s representative, the football coach, and the teenage club member. The different groups featured in the video do not necessarily have the same interests or concerns, but the order in

which they speak in the video creates a coherence to their views on the issue of safe sports.

Although well-organized and consistent, the narrative about “High Five” invites questions. One question is about how a range of concerns of varying severity is made to hang together in a seemingly straightforward manner. In addition to the pairing of values and concerns introduced earlier, I want to suggest that concerns are also coordinated among themselves. In the video clip, this is achieved by addition, which is a type of coordination work suggested by Annemarie Mol (2002). In this approach, entities are added to one another with minimal effort in order to clarify how they hang together to form a coherent whole (rather than being discarded or ordered hierarchically). “They can even be substituted for one another,” notes Mol (2002: 68), and the actors do not particularly care how well things align. In *Save the Children’s* video clip (Example 5.2), such an unordered list of concerns is presented, for instance, in account 2: “mental ill-health, bullying, harassment, and so on.” That final phrase, “and so on,” implies not only that the list could be continued but it is also taken for granted that the viewer can do this for themselves (Smith, 1990). This helps to stabilize the list of unordered concerns as known and self-evident.

Altogether, the sequencing of concerns in the video clip achieves complex, partially contradictory outcomes: it communicates to the viewer about the seriousness of the existing concerns while at the same time creating a sense of controlled safety and stability, rather than panic and an urgent need to act. The clip as a whole produces a sense of security: the concerns are possible but claimed as unlikely to take place; they need to be taken seriously but the sports clubs that use the “High Five” program are well-equipped to face them. The football coach in particular engages in intricate pairing work when he does not conceal the seriousness of the concerns yet neither does he imply that they are grave enough for parents, the likely audiences of *Save the Children’s* video, to immediately withdraw their children from sports clubs. This is an interesting outcome of this example of intricate pairing work to note in terms of values: the negotiation of a “just right” balance of seriousness and urgency that neither fuels panic nor makes the cause appear unimportant.

The narrative of collaboration – IKEA Sweden’s account

I began this chapter by asking how the shared charitable cause of the “Saguskatt” campaign is produced and how the connection is made between children’s sports and children’s drawings and soft toys. So far, I have focused on Save the Children Sweden’s promotion and how concerns are added together and paired with the values they threaten. But what is IKEA’s role? After all, IKEA organizes the drawing competition, manufactures and sells the “Saguskatt” toys, and makes the donation to the “High Five” program. Given the aim of the “Saguskatt” campaign of supporting “children’s right to play” (Example 5.1), the question guiding this section is how Save the Children Sweden was selected as the suitable non-profit partner and the pre-existing “High Five” program became the project that receives the donation.

Since the national IKEA franchisees are free to choose the non-profit partner organization and the charitable cause ⁶⁸ to which they donate the turnover from the “Saguskatt” toys, there is some variation among different countries. For example, in the USA, the turnover from the sales of the 2017 collection went to Save the Children’s hurricane relief efforts in three states. ⁶⁹ The formulation published by IKEA Australia is more open and states that the sales will be donated to “Save the Children Australia to support the right of children to develop and play,” ⁷⁰ without specifying a project. The press-kit for the 2017 “Saguskatt” campaign by IKEA Canada states even more loosely that the turnover “will be donated to Canadian charities to support children’s rights to play and develop.” ⁷¹ While the notion of “children’s rights to play and develop” permeate all of these motivations, the projects supported by these different local IKEAs differ. So, in the three cases of the USA, Australia, and Canada, the turnover was either donated to a different cause than “safe sports” or

⁶⁸ Interview 5, IKEA Sweden; interview 3, IKEA Family and Group Sustainability.

⁶⁹ “Saguskatt” 2017 press kit, IKEA USA’s website
https://www.ikea.com/ms/en_US/media/pressroom/FY18-Lets-Play/SAGOSKATT_Press-Kit.pdf (link no longer active). Accessed: February 12, 2018.

⁷⁰ Instagram post from November 29, 2017, IKEA Australia’s account
https://www.instagram.com/p/BcEmkdygb88/?taken-by=ikea_australia Accessed: May 30, 2018.

⁷¹ “Saguskatt” 2017 press kit, IKEA Canada’s website
https://www.ikea.com/ms/en_CA/img/pdf/IKEA_SAGOSKATT_November_2017.pdf (link active but updated). Accessed: February 12, 2018.

it was not communicated exactly what project it supported. This shows us that, rather than being an “obvious” alternative, the “safe sports” cause was an active choice made by IKEA Sweden and Save the Children Sweden. The question of “safe sports” selected in the Swedish case is especially interesting because the “Sagoskatt” collection was not merged with a newly established project but contributes to the already existing Save the Children initiative.

In the interview with IKEA Sweden, I asked how they came to the decision to donate the money to Save the Children Sweden, and specifically to the “High Five” program. Tim, who is part of the loyalty team in the marketing department at IKEA Sweden, explains that Save the Children Sweden is one of the four long-term partners decided on by IKEA Sweden’s management. The three other partner organizations are: (1) the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation; (2) a non-profit actor Generation Pep⁷² working to promote children’s active and healthy lifestyles; and (3) We_Change,⁷³ an initiative run by the non-profit organization for young people “Fryshuset” that engages secondary school students in questions of sustainability by introducing their voices into decision-making processes. That is, out of IKEA Sweden’s four selected non-profit partners, three work with children and young people. Tim explains that the motivation for partnering with these non-profit actors was the desire to make a change at a local level: “Together with these organizations we can contribute in the best possible ways to a better society in the places where we are active.”

Tim goes on to explain further why IKEA Sweden chose “High Five” to receive the donation. To understand this excerpt, it is important to know that the interview was conducted in writing. Tim’s answers are significantly more condensed than those in the other interviews, where the participants were able to reply in a more conversational, casual way, and I was able to immediately ask follow-up questions. Thus, the rhetoric of this written account at times resembles IKEA’s promotional materials more than the spoken interviews.

When I ask how IKEA Sweden came to its decision to donate the money to the “High Five” program, Tim explains the choice the following way:

⁷² <https://generationpep.se/sv/> Accessed: January 7, 2020.

⁷³ https://we-change.se/om-we_change/ Accessed: January 7, 2020.

Example 5.3

Yelyzaveta: How did you decide to support the “High Five” program specifically?

Tim: When the time came to distribute the national donation, it felt obvious to support the work of Save the Children Sweden. For us at IKEA children are the most important people in the world, and for more than 25 years we’ve had an extensive collaboration with Save the Children Sweden. Their initiative “High Five” is a program that focuses on creating conditions for safe sports that is free from bullying, discrimination, and harassment. IKEA Sweden shares Save the Children’s view that for children sports should be about joy and a sense of community – no child who plays sports should feel harassed or excluded. We also want to help decrease children’s sedentary habits and increase their mobility, and “High Five” was also a good fit with this. About 300 Swedish sports associations work with “High Five”, which aligns with our ambition to reach as many people – and children – as possible.

The word “obvious,” with which the account opens, caught my eye as I was analyzing the interview: “it felt obvious to support the work of Save the Children Sweden.” The obvious, or in Swedish literally “self-evident” (*självklart*), character of IKEA’s decision to partner with Save the Children Sweden is explicitly articulated and presented as a natural outcome of the long history of partnership between IKEA and Save the Children: Tim mentions a 25-year-long “extensive collaboration.” This said, we know that IKEA Sweden has established collaborations with two more non-profit partners that work with children and young people. In what way, then, was the decision to donate to Save the Children’s project “obvious”?

Used in the first sentence, the word “obvious” is followed by the statement that, for IKEA, “children are the most important people in the world.” In Smith’s (1978: 40) terms, the obvious is something that does not require an expert reader or viewer: “what is obvious is what may be plainly seen or understood by anyone.” It is a shared foundation between speaker and listener, writer and reader. One outcome of presenting the decision as “obvious” is that the choice is rendered as a non-choice. The reader, in this case of a written interview, is encouraged to imagine a smooth alignment between Save the Children’s “High Five” program, IKEA’s drawing competition, and the “Sagoskatt” collection. But studies

that have examined collaborations between non-profit organizations and for-profit companies have shown that such partnerships often involve negotiations and frictions and are rarely a seamless alignment of shared values (Moor, 2007; Powell, 2019; Tornhill, 2019). So, in order to think further with IKEA Sweden's account of events and explore the collaboration, it is useful to attend to accounts of the non-profit partner, Save the Children Sweden.

The narrative of collaboration - Save the Children

Sweden's account

To make sense of how the “obvious” position of the charitable cause is achieved, at this point we can consider another interview excerpt, in which Helena, key account manager at Save the Children Sweden, talks about the partnership from the organization's perspective. Before analyzing an excerpt from this interview, it should be noted that putting IKEA's and Save the Children's accounts next to each other has the purpose of interrogating apparently natural, inevitable decisions. As explained in more detail in the discussion of juxtaposition as an analytical method, the intention is not to pass judgement or attempt to determine the “truer” version of events (Doganova et al., 2014). Instead, attending to both accounts is necessary in order to gain a more nuanced picture of the complex and messy practices and negotiations comprising children's charity (see also Vogel, 2021).

In this part of the interview with Helena, my objective was to fact-check who was donating what within the frame of the “Saguskatt” campaign. Before going on to talk specifically about “Saguskatt,” Helena briefly summarized the main points of collaboration between IKEA Sweden and Save the Children, much as Tim did in the other interview. In doing this, she emphasized that “Saguskatt” is a one-off collaboration between Save the Children Sweden and IKEA Sweden, unlike other long-term projects. The main long-term project that both Helena and Tim mention in the interviews, and that Save the Children Sweden and IKEA Sweden choose to highlight on their websites,⁷⁴ is called “On Equal

⁷⁴ Save the Children Sweden's website <https://www.raddabarnen.se/foretag/plv/>
Accessed November 18, 2020; IKEA Sweden's website

Terms” (*“På Lika Villkor”*). This is an initiative run by Save the Children Sweden that aims to encourage more participation by and inclusivity for children and young people in distressed urban areas in several large cities in Sweden. Helena explains that the funding for the project is generated through IKEA donating 25 öre, that is one quarter of a Swedish crown, every time a customer scans their IKEA Family membership card. This is what Helena calls “the basis of our agreement.” Additionally, when buying screws and bolts, says Helena, customers can choose to donate the money to Save the Children Sweden. So, as we can see, funding within the project “On Equal Terms” is linked to consumers buying IKEA’s products, much as within the “Sagorskatt” campaigns. But unlike the “Sagorskatt” campaign, “On Equal Terms” is a long-term project.

Helena goes on to describe how Save the Children Sweden is involved in the “Sagorskatt” campaign in the following way:

Example 5.4

Helena: Last year [2017], this additional opportunity with “Sagorskatt” came up and then IKEA contacted us and the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation to ask what we thought might fit well, and what connections there are between the work we do and “Sagorskatt.” So, broadly speaking, we got to suggest the type of project and why we needed the money, one might say. And then we discussed it internally and said we can see a connection between children’s play and our “High Five” sports project, and suggested that this could be a good connection.

Yelyzaveta: Ah, okay, I was wondering about that, what the connection is between sport and children’s drawings and creativity.

Helena: Yes, I understand, but we connected children’s right to play with sport and play, so that was the connection really.

(After this remark, the topic of conversation changed, so no more clarifications were given about the connection between sport and play.)

In this excerpt, Helena describes a procedure that was put in place to decide which non-profit organization should receive the “Sagorskatt” donation. The fact that IKEA Sweden contacted several organizations

<https://www.ikea.com/se/sv/this-is-ikea/community-engagement/svenska-samarbeten-pubd5cbc5c3> Accessed November 18, 2020.

unsettles the stated “obviousness” of the decision to partner with Save the Children Sweden and to donate the turnover from the sales of the “Sagoskatt” collection to “High Five.” Helena mentions that, besides Save the Children Sweden, IKEA Sweden also contacted the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (Naturskyddsföreningen) as a potential partner for the 2017 “Sagoskatt” campaign. This means that the “Sagoskatt” collection, which generates a donation to “children’s right to play, develop, and have fun” (“*alla barns rätt till att leka, utvecklas och ha roligt*”),⁷⁵ *could have been* linked to nature instead of “safe sports.”

Given the long history of nature as a symbol of western ideals of an innocent and good childhood (Halldén, 2009b; Pettersson, 2013; Änggård, 2009), the possibility of “Sagoskatt” bringing together children and nature is worthy of some attention. Similar to the figure of the priceless child (Zelizer, 1985/1994), nature is another priceless object (Fourcade, 2011) that does not easily lend itself to (monetary) valuation. Nonetheless, nature is regularly valued in financial terms; for example, in determining compensation for oil spills (Fourcade, 2011) or the worth of wind power (Pallesen, 2016). Purity and innocence are often associated with romanticized images of both nature and children, so perhaps it is not coincidental that both often become the focus of charitable efforts and of entire philanthropic organizations. Priceless objects must be “saved,” as in the name of the organization *Save the Children*, or “conserved” and “protected,” as in the name of the Swedish Society for Nature *Conservation*. Priceless objects in need of saving and protection seem to be crucial for children’s charity, and perhaps for charity in general. This may be because concerns can be more easily evoked over objects that are normatively ascribed high value, especially concerns that are said to threaten these objects, such as nature. But, in order to follow this line of reasoning, we would of course first need to examine how priceless objects are stabilized as priceless and beyond controversy.

Tim’s statement at the beginning of example 5.3 – “When the time came to distribute the national donation, it felt obvious to support the work of Save the Children Sweden” – does not align smoothly with the

⁷⁵ “Sagoskatt” 2017 press release, IKEA Sweden’s website <http://press.ikea.se/”Sagoskatt”-mjukdjur-27-oktober-2017/> (link no longer active). Accessed: March 12, 2018.

laborious process of application and selection described by Helena in example 5.4. IKEA Sweden enacts a partnership with Save the Children Sweden that relies on support, agreement, and shared values relating to children; thus, the transfer of the “Saguskatt” donation appears effortless. On the other hand, Save the Children Sweden’s collaboration with the company is enacted in example 5.4 as requiring effort, rather than being merely the passive reception of the donation. It includes: (1) connecting one of the organization’s projects to the already existing format of the “Saguskatt” campaign; (2) making an argument for why they should receive the money and how it will be spent; and finally (3) reporting back afterwards, as Helena mentions later in the interview.

Focusing on (1) is of special interest because it concerns bringing “Saguskatt” and “High Five” together and creating a shared cause for the joint campaign. Helena describes aligning the already existing “High Five” program with IKEA’s drawing competition and the toy collection as requiring work from the non-profit partner. This work consists of bringing together children’s drawings, play, children’s right to play, and “safe sports” for children. Helena mentions that IKEA Sweden turned to Save the Children Sweden, as well as the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation, asking which of their projects “could fit well” with “Saguskatt.” Therefore, it follows that Save the Children initiated a discussion and established a link between children’s right to play and the “High Five” program. Save the Children thought that it “could be a good connection,” and it is likely that IKEA Sweden did too because in IKEA’s poster (Example 5.1) we can see a seemingly obvious merging of children’s right to play and safe sports.

In conclusion, the argument in this section is that instances enacted as obvious, natural decisions and non-choices are in fact an achievement of both the for-profit and non-profit partners. The partners invest effort into internal and external negotiations to collaborate and present a shared campaign to the (consumer) public. What Helena’s account makes visible is that, prior to the collaboration with IKEA on “Saguskatt,” the “High Five” program did not have an explicit connection to either children’s right to play or play more broadly. Thus, the realization that a shared cause requires active work and negotiation encourages us to examine what is rendered invisible and what is excluded as a result of this work (cf. Dussauge et al., 2015a). In particular, what values in the

sense of norms and ideas about children are highlighted in the presentation of the cause and what values remain invisible?

At the beginning of this chapter, I asked what children's drawings made into soft toys and bullying and discrimination in children's sports clubs have in common. One answer is, well, children. Up until now, I have focused on the work that IKEA and Save the Children did to bring together the drawing competition, "Sagorskatt" toys, and the "High Five" program. Now I will zoom in on values of children specifically – on what values are mobilized in the presentations of the shared cause of the "Sagorskatt" campaign, and how.

Values of children and the shared cause

In his interview, Tim writes the following: "For us at IKEA, children are the most important people in the world" (Example 5.3). The same expression is used in IKEA's press releases and marketing; for example, on IKEA Sweden's website in the presentation of Children's IKEA, the division of the company responsible for the range of products for children.⁷⁶ The expression is also used in a press release from 2018 in which IKEA announces that it has joined an international non-profit organization called Global Child Forum, which works with children's rights.⁷⁷ Notably, in this press release, IKEA mentions the "Sagorskatt" toys as a "design collaboration" with children and one of the company's initiatives to bring children and children's rights into focus. So, the idea that children are IKEA's "most important people in the world" is important not only in Tim's account, but for the IKEA brand more broadly.

What is interesting about IKEA's expression "children are the most important people in the world" is the superlative "the most." It presents all children as not merely important for IKEA, but as a group of *utmost* importance, discursively positioned as highest. Compared to other values of the normative kind, for example, "joy" and a "sense of community" (Examples 5.2 & 5.3), "the most important" is phrased as an

⁷⁶ IKEA Sweden's website <https://www.ikea.com/se/sv/this-is-ikea/design/barnsaekerhet-pub340124of> Accessed: June 23, 2021.

⁷⁷ Press release from April 11, 2018, IKEA Sweden's website <https://preview.thenewsmarket.com/Previews/IKEA/DocumentAssets/506781.pdf> Accessed: September 12, 2018.

appraisal. In its seeming absoluteness, “children are the most important people in the world” is reminiscent of children’s emotional pricelessness (Zelizer, 1985/1994). Yet there seems to be a difference to the cases that Zelizer (1985/1994, 2002, 2012b) uses to talk about children’s pricelessness, such as child labor and life insurance, where labor and life are assigned a monetary price. In IKEA’s statement, nothing is explicitly *priced*, so it may be helpful to think beyond the notion of *pricelessness*. “The most important” is an appraisal, but one that is connected neither to money nor to anything calculable. Perhaps this very form of an incalculable appraisal stabilizes the value of children as elusive and seemingly absolute.

Mobilizing the value of children achieves several things for IKEA. Firstly, the phrase “the most important people in the world” appears to authorize the company as an agent of charity. Remove the value of children as IKEA’s priority from the account (Example 5.3), and it becomes much less evident why a global furniture and home design company should become engaged in sports or the right to play. Secondly, the high importance of children also helps to anchor the otherwise potentially arbitrary pairing of values and concerns. To draw a parallel with Foster’s (2014) study of the collaboration between Coca-Cola and the WWF for water conservation, motivating the campaign by emphasizing the value of children may resist criticism. Foster (2014) asks: “Who would argue against clean water?” meaning that it enacts a certain non-negotiability. Speaking “against” the importance of children may be just as controversial, which makes IKEA and Save the Children’s collaboration difficult to challenge.⁷⁸

The phrase “the most important people in the world” also achieves something else for IKEA; namely, it produces children as first and foremost *people*. Consider this in relation to the children’s rights discourse used in the communication of the “Saguskatt” collection, and in Helena’s interview. In the interview example 5.3, Tim does not motivate IKEA Sweden’s decision in terms of children’s rights or specifically the right to play, as IKEA’s in-store poster does (Example 5.1). Children are presented here as first and foremost human beings,

⁷⁸ Particularly perhaps in the context of Sweden. To give one example, Sweden was one of the first countries to ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990, and the UNCRC became Swedish law in 2020.

rather than citizens with rights. The social relations underpinning the two ways of talking about children differ (Smith, 1978, 1983). The last sentence in example 5.3 ends with Tim saying that the decision to donate the proceeds to “High Five” “aligns with our ambition to reach as many people – and children – as possible.” What the category *people* does here is to separate out children as a group. In its otherwise family-focused marketing, here IKEA presents children as a group in their own right and one that carries special weight for the company. One could also argue that the category of “people” supersedes categories such as “customer” or “employee,” thus elevating IKEA’s stated ambition to a higher humanist ethos. In a similar vein, the slogan widely used in IKEA’s branding, “to create a better everyday life for the many people,”⁷⁹ speaks about people. Thus, the company is enacted as an institution with a humanist, and humanitarian, mission, if we think about its charity work.

Concluding thoughts

How do IKEA and Save the Children merge two existing projects, the “Sagaskatt” toy collection and the safe sports “High Five” program, into a single shared campaign with a shared cause? Previous research has pointed out the importance of things being presented as collective values for how corporate actors and for-profit and non-profit actors together communicate their campaigns (Foster, 2014; Lee, 2013; Rajak, 2011). Collective values tend to stop debates and help to position campaigns and partnerships as beyond controversy. The analyses in this chapter extend this importance and demonstrate that the shared cause of the “Sagaskatt” campaign relies as much on the values as the concerns supported by both partners. Safe sports are presented as a value in the normative sense, as a desirable ideal or principle. But, importantly, safe sports for children are also presented as threatened by a range of what I have called concerns, such as bullying, discrimination, harassment, and abuse in sports clubs. These concerns are wider societal problems, which the partners aim to address through this campaign. So, in presenting this

⁷⁹ “This is IKEA” October 2017, IKEA Sweden’s website https://www.ikea.com/ms/media/pdf/This_is_IKEA_Oct_2017.pdf (link no longer active) Accessed: March 29, 2018; IKEA Sweden’s website <https://www.ikea.com/se/sv/this-is-ikea/about-us/vision-och-affarside-pub565898d9> Accessed: January 7, 2021.

shared cause, Save the Children and IKEA are actively coordinating values and concerns. Pairing, as I have referred to this type of coordination work, is discursively achieved in several ways. The two prominent strategies discussed are contrasting (a value, and a concern which is said to threaten it) and excluding (defining a value through the absence of concern). What pairing achieves for IKEA and Save the Children is to legitimize the partnership as self-evident and therefore credible and well-suited to dealing with the concerns in question. In particular, the successful pairing of values and concerns helps to authorize IKEA as a credible agent of children’s charity. This is a contribution that I hope the chapter makes to previous research scrutinizing the engagement of businesses in charity (e.g. King, 2006; McGoey, 2015; Powell, 2019; Tornhill, 2019).

In the relationship of pairing, values and concerns are held to be equally important and mutually supportive. Values legitimize concerns as matters of worry and care, while concerns reinforce the importance of values. The fact that values and concerns are mutually supportive suggests that an exploration of children’s charity benefits from the symmetrical analytical attention to how both values and concerns are enacted in practice. Literature that elaborates upon the relationship between values and concerns tends to assign a more minor role to concerns in valuation practices (Dussauge et al., 2015a; Kjellberg & Stigzelius, 2014). However, as the analyses in this chapter show, this is not the only possible relationship between values and concerns. In the following chapters, this will become clear as forms of coordination work other than the pairing discussed here are introduced. But, overall, approaching this relationship as one of co-production is necessary in order to examine how both values and concerns are made in practice. Examining this seems especially important when values and concerns are used to motivate actions, which is the case with charitable causes such as the children’s right to play and safe sports cause of the “Saguskatt” campaign.

Up until now, I have discussed IKEA and Save the Children’s partnership and the shared cause they have produced for the campaign. What I will analyze next is the monetary aspect of the collaboration, namely the donation transferred from IKEA to Save the Children. In some cases, businesses donate a set sum to charitable partners. IKEA is

no exception: as part of other initiatives, the company has made set financial donations and donated its products to non-profit organizations, including Save the Children Sweden.⁸⁰ But the “Sagoskatt” campaign is different because IKEA ties the amount of money donated to the sales of the soft toys. When the charitable and the commercial seem so tightly interwoven, how can we make sense of this donation?

⁸⁰ E.g. in 2015 IKEA Sweden donated 37 000 backpacks, each filled with products for children such as toys, blankets, and pens, that Save the Children Sweden distributed among child refugees <https://www.raddabarnen.se/foretag/huvudpartners/ikea/ryggsackarna/> Accessed February 16, 2021.

In 2020, IKEA Sweden made a donation of 11 million Swedish crowns to support vulnerable groups, including children, the elderly, LGBTQI people, and people suffering from mental health problems <https://www.rfsl.se/verksamhet/ge-en-gaava/ikea-donerar-en-miljon-kronor-till-rfsl/> Accessed February 16, 2021.

Chapter 6. More than money: A charitable donation

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I analyzed the shared charitable cause of the “Sagoskatt” campaign: to support children’s right to play. In this chapter the focus will be on the donation generated through the sales of “Sagoskatt” toys to contribute to this cause. The 2017 collection is particularly interesting because there was a shift in how the donation was generated compared to the previous campaigns in 2015 and 2016. For the first time, IKEA donated what is called the “turnover” in the promotion, defined as “[t]otal value of sales excluding tax.”⁸¹ In the Swedish promotion, the donated money is also referred to as the “entire turnover” (*hela omsättningen*),⁸² “the money from the sales of the SAGOSKATT toys in Sweden” (*pengarna från försäljningen av SAGOSKATT mjukdjur i Sverige*),⁸³ and “the money from the sales in Sweden” (*pengarna från den svenska försäljningen*).⁸⁴ In the English-language promotional materials, the phrasings used are “100% of turnover”⁸⁵ and “100% of sales.”⁸⁶ So, the number of toys sold, and thus consumers who bought them, seem to play a key role in securing the donation, while IKEA is presented as a mediator who “collects” and “passes on” the donation to Save the Children Sweden.

⁸¹ I did not find a clarification of “turnover” in the Swedish promotion, so this one comes from IKEA Canada’s promotion: Announcement about the drawing competition 2017, IKEA Canada’s website https://www.ikea.com/ms/en_CA/pressroom/index.html (link no longer active) Accessed: February 12, 2018.

⁸² Instagram post from October 27, 2017, Save the Children Sweden’s account <https://www.instagram.com/p/Bavwk8Nhi2B/?hl=sv&taken-by=raddabarnen> Accessed: March 16, 2018.

⁸³ “Sagoskatt” 2017 press kit, IKEA Sweden’s website http://press.ikea.se/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/IKEA_SAGOSKATT_pressmaterial_oktober_2017.pdf (link no longer active). Accessed December 6, 2017.

⁸⁴ “Sagoskatt” 2017 press release, IKEA Sweden’s website <http://press.ikea.se/”Sagoskatt”-mjukdjur-27-oktober-2017/> (link no longer active). Accessed: March 12, 2018.

⁸⁵ “Sagoskatt” 2017 press kit, IKEA Canada’s website https://www.ikea.com/ms/en_CA/img/pdf/IKEA_SAGOSKATT_November_2017.pdf (link active but updated). Accessed: February 12, 2018.

⁸⁶ “Sagoskatt” 2017 press kit, IKEA UK’s website https://www.ikea.com/gb/en/doc/general-document/ikea-download-pdf-12.2-mb_1364426849772.pdf (link no longer active). Accessed: July 3, 2018.

With these discussions in mind, the question for this chapter becomes how IKEA enacts its donation as charitable when prices, the commercial, and the charitable are interwoven. The chapter begins with a discussion based on studies of cause-related marketing which highlight contradictions and tensions centering on companies that sell their own products for charity. I will argue that a monetary sum presented as a charity donation is an achievement rather than a given. The examples I then analyze are IKEA's online and offline promotions, where the donation is presented to consumers, as well as interviews with IKEA.

Cause-related marketing

A particular type of collaboration between for-profit companies and non-profit organizations, called cause-related marketing (King, 2006, 2010a, 2010b; Li, 2017; Rugg, 2020), can be helpful in making sense of the "Sagoskatt" donation. The partner company donates a percentage from sales of a product or products to the non-profit partner organization and its cause, offers free advertising, or sponsors fundraising events (King, 2010b). As "selling for charity," cause-related marketing has come under much scrutiny. As discussed in the chapter on previous research, the critique can be summarized as follows: companies claim cause-related marketing campaigns to be charity, but in fact they are something else. In order to argue that companies pursue and prioritize their own interests instead of doing charity, these studies often point to paradoxes and gaps between the causes that companies claim to support and their actions outside these charity campaigns (King, 2010a; Li, 2017; Rugg, 2020; Wirgau et al., 2010).

However, Liz Moor (2007) notes that cause-related marketing has brought benefits not only for companies but also for non-profit organizations. Besides securing funding, collaborating with businesses has helped charities to reach out to new and wider audiences who might otherwise be challenging to engage. Gaining exposure via the company's channels, both in stores and online, means reaching the company's many, often international, customers and followers. To illustrate, a partnership between the American National Football League and the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation was described as an opportunity to reach tens of millions of football fans with the promotion

of mammography (King, 2010b). When a campaign reaches a wider public, this means not only spreading more awareness about the cause but potentially also collecting more money for the said cause. But at the same time, Moor (2007) argues, reaching these audiences requires that charities market themselves more intensively and work with branding more extensively and strategically than they may have needed to in the past. Non-profit organizations also face the challenge of communicating their beliefs and ideals *and* aligning them with those of the for-profit partner (Moor, 2007). This is part of what Moor (2007) calls “brand orientation,” which is a route that a growing number of non-profit organizations are taking in order to navigate competition and limited opportunities to secure funds.

So, it is clear from studies on collaborations for charity and cause-related marketing that there is uncertainty about how to classify cause-related marketing projects. Are they charity, profit-making branded by for-profit companies as charity, or a combination of both? The factor that seems to provoke a significant share of these uncertainties is the intertwining of commerce and charity in initiatives where for-profit companies sell their own products to generate a donation. The boundaries between business, profit, charitable donations, and consumer money become increasingly unstable and blurred. Many companies do not communicate the results of their cause-related marketing campaigns (Einstein, 2017), causing further uncertainty and raising questions about the accountability of corporate charity.

To make sense of these tensions, we can turn to studies in economic sociology which argue that people make charitable donations and other categories of money distinct by assigning them to different social relations (Bandelj et al., 2016; Bandelj et al., 2017; Dodd, 2014; Wilkis, 2018; Zelizer, 1997/2017). Viviana Zelizer (1998, 2007, 1997/2017) uses the notion of earmarking to discuss the work that people put into setting and negotiating boundaries between different categories of money: wages and tips, gifts and loans, a child’s weekly allowance, and the money earned by babysitting or doing chores. To highlight the multiplicity rather than uniformity of money, Zelizer (1997/2017) uses the plural term “monies.” Zelizer (1997/2017) also uses the term “moral earmarking” to refer to practices in which categories of money are not only morally separated but also ranked (see also Bandelj et al., 2016). For

instance, money earned through crime is considered “dirty” and, unlike money earned through honest means, is not acceptable as a church donation (Zelizer, 1997/2017). Thus, Zelizer (1998, 2007, 1997/2017) demonstrates that people invest considerable amounts of work into negotiating and matching social relationships with suitable monies (see Marion Fourcade’s essay in Bandelj et al., 2016 for a similar argument). She also shows that there are many uncertainties about this suitability, which is why I hope to show that using the concept of concerns will be helpful in examining these uncertainties and how they come into being. However, instead of using the notions of monetary values and non-monetary values (Zelizer, 1985/1994, 1997/2017), I also hope to show that approaching charity donations with the notion of values as norms and values as appraisals can be beneficial. This approach allows us to examine in more detail how different values are mobilized in order to present a monetary sum as a charity donation.

Communicating the donation to consumers

Donation as a number: “500 000 Swedish crowns”

I will start by analyzing an example from the “Sagoskatt” campaign that shows how the donation was communicated to consumers *after the campaign had ended*. But before moving on with the analysis, it is worth mentioning that it was not possible to elicit information about the donated sum from either Save the Children or IKEA. In the former case, the respondent from Save the Children Sweden expressed uncertainty about whether she was in a position to give this information, but mentioned that it was a “substantial sum” (“*en anseelig summa*”) and referred me to IKEA for more details. I emailed IKEA Sweden with a request for statistics about the campaign, such as how many toys were sold and what the final donation to Save the Children was, but I was forwarded to IKEA Family, which did not respond to this particular request. Thus, the first example analyzed in this chapter is the digital newsletter through which the donation was communicated to consumers in Sweden (Example 6.1). Although the 2017 “Sagoskatt” collection was promoted on several sites, namely IKEA Sweden’s website, Instagram, and Facebook, the newsletter is the only platform where the donated sum

was mentioned. That the exact sum donated from the sales of the “Sagoskatt” collection is not as easy to locate as other information about the campaign suggests that this speaks to anxieties and implicit concerns surrounding the financial aspects of corporate children’s charity.

Example 6.1

A cropped section of the IKEA Family digital newsletter.⁸⁷ ©Inter IKEA Systems, B. V.

Text in the newsletter:

You and your soft toy have made a difference!

THANK YOU!

YOUR SOFT TOY = MORE SUPPORT FOR SAVE THE CHILDREN SWEDEN!

⁸⁷ Received February 12, 2018

<http://www.anpdm.com/newsletterweb/45425C4A75484A5A4A79474759/41445A4B7347425C417645455F4B71>

Thank you for buying a soft toy from the **SAGOSKATT** collection. You have helped us to donate **500 000** Swedish crowns from the sales of SAGOSKATT in autumn/winter 2017 to “**High Five**,” an initiative by Save the Children that creates safe sports for children and young people.

Read about the SAGOSKATT collection >>

IKEA’s digital newsletter is an email giving details of new product arrivals, current deals, offers, and other information which subscribing Swedish IKEA Family members, including myself, regularly receive in their inboxes. Example 6.1 is a screenshot of the section of this email informing subscribers about the results of IKEA’s “Sagoskatt” campaign in 2017. As well as the donation, I also direct my attention in the analysis towards how consumers and their contribution to the campaign are presented in the newsletter.

The first thing to note about the newsletter is the donated sum of 500,000 Swedish crowns, which is stated in bold in the caption. This is presented as a calculable number. The phrasing “**500 000** Swedish crowns *from* the sales of SAGOSKATT in autumn/winter 2017” (my emphasis) also seems to differ from the way in which the donation is presented in other “Sagoskatt” promotions, namely the “entire turnover” (“*hela omsättningen*”) ⁸⁸ from the sales. As a number that is intended to represent the raw sum of the total proceeds, it may also strike the reader as somewhat neat and rounded. However, whether it was rounded up from a smaller number or down from a higher number is unclear.

Repeated expressions of gratitude to consumers for making the donation possible are also notable in the newsletter. The main body of the text opens with: “Thank you for buying a soft toy,” and the first lines in the translation in Example 6.1 are also directed personally to the reader: “You and your,” “Thank you,” “Your soft toy,” “Thank you for buying.” “You and your soft toy” implies that part of the credit for the charitable donation belongs to the customers. IKEA is presented as not alone in its charitable giving: the donation is shared, made by “us,” where “us” includes both IKEA and the reader of the newsletter, who is addressed directly. In the Swedish original, the phrase puts even more emphasis on togetherness, and can be more literally translated as: “You

⁸⁸ Instagram post from October 27, 2017, Save the Children Sweden’s account <https://www.instagram.com/p/Bavwk8Nhi2B/?hl=sv&taken-by=raddabarnen>
Accessed: March 16, 2018.

have contributed so that together we have been able to donate” (*“Du har bidragit till att vi tillsammans har kunnat donera”*). Such personalized yet collective messages of gratitude thanking customers for their contributions to IKEA’s campaign practically form their own genre, appearing across different platforms and formats: social media posts, newsletters, videos, and images (cf. Malkki, 2015). As if to reinforce the message, the image used in the newsletter shows all 10 toys from the 2017 collection facing forward and gazing directly at the viewer. In addition, the IKEA *Family* logo is prominent in the upper left-hand corner of the image, creating a close “familial” visual bond between IKEA, its customers, the toys, Save the Children, and the children who are assumed to benefit from the “High Five” program and the charitable donation. This said, the newsletter is sent out solely to members of the IKEA Family club, making the seemingly all-embracing “we” somewhat more exclusive.

Keeping in mind the donated sum that was communicated via this newsletter, I would like to interject with an anecdote which can help to pose further questions about how IKEA’s charitable donation is enacted. During the early stages of working on this thesis, I presented a chapter draft at a higher seminar – the draft that included the analysis of this newsletter excerpt. Many of my colleagues in the group appeared surprised at the donated amount: “This is peanuts for a large company like IKEA,” said one. Up until that moment, half a million crowns had seemed to me like quite a lot. What my colleagues seemed to mean was not only that the sum was small, but also that it was not sufficient as a donation when made by a successful multinational company. “A little,” “a lot,” and – perhaps most interestingly – “enough” can be thought of as appraisals, showing that values as appraisals and values as norms are intertwined. Although the donation is appraised through this exchange, assessed in numbers, what the amount should be is also judged in terms of norms and principles. Namely, in terms of what IKEA is expected to be able to donate compared to, say, a much smaller company.

What counts as “enough” depends of course on the situation in question. For example, in the 2017 “Let’s play for change” campaign, IKEA writes that “IKEA Foundation donates 45 million euros to organizations around the world that support children’s rights to play and

develop in some of the world's poorest areas.”⁸⁹ The Foundation's annual giving to its partners amounts to 150 million euros.⁹⁰ To give another illustration, the total revenues of Save the Children Sweden in 2017 were 1 186 million Swedish crowns, out of which about 200 million came from corporate funders.⁹¹ Juxtaposed with these numbers, the donation of 500 000 Swedish crowns or about 50 000 euros at the time of writing, does appear to be a small contribution for both the for-profit and non-profit actors involved.

My discussion just now has concerned how the collected donation was communicated to consumers after the campaign was over. But at the time of the campaign, IKEA also communicated the future donation-yet-to-be-collected to store visitors. This promise of a donation is worth analyzing separately because it plays a part in engaging consumers, whose role IKEA presents as central in raising the donation, and encouraging them to join the campaign.

Donation as an amount: “everything”

The following example (Example 6.2) is a poster informing customers about the “Saguskatt” collection at a local IKEA store in a mid-sized city in Sweden. At the store, it hung above six large wooden crates filled with toys from the collection. Compared to the newsletter addressed to IKEA Family members, the audience for this poster is potentially wider. The crates containing the “Saguskatt” toys were placed next to the passageway in the children's section and were almost impossible to ignore. Anybody who entered the store via the main entrance and was on their way to the restaurant or the kitchen and bedroom sections was likely to pass through the children's section and walk past the toys. In chapter 5, I analyzed part of the same IKEA poster and how it connects the toys to the “High Five” program. Here, the focus will be on the display of toy prices and the presentation of the donation that IKEA intends to

⁸⁹ “Saguskatt” 2017 press kit, IKEA Sweden's website http://press.ikea.se/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/IKEA_SAGOSKATT_pressmaterial_oktober_2017.pdf (link no longer active). Accessed December 6, 2017.

⁹⁰ Interview 1, IKEA Foundation.

⁹¹ According to “A Better World for Children: Annual report 2017”, Save the Children Sweden's website, https://www.raddabarnen.se/globalassets/dokument/om-oss/arsredovisningar/radda-barnens-arsrapport_final_20180803.pdf Accessed: April 29, 2019.

collect from the sales. Since IKEA directly connects this donation-yet-to-be-collected to the sales of the toys, how consumers are motivated to take part is crucial.

Example 6.2

Promotional poster at the IKEA store. ©Inter IKEA Systems, B. V. Photo of the poster taken by the author, November 7, 2017.

Text in the top left-hand corner of the poster reads:

SAGOSKATT

Soft toy, from

15:-

EVERYTHING GOES TO SAVE THE CHILDREN SWEDEN

The text in the top left-hand corner of the poster shows the price of the cheapest “Sagoskatt” toy (15 Swedish crowns) and reads “everything goes

to Save the Children Sweden.” Because of the large print and the visual emphasis on “**EVERYTHING**” printed in bold type, this snippet is one of the most prominent parts of the poster. Unlike a calculable number presented in the previous example (the donated sum of 500 000 Swedish crowns), “everything” can be called an incalculable amount. “Everything” is interesting in its enigmatic totality: seemingly total and exhaustive, yet in a way that avoids specificity. “Everything” seems like a lot, but as viewers of the poster we do not really know how much it is, which makes this amount difficult to compare or challenge. “Everything” tells us a lot and at the same time nothing at all, so how can we make sense of it?

I would argue that “everything” achieves the self-removal of IKEA as the actor determining the size of the donation. Compare this presentation of the donation to the 2015 and 2016 “Sagoskatt” collections, when a certain sum per toy sold, typically €1 or 10 Swedish crowns, was said to be donated to charity.⁹² In the case of the 2017 collection, when the entire turnover from the sales is donated, referred to as “everything” in the poster, there is no need to justify why only a certain percentage is donated. “Everything” sets the pricing bar high and resists potential questions about where the “rest of the money” from the sales goes. With the donation depending on the number of soft toys sold, IKEA appears to have removed itself from having to put a price on children’s charity. This removal is also achieved by the passive constructions in the poster’s text: “everything goes” and “the proceeds are donated” (“*pengarna skänks*” in the bottom right-hand corner). In contrast to the newsletter in example 6.1, which presents IKEA and IKEA’s customers as making the donation possible together, in the poster the passive voice obscures who is responsible for creating the donation. In the poster, it is rather the market – toys bought and sold – that establishes the amount of money donated to Save the Children Sweden.

Considering the newsletter (Example 6.1) and the poster (Example 6.2) together, we can see an interesting conflict between how IKEA

⁹² “Sagoskatt” 2015 press kit IKEA Sweden’s website http://press.ikea.se/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/IKEA_pressmaterial_SAGOSKATT_mjukdjur.pdf (link no longer active). Accessed: July 2, 2018; “Sagoskatt” 2016 press kit, IKEA Sweden’s website http://press.ikea.se/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/IKEA_pressmaterial_SAGOSKATT_nov_2016.pdf Accessed: February 6, 2018.

communicates with consumers about the collected donation on the one hand, and the donation-yet-to-be-collected on the other hand. One is a number, seemingly concrete, solid, and quantifiable. The other is a descriptive amount – hard to quantify or estimate, and so to compare. In its totality, “everything” may seem bigger, more generous, which is especially apparent when compared to the exchange at the higher seminar, where the donation of 500 000 Swedish crowns was generally deemed insufficient for a large multinational company such as IKEA. Notably, the two ways of presenting the donation are used in separate pieces of promotional material, which also speak to different audiences (store visitors and subscribers to the IKEA Family newsletter). The IKEA Family newsletter mentions neither the word “everything” nor “turnover,” but instead the sum is said to be donated “from the sales.” Thus, potential friction between the two ways of enacting the donation is avoided.

Coordinating values for charitable donation

The following excerpt is from the interview with Charlotte (global campaign manager at Group Sustainability) and Sara (communications leader at IKEA Family). I asked about how the idea of children creating for children through the “Sagorskatt” collection had emerged (I will come back to this excerpt later, in chapter 8). Sara and Charlotte replied that, with the previous “Soft toys for education” campaign which lasted for 14 years, IKEA had primarily engaged adults, but the company also wanted to engage children in helping out. Charlotte pointed out that promoting children’s rights is the central message in both campaigns, and specifically the right to play in the case of the “Sagorskatt” collection. Charlotte then continued:

Example 6.3

Charlotte: So this is something that we’re thinking about all the time, how we can work with this, how we can talk about it and get the message out.

Sara: Yes, it’s been very important that we stayed with children also supporting other children in this.

Charlotte: Mmm.

Sara: This connection has been important to stay with. And then we have the donation from the whole collection

Yelyzaveta: Right.

Charlotte: You know... it's really...

Sara: We're not doing this for our own benefit.

Charlotte: No, no.

Sara: In this sense...

Charlotte: This is a small collection and they... I mean, this isn't, no, this isn't at all..., this is a charity.

Sara: Yes!

Charlotte: And everybody in-house also thinks that this is very good and fun.

Yelyzaveta: I can imagine.

Charlotte: So, it's not something we need to fight over in any way.

Sara: No.

Charlotte: A positive activity.

This account shows an apparent friction between two alternative uses of the “Sagoskatt” collection: for “charity” and for IKEA’s “own benefit” (“*egen vinning*”). The two alternatives are contrasted: “we’re *not* doing this for our own benefit [...] *this is a charity*” (“*det är en välgörenhet*”; added emphases). The reason mobilized to substantiate the claim that the collection is for charity is mentioned in the account before the word “charity” is introduced. The donation is said to be generated from the sales of the entire collection: “the donation from the whole collection” (“*donationen av hela kollektionen*”). It is implied therefore that the collection does not (financially) benefit IKEA. The Swedish “*vinning*” is translated here as “benefit”; however, it is challenging to find an equivalent in English. It can be translated as “profit” or “gain,” which, unlike “benefit,” both contain a layer of meaning which invokes economic profit. Since the monetary donation from the “Sagoskatt” collection is mentioned adjacent to “our own benefit,” it made sense to interpret “*vinning*” in this way. But, like “*vinning*” in Swedish, “benefit” also has a wider array of meanings which include both economic and other-than-economic gain.

I would argue that, in this account, “charity” and “our own benefit” can be understood as values in the sense of being norms and principles

that allow actors to appraise their actions. “Charity” is also described as “very good and fun” in the account, meaning that it is something desirable. But the qualifier “very” is an appraisal, which shows how norms and appraisals are intertwined.

Sara and Charlotte mention that, at IKEA, the campaign is unanimously considered to be a good and “positive activity,” “not something we need to fight over in any way.” The fact that IKEA donates the sales from the collection to charity appears to cause no internal disagreements – it is presented as positive for everybody involved. The fact that the “Sagokatt” collection brings together IKEA’s employees, as Charlotte mentions, could be seen as a benefit that the company receives from doing charity. However, the conventional contrast made between personal gain and charity, which is particularly apparent in the ideal of the altruistic free gift (Douglas, 2002; Godbout, 1998; see also Callon & Law, 2005), usually implies a *monetary* personal gain. Since the benefit presented in Example 6.3 of doing charity is a *non-monetary* benefit (the employees consider it “good and fun”), it does not compromise the campaign’s “charity” value.

Altruistic “charity” is contrasted in the account with another kind of “benefit,” the apparently self-interested “our own benefit.” The account defines “charity” not in positive terms but only by exclusion, by saying what it is not: “this *isn’t*, no, this *isn’t* at all., this is a charity” and “we’re *not* doing this for our own benefit” (my emphasis). It is worth noting that, in a different setting, say an annual report or a pitch, the “our own benefit” value may well be presented as highly desirable and positive. But in the context of children’s charity, “our own benefit” is positioned in contrast to “charity,” as something negative to be avoided. This structure of contrast suggests that there are frictions between the values embodied in “charity” and “our own benefit,” and that if the two domains became merged this would potentially give rise to concerns. Unlike the public concerns discussed in chapter 5, here concerns are more implicit, but they can be identified by the work invested in resolving them.

I argue that, in order to resolve the frictions between the values of “charity” and “our own benefit,” the account does the work of coordinating, or more specifically, the work that can be called *demarcating*. “Demarcating” means coordination work that is accomplished by separating and keeping apart what are presented as

conflicting values, such as “charity” and “our own benefit.” Demarcating thus differs from the pairing discussed in the previous chapter, the work of bringing together concerns and values.

One outcome of the demarcating work in example 6.3, I suggest, is that it helps IKEA to legitimize the campaign as charity. Discursively separating “charity” from “our own benefit” precedes potential questions and concerns about the donation and its sufficiency. “Everything goes to Save the Children” (Example 6.2) performs a similar function. The friction between “charity” and “our own benefit” potentially gives rise to concerns, although they are more implicit compared to the explicit and named concerns discussed in the previous chapter, such as “bullying” and “discrimination.” Worry or concern are not explicitly articulated in any of the examples discussed so far in this chapter, but the account in example 6.3 takes it for granted that the listener will agree that commerce and charity need to be kept separate.

From gift literature (Douglas, 2002; Godbout, 1998; see also Callon & Law, 2005) and the literature in economic sociology (Bandelj et al., 2017; Zelizer, 2007, 1997/2017), we know that, conventionally, the domains of charity and personal gain are thought of as incompatible and incommensurable. A potential “contamination” of relationships, morality, and sentimental ideals has been pointed out as a common anxiety around introducing commerce and money into domains that are positioned above self-interest and economic rationality (Bandelj et al., 2017; Zelizer, 2007, 1997/2017). In the case of charity, companies and non-profit organizations alike may be concerned with demonstrating that their campaigns are acts of giving to people in need, rather than of benefitting from them (e.g. see the crisis of trust in the Swedish Red Cross in Petrelius Karlberg et al., 2013). Thus, it becomes crucial to successfully negotiate principles of commerce and charity. The totality of “everything” (Example 6.2) and the phrasing “donation from the whole collection” (Example 6.3), together with demarcating “charity” from IKEA’s personal “benefit” (Example 6.3), work to present “Sagoskatt” as a toy collection for children’s charity. However, the following analysis will show that uncertainties about appraisals and the sufficiency of charitable donations still occur.

How much is enough to donate?

The first examples analyzed at the beginning of this chapter are of how IKEA communicates the donation to consumers (Examples 6.1 & 6.2). The following example (Example 6.4) is taken from a different site: the social media account of Save the Children Sweden. In an Instagram post published around the time that the 2017 “Sagoskatt” collection came out on the market, Save the Children provided brief information about the campaign. Parts of the caption included in the post and quoted below mention the donation-yet-to-be-collected. Besides the caption, I also want to draw attention to a comment in the section below the post, where a commenter questions how the donation from the sales of the “Sagoskatt” toys is generated.

Example 6.4

Instagram post from October 27, 2017, Save the Children Sweden’s Instagram account.⁹³ ©Inter IKEA Systems, B. V.

Selected parts of the caption:

CHILDREN’S DRAWINGS BECOME CUDDLY TOYS

⁹³ <https://www.instagram.com/p/Bavwk8Nhi2B/?hl=sv&taken-by=raddabarnen>
Accessed: March 16, 2018

For every soft toy sold from @ikeasweden's "SAGOSKATT" collection, the whole amount, from 15 crowns per toy, is donated to our work at Save the Children Sweden. ... The entire turnover from the collection in Sweden goes to our programme "High Five"...

Pernilla's comment:

I wonder if it's 15 crowns per soft toy they donate? In this case I wonder "What can this do?" Great contribution, but it would be better with a little more money that can actually make a difference. ❤️

To begin with, a brief clarification is needed about the relationship between the caption and the comment. The caption states that for every toy sold "the whole amount, *from* 15 crowns per toy, is donated" (my emphasis). In the 2017 collection, 15 crowns is the price of the small-sized toys, while the large-sized toys cost 29, 49, or 59 Swedish crowns. The comment made by the Instagram user, whom I will call Pernilla, does not seem to take this into consideration: it appears to assume that no more than 15 crowns is donated per toy. Whether Pernilla has misinterpreted the caption or not is unimportant, however. Instead, it is interesting that, while assuming good faith, if we judge from the heart emoji and the words "great initiative," Pernilla brings up the question of how large the donation will *really* be. Connecting the donation to the toys' retail prices in the first sentence, she interrogates the size of the donation and the possible social change that this donation can make. A small amount of money here equates to small or even no social change. So, Pernilla's comment questions the donation by asking whether it is an adequate appraisal, much like the exchange at the research seminar mentioned earlier, but in a somewhat different way. At the seminar, the donation was judged in terms of norms: compared to an expectation of how much IKEA as a large multinational company with substantial profits should be able to donate to children's charity. Pernilla's comment instead judges the donation in terms of its expected potential to enable social change. Interestingly, the conclusion in both cases is that the donation is not sufficiently large because there is deemed to be a misalignment between the appraisal (the monetary sum of the donation) and the expected norms (e.g. social change). These two examples again show that values as appraisals and values as norms are closely intertwined. So, in order to successfully present their campaign as charity, IKEA and Save the Children need to attend to both.

Unlike IKEA's poster, which states that "everything" (Example 6.2) is donated to "High Five," the caption in Save the Children's Instagram post states that the "entire turnover" (*hela omsättningen*) is donated. The word "everything" and the phrase the "whole turnover" do similar work: they perform totality and exclude potential economic profit from the sales of the toys. But, unlike "everything," the "turnover" seems to be a calculable number rather than an amount. Pernilla's comment makes visible that seemingly solid calculable numbers can give rise to uncertainties and concerns. Perhaps this is because in both Save the Children's post (Example 6.4) and IKEA's poster (Example 6.2) only the lowest price for the small-sized toys is mentioned: "from 15:-." This contributes to generating friction between this relatively small price and the totality of "everything" and the "entire turnover." The price invites questions about the total sum collected, and potentially its insufficiency. Building on this interrogation of the donation, one could ask: would it not be possible for IKEA to sell more expensive products so that it collects more money for Save the Children? Yet, as will be elaborated in the next section, low prices and affordable products are an important part of IKEA's brand.

Democratizing charity through prices?

For IKEA, low retail prices constitute one of the central elements of the company's business idea.⁹⁴ The figure of the company's founder, Ingvar Kamrad, said to have been a man of modest needs, is a personification of thrift (Garvey, 2018; Kristoffersson, 2015; Salzer, 1994; see also Marshall & Morreale, 2018). IKEA's business principles specifically highlight the importance of low retail prices for the brand. Called "Democratic Design," IKEA's core principles include the idea of offering "a wide range of well-designed, functional home furnishing products at prices so low that as many people as possible will be able to afford them"⁹⁵ (see also Marshall & Morreale, 2018). The low retail prices of mass-produced commodities are not an uncontroversial topic, however.

⁹⁴ "This is IKEA" October 2017, IKEA Sweden's website https://www.ikea.com/ms/media/pdf/This_is_IKEA_Oct_2017.pdf (link no longer active) Accessed: March 29, 2018.

⁹⁵ "This is IKEA" October 2017, IKEA Sweden's website https://www.ikea.com/ms/media/pdf/This_is_IKEA_Oct_2017.pdf (link no longer active) Accessed: March 29, 2018.

They are thought to come at the cost of something else, such as underpaid labor, unsustainably sourced materials, or poor manufacturing quality. The conditions under which most toys are manufactured in the global south to be sold in countries of the global north constitute one of the “more intractable and enduring legitimization problems” (Langer, 2004: 264). Alongside the production and consumption of toys, problems of quality and safety are under scrutiny from the media, the public, policymakers, and NGOs (e.g. Berlan, 2012, 2016; Langer, 2004).

To return to the question of the prices of the “Sagorskatt” toys in relation to the donation collected from their sales, I will analyze an excerpt from the interview with Sara and Charlotte when I asked them why each of the “Sagorskatt” toys comes in two sizes. To remind the reader, the small toys, each about the size of my palm, cost 15 Swedish crowns apiece, while the prices of the bigger toys are 29, 49, or 59 crowns. Charlotte and Sara explain the motivation in the following way:

Example 6.5

Sara: This is also a question for IKEA of Sweden really, but... I think it's because we want as many as possible to be able to take part, who [inaudible: buy and] also contribute to the campaign. And then we can sell it for, I don't know what the exact price is, but it's...

Charlotte: 10 crowns maybe, I don't know.

Yelyzaveta: 15.

Sara: 10 crowns, maybe 15 crowns, 20 at the most. So, this is also somehow about democratizing and the low price making it possible for everybody who wants to be able to buy something.

Sara says in this excerpt that the low retail prices of IKEA's products make it possible to reach and engage many people. Low retail prices are linked to “democratizing,” since they are stated to make consumption accessible and affordable for everybody, including those who do not have much money to spare. Note the “*everybody* who wants” (my emphasis), which in its absoluteness brings to mind “everything,” that is, all the money from the sales of the toys that is said to go to charity (Example 6.2). Democratizing also connects with IKEA's motto to “reach as many people as possible,” which was used in the IKEA Sweden interview analyzed in the previous chapter. So, with the low retail prices of the

“Sagoskatt” toys, anybody can afford to buy one – and so give to charity. We can understand “democratizing” as a value because it is an ideal which guides people’s behavior, and in the global north it is largely seen as desirable and positive. Thus, in example 6.5, IKEA presents its toys as good *and* affordable, effectively negotiating the relationship between prices and the democratizing norm. Selling affordable products and engaging many consumers is thus presented as a justification for the “enough” question provoked by Pernilla’s comment in example 6.4. Although selling more expensive products could potentially bring greater benefit to the charitable cause, in this case the accessibility of charity via low retail prices is ascribed greater importance.

Affordable toys for children

In the following excerpt, Stina, communication manager at Children’s IKEA, speaks about the importance of low prices for adult consumers *and also* for children. As in the interview with Charlotte and Sara, I asked Stina why the “Sagoskatt” toys are available in two sizes. Her response comes from the perspective of Children’s IKEA, a different division of the company, whose main task is to develop the range of IKEA’s products for children.

Example 6.6

Stina: It’s very nice to have toys that have a price tag... that’s affordable for children and their pocket money. So they can buy them themselves and these mini toys have a price of 1 euro each. And it’s both for children, those children who have pocket money can maybe choose one themselves. It’s also a way to make life easier for parents if children, you know what it’s like to shop with children who maybe want something haha... No matter whether you’re in a grocery store or wherever you are, a toy store. So, to be able to, even if you don’t have a big wallet, to still be able to meet your child’s needs or the needs of the children you have with you at the store. ... For many children it’s important to be able to have a small soft toy, a small friend with them in a bag or in a pocket or some such. ... A soft toy has such a great value because of the relationship with, like all children have a relationship with their soft toy. So, this is a way to reach as many as possible and to offer, to give many an opportunity to have one, as it were. It’s not just “Sagoskatt” that we

have in small sizes, but we try to have a certain number of soft toys that are affordable for a very low price.

This example is interesting due to the way in which the low retail prices of the toys are linked to children as consumers. Stina mentions that, thanks to IKEA creating a range of low-priced products, children are able to afford to be consumers and buy themselves a plush companion with their pocket money. This is not unique to the “Sagoskatt” collection specifically, as Stina says that they “try to have a certain number of soft toys that are affordable for a very low price.” The value of having a plush companion for comfort is used here to justify the importance of low prices: Stina says that a soft toy with which a child has formed a relationship has “such a great value” (*ett så stort värde*). The use of the word “value,” which was otherwise not commonly used in the interviews, is notable here because it explicitly labels the emotional worth of toys for children as a “value.” It is notable that, alongside “*great* value,” the diminutives “small soft toy, a small friend,” “small sizes,” “mini toys,” and “a very low price” are used to achieve a contrast throughout the excerpt. The emotional value of a soft toy is not attached to appraisals such as size or price, the account tells us. In other words, a toy does not need to be big and expensive in order to become a child’s companion and comfort. Hence, I suggest that these different values are coordinated by demarcating.

At the same time, however, the affordable price is presented as the factor that enables a bond to develop between the child and the toy, especially if the child purchases the toy with their own money. I would argue that this example, as well as example 6.3 earlier, shows us that, while seemingly separate, values coordinated by demarcation need each other. Appraisals and norms (the price and emotional value of a toy in example 6.6) and values as norms (“charity” and “our own benefit” in example 6.3) are intertwined and enacted through being contrasted against one another.

The “democratizing” effect of low retail prices was already stated by Sara in example 6.5, but here in example 6.6, children are included as consumers. However, in Stina’s account, low retail prices are legitimized by more than just the child’s needs: they are enacted as helping parents to parent. Irrespective of class or income, cheap toys are presented in this account as able to help parents manage shopping with children (“you

know what it's like to shop with children who maybe want something"). The first part of this comment, "you know what it's like," enacts a taken-for-granted knowledge that does not need to be explained further since it is already apparently commonly known and understood (Smith, 1990). The account could be alluding to what is known as "pester power" (Buckingham, 2007; Sparrman, 2009), or the "nag factor" (Cook, 2004a). Usually used in a negative way, pester power is often seen by parents as uncomfortable and frustrating (Sparrman, 2009). The term "pestering" often implies that either a "spoilt" child is considered to be the cause of such behavior or, alternatively, the market is blamed for constantly advertising far too many products to children (Sparrman, 2009). In this sense, example 6.6 is interesting because it comes from the market actor IKEA, which has a large selection of products for children. In this example, a child's desire to get a toy is connected not to naughtiness but to the "child's needs." Thus, a parent who buys a toy is meeting their child's needs, rather than accommodating pester power, and thus doing what can be called "good parenting" (cf. Sparrman et al., 2017). But since not everybody can afford such purchases, in the Children's IKEA account, the company's low prices are presented as helping parents to attend to their children's needs. This account can be seen as an attempt to shift responsibility for "pestering" away from both the child and IKEA. The company is not stimulating pester power but is instead offering parents an affordable solution for attending to their children's needs. The outcome of highlighting the importance of low retail prices and connecting them to children's needs is that low prices are enacted as benefitting everybody involved: children, their parents, and IKEA.

Going back to Pernilla's comment (Example 6.4), when she wondered whether it would be possible to donate more money to make a bigger difference, in IKEA's accounts, low prices are produced as a tool for *solving* problems rather than causing them. Thinking about the donation and the prices of the "Sagoskatt" toys with the notion of demarcating shows that there are anxieties about monetary appraisals, such as the size of the donation and the prices of commodities sold for charity. Demarcation work also shows that monetary appraisals and non-monetary values are closely intertwined. Norms can guide appraisals (e.g. of charity and personal profit as necessarily separate), and

appraisals can be judged in terms of norms (e.g. the donation can be assessed in terms of an expectation of how much the company should be able to donate). So, IKEA presents the campaign as charity by negotiating the relationships between the donated sum and the prices of the soft toys; between the low prices of the soft toys and the emotional value of the toy for a child; between the low prices of the soft toys and the democratizing value of more consumers being able to engage in charity.

Concluding thoughts

So how does IKEA enact its donation as charitable? One aspect that the above analyses have made visible is that a charitable donation presented to consumer audiences is an achievement rather than a given. This means that a monetary transfer from a company to a non-profit organization does not automatically count as a “charitable donation.” Scholars in economic sociology have argued that monetary transfers can be read differently, based on the kinds of social relations to which they are attached (Zelizer, 1997/2017). The question of the sufficiency of IKEA’s donation is one example analyzed in this chapter, which specifically shows how a monetary sum can be interrogated in terms of norms.

Another central point made in this chapter is that values as norms and values as appraisals are intertwined. It builds on the literature in economic sociology that points towards the interplay of monetary and non-monetary values (Zelizer, 1985/1994). Monetary donations to charity can be seen as an appraisal because they are an attempt to attach a monetary sum to a charitable cause. In IKEA’s promotion, the donation is presented in two ways: as a calculable number (“500 000 Swedish crowns,” “the entire turnover”) and as an incalculable amount (“everything”). Since “Saguskatt” is a purchase-triggered campaign, another appraisal, namely the prices of the “Saguskatt” toys, is important for understanding how the donation is enacted. As the analyses show (especially example 6.4), low retail prices do not merge seamlessly with the claimed goal of the “Saguskatt” campaign to donate “everything” to charity. IKEA negotiates potential conflicts between the two appraisals, donation and prices, by highlighting the totality of donated proceeds from the sales. This seeming totality also allows IKEA to present the

market as the actor that determines the size of the donation and thus attaches a specific sum to a children's cause.

Finally, I have argued that, in order to present the campaign as charity, IKEA also does the work of contrasting and separating two other values, namely those of "charity" and "[IKEA's] own benefit." The work of coordinating two values by contrasting them and placing them in opposition to each other is what I have called demarcating. Demarcating tends to enact values as naturally and inevitably separate, but also inadvertently shows us that these values are intertwined and defined through one other (Example 6.3). A successful demarcation allows IKEA to display that the company keeps business and charity separate, *at the same time* as the "Sagoskatt" campaign relies on the intertwining of charity and commerce. This is true of corporate charity more broadly, where commodities are sold for the benefit of a charitable cause.

The fact that the objects sold for charity in the "Sagoskatt" campaign are soft toys rather than children's books, wooden or plastic toys, or other playthings, all of which IKEA also has in its range, is noteworthy. Since the toy collection is a vital part of the campaign, the question for the next chapter is: what can soft toys tell us about how children's charity is enacted as charity? In the last two empirical chapters, I will direct more focus towards children and values of children in the campaign. These first two empirical chapters, although attending to the values of safe sports for children and children's right to play, have largely focused on the charitable aspect of the campaign: the shared charitable cause and the donation. The task for the last two empirical chapters is to explore in greater depth how values of children are used in children's charity by both for-profit and non-profit actors.

Chapter 7. Toys for charity: Designing with a child perspective

Introduction

Products or services sold for the benefit of charity are another aspect of purchase-triggered donation that needs to be addressed in order to understand corporate children's charity. The "Sagorskatt" campaign stands out because these products are playthings for children, unlike the other campaigns mentioned in the introductory chapter, where coffee, chewing gum, and other products not specifically marketed as products for children are sold for the benefit of children's charities. The role of these commodities in producing a monetary donation is interesting, but so is their roles as objects. In the previous chapter, the first aspect was explored: the prices of the "Sagorskatt" toys in relation to the donation collected from the sales. But it also matters what products reach children through charitable campaigns because they can put the success of the campaign in jeopardy.

Liisa Malkki (2015), for example, describes a campaign arranged by the Finnish Red Cross where volunteers hand-knitted soft toys called Aid Bunnies. The toys were sent to children in need in the global south, but in some countries these Aid Bunnies did not reach the recipients because the handcrafted toys failed to follow international safety standards. At customs in Lebanon, the Aid Bunnies were deemed a potential fire hazard and turned away, so they never reached the children whom they were meant to comfort (Malkki, 2015). Thus, as material objects, toys can play an important role in charity campaigns.

The "Sagorskatt" toys are industrially manufactured, but this does not mean that they are free from worries or anxieties about safety. The kinds of toys that are considered good and safe for children's physical and psychological health and well-being is not a settled matter but is a topic debated by parents, experts, companies, and the general public (Best, 1998; Cross, 1997; Hutchinson, 2012; Korsvold, 2010; McClary, 2004; Ogata, 2013; Seiter, 1993). Because the "Sagorskatt" collection is presented not only as toys benefitting children through a monetary

donation to charity but also as benefitting the children who consume the toys (albeit these aspects are mentioned in different promotional pieces), it is important to consider the role of these toys in the campaign. After all, purchasing them is a way in which both adults and children can contribute to the charity aspect of the campaign, as discussed in the previous chapter. This chapter thus directs its attention to concerns about soft toys presented in IKEA's promotion, primarily focusing on the safety concerns. What can these concerns tell us about values, and in particular values of children mobilized by IKEA in the "Sagokatt" campaign? Taking examples from the IKEA catalogue and interviews with IKEA employees, I will analyze the rhetoric around these soft toys.

Children and safety

The example of the Aid Bunnies (Malkki, 2015) illustrates that there are mechanisms and procedures put in place to test and assess the safety of products that reach children, such as international safety standards. Yet there are many anxieties and moral panics about what is safe for children to use, play with, pull apart, and construct, not to mention to eat and wear (e.g. Arzuk, 2020; Best, 1987, 1998; Gossage, 2016; Hutchinson, 2012; Jenks, 2003; Martens, 2010, 2013, 2018; Sjöberg, 2013; Strandgaard Jensen, 2012). How do we know what is safe and appropriate and, perhaps most importantly, who is responsible for ensuring this safety?

Preoccupations with children's safety can be connected to the figure of the innocent, vulnerable child (e.g. Best, 1998), which is a persistent ideal, particularly in the global north. The ideal of the vulnerable child is one of the constructs that different strands of Child Studies have worked to unsettle (Brown Rosier, 2009; Christensen, 1999; Cook, 2004a; Faulkner, 2011; James et al., 1998; Lee, 2001; Prout, 2005; Sparrman, 2014, 2015a; Zelizer, 1985/1994). This ideal is rooted in romantic imaginaries of innocence, purity, and pristine goodness (Cook, 2004a; James et al., 1998). Children's innocence is seen as an "original and natural state of affairs" (Cook, 2004a: 27) and is constantly under threat of being lost if children are exposed to the "corrupting" forces of the "adult" world (Cook, 2004a; see also Lee, 2003). There is a moral panic which claims that, if innocence is lost, so is the child's childhood: the

media, technologies, and even educational policies are claimed to unsettle and blur the boundaries between childhood and adulthood, forcing children to live more adult lives in the adult world (Postman, 1982/1994). However, who is considered responsible for protecting children – families, parents, the state, or the market – is contingent on time and place (e.g. Arzuk, 2020; Lee, 2003; Sjöberg, 2013).

Andrew McClary's (2004) historical study of toys in the USA highlights tensions between the responsibility of parents, companies, and the state for children's physical safety (McClary, 2004). McClary (2004) argues that, up until the 1940s when the first laws banning hazardous toys were introduced, the responsibility for preventing accidents mostly fell on the parents. Especially when homemade and handmade toys were still prevalent, parents (primarily mothers) were expected to instruct their children and keep an eye on them. As industrially manufactured toys became more widely available, and with them a range of "new" hazards, such as toxic paints and steam engines, this responsibility became shared by the state through laws, national standards, and controls over the toy manufacturers. In his analysis of media controversies about hazardous toys from the latter part of the 20th century, McClary (2004) concludes that, while parents were still expected to bear a share of the responsibility, much more of it was now assigned instead to the toy manufacturers.

In relation to children's safety and responsibility, it is worth mentioning a competitive and growing market for child and baby safety products (Martens, 2010, 2013, 2018). Lydia Martens (2010, 2013, 2018) argues that the prevalence of anxieties and concerns about children's safety have produced a wide range of safety products, such as playpens and baby monitors. Newly "discovered" concerns, such as the identification and classification of the Bisphenol A chemical used in plastics as a health hazard (Martens, 2013), legitimize more innovation, new products, improved products, and thus more consumption. Martens (2010) also argues that ideas about what is safe and anxieties about safety are contingent. Following the development of a child safety product, such as stair gates, reveals the elasticity of safety standards and how they change over time, rendering the older formulations of what is safe for children outdated, and ultimately unsafe (Martens, 2010). So, in terms of values and concerns, and bearing in mind the discussion about

concerns threatening values in chapter 5, concerns about safety seem to suggest that certain values are thus at stake or threatened. What these values are in the “Saguskatt” campaign will be explored later in the analyses.

Taken together, the literature shows us that anxieties and concerns about children’s safety bring to the fore issues of responsibility. The question that remains after consulting the literature is how, precisely, companies perform safety and negotiate responsibility for their products in public.

Safe play value

I will first introduce an article from the 2018 IKEA catalogue, the issue that was released in August 2017.⁹⁶ The article is entitled “Anatomy of a hippo-crocodile” (“*Anatomin hos en hippo-krokodil*”, example 7.1) and, notably, it *does not* mention the charity aspect of the campaign. This makes it important to analyze the article together with other empirical materials that do focus on the charity aspect in order to examine the role of the soft toys in the campaign. This piece of promotion was published before the release of the “Saguskatt” collection in November 2017 and, strictly speaking, is located on the fringes of the campaign. The article is nevertheless included in the analysis because it advertises the 2017 collection. It announces the upcoming release of the toy collection and prominently features the hippo-crocodile toy, while six more toys from the same collection are visible in the images and videos.

⁹⁶ “IKEA katalogen 2018 – Bilder och filmmaterial”
<https://via.tt.se/pressmeddelande/ikea-katalogen-2018-bilder-och-filmmaterial?publisherId=2111134&releaseId=3245502> Accessed: September 11, 2020.

Example 7.1

Page spread from the 2018 IKEA catalogue, pp. 236–237, IKEA museum website.⁹⁷ ©Inter IKEA Systems, B. V.

The article is available in two configurations. One is a two-page article in the paper version of the IKEA catalogue (Example 7.1). The other is placed under the section “Feature stories” (“*Reportage*”) in the online version of the catalogue.⁹⁸ While the texts are identical in both configurations, not all of the images are the same. For example, only the paper catalogue includes the close-up of the hippo-crocodile toy with comments about how different parts of the toy are made safe – tail, eyes, and fabric (Example 7.1, left-hand page). The online version has two additional video-clips embedded: “This is what it takes to become a real soft toy at IKEA,” and “What’s going on at Children’s IKEA?,” each about two minutes long. The latter is an interview between a Children’s IKEA product developer and the animated hippo-crocodile toy, which also constitutes the main text of the article in both versions of the catalogue. Throughout the rest of the chapter, I will analyze a few sections from this article. Firstly, I focus on a sequence of images and captions (Example

⁹⁷ <https://ikeamuseum.com/sv/ikea-kataloger/?id=2018> Accessed: September 10, 2020.

⁹⁸ IKEA’s online catalogue 2018 http://onlinecatalogue.ikea.com/SE/sv/IKEA_Catalogue/?dcse12 (link no longer active). Accessed: April 20, 2018.

7.2) and later excerpts from the interview in the paper version of the article (Examples 7.3 & 7.4).

To begin with, the focus will be on the three photos of the hippo-crocodile going through the safety testing on the right-hand side of the page spread (Example 7.2). The photographs are also stills from the video entitled: “This is what it takes to become a real soft toy at IKEA.” The video’s storyline is that the animated hippo-crocodile goes through safety tests at a factory in Vietnam in order to become a safe IKEA toy for children to play with, and the photos show two such tests. Throughout the videos, images, captions, and text, the hippo-crocodile toy acts as both the protagonist and the narrator, and the caption quoted in example 7.2 is the hippo-crocodile’s first-person narration.

Example 7.2

Page spread from the 2018 IKEA catalogue with the section in focus circled around.⁹⁹ ©Inter IKEA Systems, B. V.

⁹⁹ The 2018 IKEA catalogue, pp. 236–237, IKEA museum website <https://ikeamuseum.com/sv/ikea-kataloger/?id=2018> Accessed: September 10, 2020.

Säkerhets- tester

*Vi gosedjur utsätts för
otroliga prövningar
innan vi kan leka.*

1. Här är jag på väg genom metalldetektorn som kollar att det inte finns nålar eller häftklamrar kvar i mig.

2. Dragtestet! För att se till att jag inte går sönder om två barn skulle bråka om mig. 10 kilos tryck i 10 sekunder!

3. Vi klarade det! Jag och gäng-et firar att vi är säkra för barn att leka med och att vi nu kan skickas ut till IKEA varuhusen!

A close-up of the framed section. The panels are placed vertically in the original. ©Inter IKEA Systems, B. V.

Translation of the caption in example 7.2:

Safety tests. As soft toys we face incredible ordeals before we can play.

1. Here I am on the way through the metal detector which checks that there are no needles or staples left inside me. 2. Pull test! To make sure that I will not break apart when two children fight over me. 10 kg of tension for 10 seconds! 3. We made it! The gang and I are celebrating that we are safe for children to play with and that we can now be sent to IKEA stores!

In these images, we see the hippo-crocodile toy going through the metal detector and the pull machine test. Two potential hazards are foregrounded: sharp objects left in the toy by accident and the possibility of the toy breaking apart. It is not clarified what exactly could or would happen if these hazards were not removed. The text takes it for granted that the reader, who is likely to be a parent, will understand why staples or weak seams are undesirable. If not identified and removed beforehand, both hazards present potential risks when children interact with the toys – playing, tugging, or fighting over the toy. “Safety” thus frames this excerpt from the article: the notion is introduced at the beginning (“Safety tests”) and at the very end, this time referring specifically to children and play (“safe for children to play with”). Although the Swedish word for “safe” (“säker”) that is used here is different from the one used by Save the Children to talk about the “High Five” program and “safe sports” (“*trygg idrott*” in chapter 5), the parallel

is worth noting. “Safety” is highlighted by both Save the Children and IKEA in the “Saguskatt” campaign, when it concerns either child beneficiaries or child consumers of the toys.

I argue that, in the account in example 7.2, safe play is enacted as a value. Safe play can be understood here as a value of the normative kind because it speaks to ideals and principles guiding people’s actions. One could say that children’s safety, or just play in the sense of physical well-being, needs to be considered as a value in this example. However, while it is implied that sharp objects may physically harm a child playing with the toy, what is explicitly articulated in the account is *safe* play (“we can play”; “safe to play with”). So, to follow IKEA’s own word choice, in this analysis the focus will be on the value of safe play. Already in this brief text, we can see insights into how this value is enacted. For IKEA, soft toys are not to be collected (cf. Johansson, 2005: 69) or used as decorations, but first and foremost they are to be actively played with – pulled, tugged, and fought over. In other words, a particular kind of play is enacted here, to which I will return later in the analysis. For now, it is worth noting that this play is free, unrestricted, and potentially destructive because it explicitly allows for the possibility that children may fight over a toy and rip it apart.

Similar to the “safe sports” in the “High Five” program, safe play is enacted in this example as threatened by undesirable objects and inferior qualities of the toys. I would argue that these can be understood as concerns, more specifically the kind that one might call risks. IKEA presents sharp objects accidentally left inside the toys and weak seams as hazards to children’s health and to unrestricted play. Concerns threatening safe play are, however, a different type of concern than those threatening safe sports for children discussed earlier. The most important distinction between the two is that of responsibility. While IKEA is not expected to alleviate bullying and discrimination in sports clubs, which are both extensive and general issues, the company does bear legal responsibility for its own products. Concerns over soft toys are constructed in such a way that the company not only addresses them but also resolves them and is accountable for them. For comparison, the “High Five” program is presented as a successful way of *dealing with* concerns such as bullying in sports clubs (see e.g. example 5.2 in chapter 5). In contrast, the article featuring the hippo-crocodile communicates

to the readers of IKEA's catalogue that the risks have been *resolved* in advance and that IKEA's toys are risk-free.

Concerns in the sense of risks also stand out because, at least rhetorically, they belong to a potential future: a poorly manufactured toy *might* threaten the child's health or disrupt play. It is reasonable to imagine that events presented as concerns in the sense of risks *have already happened* in the past (see e.g. McClary, 2004, writing about the introduction of safety regulations in toy manufacturing). No cases of children harming themselves with IKEA's products are, however, mentioned in this article in the IKEA catalogue.¹⁰⁰ Concerns posed as risks are thus different from bullying and discrimination in sports clubs, which are said to be *currently* taking place.

Coordinating values and concerns

I suggest that, in order to negotiate the value of safe play and concerns that are said to threaten it, IKEA does the work of coordinating values and concerns. This specific type of work will be called *anticipating*, by which I mean active work of matching and presenting a value and a potential concern said to threaten that value. Like other types of coordination work, the matching of values and concerns can be presented as natural and inevitable, or it can be explained and justified. However, anticipating relies not only on matching a value and a concern but also presenting the work invested in foreseeing and preventing risks. Hence the word "anticipating." Anticipating also involved the work of presenting the risks as knowable, measurable, and manageable. Concerns that can be dealt with are those of which there is an awareness

¹⁰⁰ The company does have a history of products being recalled because of potentially hazardous defects, e.g. toy musical instruments (January 2016) <https://www.svt.se/nyheter/nyhetstecken/ikea-aterkallar-leksaker>; teddy bears (October 2002) <https://www.aftonbladet.se/relationer/a/EoaVlj/ikea-stoppar-farliga-mjukdjur>; a bat cap (April 2016) <https://www.ikea.com/us/en/customer-service/product-support/recalls/ikea-recalls-lattjo-bat-cape-pub98coc820>; a swing (September 2014) <https://www.ikea.com/us/en/customer-service/product-support/recalls/ikea-recalls-gunggung-childrens-swing-due-to-fall-hazard-pub3c484f11>; a folding tent (September 2011) <https://www.ikea.com/us/en/customer-service/product-support/recalls/ikea-recalls-busa-childrens-folding-tent-for-risk-of-serious-injury-pub26e9cb41>; and stuffed animals (June 1997) <https://www.cpsc.gov/Recalls/1997/cpsc-ikea-announce-recall-of-stuffed-animals>.

– it is difficult if not impossible to deal with an unidentified or unknown risk (cf. Beck, 2000).

Awareness of some of the risks and the work invested in dealing with them is what IKEA's article in example 7.2 demonstrates. The pull test and its description in the caption – “To make sure that I will not break apart when two children fight over me” – illustrate a situation that has apparently been identified as risky. Invoking this particular situation demonstrates awareness and knowledge on IKEA's part. Like many other companies, IKEA has a history of recalled children's products, which is a possible source of knowledge about potential concerns. Product recalls, however, may also be one of the reasons why an entire article in the catalogue is dedicated to the topic of safety.¹⁰¹ At the same time, even with known risks, there may remain uncertainty about unidentified ones, which makes risk a paradoxical combination of knowledge and awareness with potentiality and lack of awareness (Beck, 2000). None of this uncertainty is visible, however, in IKEA's promotion of the soft toys, which is something to which I will return in one of the following sections.

The article entitled “*Anatomy* of the hippo-crocodile” “opens up” the “anatomy” of the toy to demonstrate its safety to the consumer public. For IKEA, techniques of showing, exhibiting, and demonstrating designs or aspects of its backstory are not unusual (Garvey, 2018; Marshall & Morreale, 2018; Murphy, 2015). An IKEA store is unimaginable without reconstructed rooms and thousands of physical objects placed within arm's reach, many of which have tags introducing the designers behind the object and the story of its creation (Murphy, 2015). In the case of soft

¹⁰¹ In 2016, several toddlers died as a result of accidents involving unstable IKEA dressers, which led the company to recall the product and received considerable media attention. E.g. <https://www.ikea.com/us/en/customer-service/product-support/recalls/following-an-additional-child-fatality-ikea-recalls-29-million-malm-and-other-models-of-chests-pub4128a7af>; “Ikea again announces dresser recall after death of 8th child” <https://eu.usatoday.com/story/money/retail/2017/11/21/ikea-again-announces-dresser-recall-after-death-8th-child/884148001/>; “Ikeas smällar – drog tillbaka miljoner byråer” <https://www.svd.se/dystert-rekord-i-aterkallanden-fran-ikea-i-ar>; “Treåring välte Ikeas kritiserade byrå” <https://www.svt.se/nyheter/konsument/trearing-valte-ikeas-kritiserade-byra>; “Ikea återkallar populära byrån” <https://www.expressen.se/dinapengar/ikea-aterkallar-populara-byran/>. In the “Sagokatt” promotional materials that I analyzed, nothing explicitly points towards these or other incidents. Yet the choice to include the article featuring factory safety tests of these toys in the issue of the IKEA catalogue that was released in the year following the accidents could be interpreted as a reaction to implicit concerns.

toys, because potential hazards are concealed within the toys' bodies and thus invisible to the naked eye or hand, they seem to require technology and expertise to be made identifiable and traceable. The metal detector, for example, makes hidden objects visible inside the toy, and the pull machine artificially simulates a play situation. Through this presentation of safety tests, IKEA not only demonstrates that the company invests work in ensuring the safety of its products, but also performs knowledge and expertise.

One of the main contributions of STS has been to demystify often taken-for-granted theoretical abstractions such as knowledge, facts, and objectivity, and demonstrating the work invested in establishing and sustaining them (Woolgar, 2012). Expertise and expert knowledge claims have also been part of this interest (e.g. Lynch, 2007; Sismondo, 2010). In example 7.2, for instance, IKEA displays putting the toys through a metal detector. This speaks to the company's knowledge about the potential risks of needles left in toys *and* about how to detect and remove them. By presenting the safety tests as rigorous and effective, IKEA thus performs expertise in making safe products for children.

In the third and final panel (Example 7.2) we see the toys, including the hippo-crocodile, the rainbow cloud, the purple monster, the lion, the fox, and the blue bird from the 2017 collection, now marked as safe, which is confirmed by a visible "OK" sticker on each toy. *All* the toys in the photo and in the video are said to have successfully passed what are named in the heading as "incredible ordeals." The company thus visually demonstrates that safety is achieved and that it fulfills its responsibility for the products on behalf of consumers.

Textually, demonstrating the successful work of achieving safety is done differently: the safety of the toys is enacted as absolute and certain. To illustrate this, I will use the excerpt (Example 7.3) from the main body of the feature story: "Anatomy of the hippo-crocodile." This story takes the form of an interview in which the animated hippo-crocodile toy leads a conversation with a Children's IKEA product developer called here Malin. The hippo-crocodile asks questions about the purpose of the safety tests that it had to endure, and the work that Children's IKEA carries out. In particular, the hippo-crocodile questions the need for it to go through the factory safety tests. It says that "this clearly was not a

game” (*“det var helt klart ingen lek”*), which in the Swedish version uses the word for “play.” So, the toy asks the following:

Example 7.3

Hippo-crocodile: I’ve been pulled, I’ve been scanned... What’s going on at Children’s IKEA?

Malin: This is for you to be 100% safe for children to play with. Zero tolerance for safety and health risks, you know.

Here, IKEA claims “100% safety” of the toys for children and “zero tolerance” for risks. Malin uses the phrase “safe for children to play with,” which we earlier saw the hippo-crocodile use in example 7.1, invoking what I referred to earlier as the value of safe play. But in this example both safety and risks are presented in quantifiable terms (“100%” and “zero”), which seems to make them measurable and containable. Malin’s answer produces the value of safe play as beyond compromise. In the previous chapters, I have pointed out other discursive exaggerations used in IKEA’s promotion, such as “everything goes to charity” and “children are the most important people in the world.” Seeming totality and incomparability unite these three exaggerations, allowing IKEA to make statements without justifying them. “You know” in the final sentence enacts the statement as taken for granted: the reader is expected to recognize the “zero tolerance” policy and realize its importance without further explanation (Smith, 1978).

Cheap toys - safe toys?

It is a legal obligation that all toys must be safe for children to play with in Sweden and the other EU countries. Manufacturers, importers, and buyers must conform to this obligation. Irrespective of material, shape, form, or the child’s age, a toy must pose no risks to the child’s health and safety¹⁰² during its whole expected time of use. This is supported by a number of standards and regulations concerning materials and

¹⁰² Some of the main regulations concerning Sweden that are based on EU regulations can be found here: the Law about toys’ safety (“Lag (2011: 579) om leksakers säkerhet”) https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/dokument/svensk-forfattningssamling/lag-2011579-om-leksakers-sakerhet_sfs-2011-579 ; The Swedish Consumer Agency (Konsumentverket) <https://www.konsumentverket.se/for-foretag/regler-per-omradebransch/barnprodukter-och-leksaker/>. Accessed November 4, 2020.

flammability, the absence of hazardous chemicals or small easily detachable parts, and so on. On IKEA Sweden's website, under the "Democratic design" section, there is information about the company's product development, safety tests, and work with the safety of children's products specifically. IKEA Sweden writes:

We strive to follow the strictest safety and quality laws and standards in the markets where we operate, and we often go even further and set our own, stricter requirements. When we develop a new product, we always make sure to keep the "commitment" we give our customers: that products from IKEA are safe to use.

In the same section on IKEA Sweden's website, it also says:

Reasonably priced products are the foundation of everything we do. This does not mean that we compromise on quality or safety.

As discussed at the end of the previous chapter, IKEA presents the low retail prices of its toys as an asset. Here, however, it is possible to notice an apparent incompatibility between a low price and good quality.¹⁰³ The implicit concern addressed by this account is that high-quality products cannot be cheap. Here, the tension between low retail prices and the quality of the products is also linked to safety concerns. In addition to invoking local safety regulations, in this account IKEA also states that "we often go even further and set our own stricter requirements." However, in relation to responsibility, there seems to be a tension between claiming to follow external safety "laws and standards" and at the same time talking about the seemingly self-chosen "commitment" ("*löfte*") the company gives to its customers that IKEA products are safe to use.

To sum up, presenting safety concerns as knowable and manageable helps IKEA to enact the value of safe play. Presenting its testing of products as rigorous and effective is one way in which IKEA displays its efforts to address potential concerns. But, as will be shown in the following section, this is not the only strategy used in the promotion.

¹⁰³ IKEA Sweden's website <https://www.ikea.com/se/sv/this-is-ikea/design/noggrant-testade-produkter-pubf563d1a4> Accessed November 25, 2020.

Preserving free play

While so far in the chapter the focus has been on the *safe* aspect of the value of safe play, in this section I will elaborate upon how IKEA produces *play*. Paying attention to play makes visible the figure of the child who is intended to engage with IKEA's soft toys, and with it the values of children that IKEA mobilizes. To begin with, I will analyze an excerpt from the interview between the hippo-crocodile and the Children's IKEA product developer Malin (Example 7.4). This excerpt is a direct continuation of example 7.3, and part of Malin's reply to the hippo-crocodile's question about what happens at Children's IKEA:

Example 7.4

Page spread from the 2018 IKEA catalogue with the section in focus circled around.¹⁰⁴ ©Inter IKEA Systems, B. V.

Translation of the selected section in example 7.4:

Hippo-crocodile: ...What else do you do?

Malin: Well, play is important for our development, so we want to inspire people to play more! We always work from the child's perspective and develop products based on how children actually play.

Hippo-crocodile: You're not a child. So how can you know this?

¹⁰⁴ The 2018 IKEA catalogue, pp. 236–237, IKEA museum website <https://ikeamuseum.com/sv/ikea-kataloger/?id=2018> Accessed: September 10, 2020.

Malin: Thanks to lots of research. We've conducted the largest study in the world on play and interviewed almost 30 000 parents and children in 12 countries.

Hippo-crocodile: So, what did you find out? [...]

Malin: Take felt-tip pens, for example. Children chew them, forget to put the cap back on, bang the tip against the table. So instead of saying "be careful with the pen," we make pens that can withstand this, so children can play the way they usually do. Or take the sustainability aspect. We make conscious choices about materials, of course, but we also make products that inspire children to think about how the planet works. For example, a mechanical flashlight which teaches children through play that energy is a finite resource.

Let me start by connecting the concerns about felt-tip pens in this account to the work of anticipating discussed earlier. It is implied that, besides drawing, children often do "undesirable," even potentially dangerous, things with everyday objects such as felt-tip pens: they "chew" them and "bang the tip against the table." Why exactly these actions constitute a problem is not articulated, but it is plausible to imagine concerns that the child could be injured or swallow chemicals from the pen's tip. The concerns here are said to be solved by IKEA's design: *IKEA's* pens can be chewed and left without a cap with no threat to the child, or to the pens for that matter, otherwise, why would forgetting to put a cap on be a problem? What is enacted as a concern here, and for whom, differs from the account about the factory safety tests (Example 7.2), where concerns about the child ripping apart a soft toy or being injured by a forgotten needle pose a health hazard for the child. But banging a felt-tip pen on the table seems to cause more damage to the pen and/or the table than to the child. Likewise, forgetting to replace a cap and letting the felt-tip dry out also seems a way to destroy the pen rather than harm the child. This is where IKEA's notion of safety appears to encompass more than just anticipating concerns about children harming themselves. The audience to whom this text speaks, which is likely to consist of parents, is also interested in the practicality of the pens, such as the ink being durable and perhaps at the same time easily washable from the table surface against which the pen is repeatedly banged.

So, in this account, we can see how IKEA demonstrates using design as a strategy to discursively address potential concerns. However, in

example 7.4, another way of addressing safety concerns is dismissed. For example, the possibility of the parent warning the child to “be careful with the pen.” There are numerous notions and theories of play (see e.g. Cook, 2018; Ogata, 2013; Pedri, 2020), in which cautioning the child is not negative a priori. But, in this account, it is taken for granted as undesirable because, I want to suggest, the particular ideal of play envisaged here is one of free play, free of constraints and rules. As a comparison, the section I have translated as “we make pens that can withstand this, so children can play the way they usually do,” in the UK online catalogue is translated as “we make pens that are *safe*, so children can play the way they *naturally* play”¹⁰⁵ (added emphasis). The phrases “the way they usually do” and “naturally” in these accounts take for granted a particular version of play – free, unrestricted play that may include a bit of chaos – as universal.

Taken together, all the examples discussed so far present us with a complex understanding of play and an ambiguous ideal of the child who plays. This is a child in need of protection who can also destroy things, a child who is vulnerable to potential health hazards but whose play should be unrestricted rather than surveilled. This ambiguity and fluidity allows the smoothing of conflicts between the values of play and safety concerns. Ambiguous ideals of children have already emerged earlier when I presented the debates in children’s consumer culture regarding children’s competence and/or incompetence as consumers (Buckingham, 2007; Cook, 2004b, 2008; Sparrman & Sandin, 2012). Ambiguities about children’s status are not only limited to consumption, however, but are distributed across other areas of social life (Lee, 1999, 2001; Prout, 2005). Lee (1999, 2001) argues, for example, that the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child needs to generate ambiguity over children as “beings” here and now or future “becomings” in order to function as an international document. It is then the responsibility of the countries who have ratified the Convention to negotiate this ambiguity and adjust how it becomes translated into policies and legislation to the local settings (Lee, 2001).

¹⁰⁵“Saguskatt” 2017 press kit, IKEA UK’s website
https://www.ikea.com/gb/en/doc/general-document/ikea-download-pdf-12.2-mb_1364426849772.pdf (link no longer active). Accessed: July 3, 2018.

Product design presented as a way to ensure the value of safe play is particularly interesting in relation to responsibility. In the literature discussion at the beginning of this chapter, I mentioned that, throughout the 20th century, it was a matter of debate and uncertainty as to who should be held responsible for children's safety during play – parents, toy manufacturers, the state, or the international bodies that approve standards and regulations (McClary, 2004). This is why it is noteworthy that, in IKEA's promotion, the pens themselves seem to be assigned at least some of this responsibility, enough to potentially release parents from the need to constantly monitor their child. Martens' (2010, 2013, 2018) work on the market for child and baby safety products, also shows that, alongside parents and companies, products such as baby monitors and safety gates can be assigned partial responsibility. This makes IKEA's products beneficial not only for the children who are enabled to express themselves, but also for parents, who can practice good parenthood. The low retail prices discussed in the previous chapter are also presented as facilitating good parenting (cf. Sparrman et al., 2017). They allow parents to both attend to their children's needs and not worry about spending too much on toys.

The article in the IKEA catalogue thus performs several functions. It allows the company to demonstrate that it takes safe play seriously and, in an entertaining yet unspecific format, describe the work that is put into making its products safe. At the same time, as part of the IKEA catalogue, which is the company's marketing device¹⁰⁶ (Marshall & Morreale, 2018), the article works to sell IKEA's products. Thus, in this case, accountability and marketing are tightly intertwined.

Children's IKEA's child perspective

So far, I have argued that one way in which IKEA anticipates concerns about its toys is by demonstrating a well-thought-through product design and successful factory tests. But what is meant by a well-thought-through design? In example 7.4, Malin describes Children's IKEA by saying that “we always work from the child's perspective.” To understand

¹⁰⁶ Although the catalogue was recently discontinued, with the last issue published in 2020 <https://via.tt.se/pressmeddelande/efter-70-ar-nu-vander-ikea-blad?publisherId=2111134&releaseId=3288739> Accessed January 15, 2021.

how IKEA presents its approach to designing safe toys and other products for children, we need to take a closer look at the notion of “the child’s perspective.”

In Child Studies, two terms are commonly used: “child perspective” and “children’s perspective” (Bergnehr, 2019; Halldén, 2003, 2009a; Sparrman, 2006). A *child perspective* (*ett barnperspektiv*) is used by researchers and practitioners to refer to a perspective that aims to take children into consideration and to act with children in mind and in their best interests (Halldén, 2003). Taking a child perspective could mean, for example, addressing the outcomes of institutional decisions and actions taken for children. *Children’s perspective*¹⁰⁷ (*barns perspektiv*), on the other hand, refers to research that focuses on children’s own actions and everyday practices (Halldén, 2003).

However, in the excerpt (Example 7.4), Malin mentions “*the child’s perspective*” (“*barnets perspektiv*”), a phrase that is also used in the academic literature in the sense of “children’s perspective” as I just described it (e.g. Cederborg & Karlsson, 2001 on “the child’s perspective” in social work). The singular definite form, “the child’s,” resonates with the rhetoric of the UN Convention on the Rights of *the Child* and the notion of the “best interests of *the child*” (“*barnets bästa*”) used in the Convention (both linked in e.g. Cederborg & Karlsson, 2001). From what I can see, the singular and plural terms both refer to children as a group, but are used in different strands of research. As we will see in the following example (Example 7.5), Stina, communications manager at Children’s IKEA, uses another version of the term: “*a child’s perspective*” (“*ett barns perspektiv*”, which could also be translated as “one child’s perspective”). It appears that both the indefinite “a child’s perspective” and the definite “the child’s perspective” are used to talk about children in general, in the sense of the plural “children’s perspective” as used by Halldén (2003). So, in order to avoid potential confusion between the terms, I will use “the child’s perspective” and “a child’s perspective” in

¹⁰⁷ To emphasize the plurality and diversity of children as a group, the plural “children’s perspectives” is also used (e.g. Grønhøj & Gram, 2021). This term is preferable to the commonly used “children’s perspective” because the singular “perspective” seems to create a misleading image of children as a unified and homogenous group. However, to avoid more confusion and since the terminology is not the central focus of the chapter, I will stay with “children’s perspective,” which is commonly used in Child Studies.

quotations only, and will otherwise stay with the term “children’s perspective” as used and defined by Halldén (2003).

To better understand how IKEA approaches product design, I will start by analyzing the following excerpt from the interview with Stina. Children’s IKEA is a business area (*affärsområde*) at IKEA of Sweden located in Älmhult which develops IKEA’s range of products for children.¹⁰⁸ I asked how Children’s IKEA understands working with a child perspective and children’s perspective, to which Stina responded in the following way:

Example 7.5

Yelyzaveta: What does it mean, then, for Children’s IKEA to have a child perspective?

Stina: This is the foundation for everything we do, this is our first... and we work with both a child perspective and a child’s perspective, this is the foundation or one of the pillars that Children’s IKEA has stood on since the beginning, to really always have a child perspective and the child’s perspective on what we do. This is a way to ensure that we make products that are good for children and children’s development, which provide support, no matter whether they are for small, small children... that the colors are right and the details that their eyes can pick up. ... That they of course have a price tag that makes it affordable for as many parents as possible so that they can create good conditions for their children.

[Stina gives an example of a crib mobile and how IKEA’s approach to developing it combines a child perspective with a child’s perspective by designing it from the point of view of the child lying in the crib, rather than that of the adult.]

Stina: Then, if you look at a child perspective from a wider perspective, it’s also about making sure that we’re not only good for those children and help those children who are our customers and bring home our products, but also how IKEA works throughout the value chain. How we look at families with children throughout the value chain, both our suppliers and our retailers, so we look at how we work with children’s rights.

Yelyzaveta: Right.

¹⁰⁸ Interview 2, Children’s IKEA.

Stina: Based on the charity that we ourselves do via the IKEA Foundation and support children in vulnerable situations there. So, IKEA's child perspective... has quite a lot of different dimensions.

To highlight the main points that Stina makes here, for Children's IKEA combining "a child perspective" and "a child's perspective" includes three of what she calls "dimensions." The first is making good products that support the development of those children who use them. The second is the affordable retail prices of these products. And the third is making sure that children down the production line are not negatively affected – that children's rights are being implemented throughout the whole value chain. IKEA extends its responsibility for the products beyond caring for the child consumers of its toys alone. IKEA's toys are described as "good for those children and help[ing] those children who are our customers," and the company is presented as caring and child focused. Given the focus of this study, the fact that Stina includes charity work to "support children in vulnerable situations" in IKEA's vision of a child perspective is notable. To connect this account directly to the 2017 "Sagokatt" campaign, this reminds us that, in addition to the child designers of the toys, child consumers of the toys, and the children meant to benefit from the "High Five" program, yet another group of children is potentially engaged: children on the production side of manufacturing the toys.

At this point, it is worth mentioning a concern that could have played into this IKEA vision of a child perspective, namely the issue of child labor. Consumption studies have pointed out child labor in toy industries as a continuing problem (e.g. Langer, 2004; Seiter, 1993). During the mid-1990s and mid-2000s, a number of media reports and documentaries publicized the fact that IKEA's suppliers in South and Southeast Asia, for example carpet suppliers, use child labor (Morsing & Roepstorff, 2015).¹⁰⁹ The company has since spoken out on the topic, condemning the practice of child labor, and showing how IKEA addresses the problem and works to support children's rights.¹¹⁰ In

¹⁰⁹ For media coverage, see e.g. *Svenska Dagbladet* May 1, 2005 "Barnarbete i IKEAs leverantörsland" <https://www.svd.se/barnarbete-i-ikeas-leverantorsland> ; Swedish documentary from 2004 "Mannen som ville möblera världen".

¹¹⁰ E.g. "IKEA's Position on Child Labour" (2003); "The IKEA WAY of Preventing Child Labour and Supporting Young Workers" (2007)

particular this work included collaborations with charitable and children's rights organizations. This work is also ongoing: as recently as in April 2021 IKEA reported joining the UN's pledge to strengthen children's rights and eliminate child labor by 2025.¹¹¹ In her study on IKEA's cultural history, Sara Kristoffersson (2015) argues that, through the years, the company has taken into account critiques of its policies and practices concerning environmental and social sustainability. But in addition to employing these critiques to improve its policies and controls, IKEA also made use of them in branding itself as a socially responsible company (Kristoffersson, 2015). For example, presenting its history on the company's website, in the timeline of the 2000s, IKEA foregrounds social work carried out together with Save the Children, UNICEF, and the WWF more than its direct work as a company producing furniture and home design products (Kristoffersson, 2015).

The fact that different groups of children are brought together under the umbrella of a child perspective and children's perspective in example 7.5 shows that these notions are elastic. They allow IKEA to bind together products for children and its charity work; responsibility to consumers for the products the company sells and corporate social responsibility. The children's rights rhetoric also allows the company to merge concerns about different groups of children. These include children along the production and supply line (Example 7.5) and children intended to benefit from the "Saguskatt" campaign since, as we saw in chapter 5, the campaign is presented as an effort at "supporting all children's right to play." As will become clear in the following example, yet another group of children in this rights rhetoric are the child consumers of the toys.

Designing with a children's perspective

How does IKEA use a children's perspective specifically in developing soft toys? The following excerpt (Example 7.6) is also part of the

https://www.ikea.com/pt/pt/files/pdf/39/56/3956e97b/iway_preventing_child_labour.pdf Accessed: June 23, 2021; "The Most Important People in the World: IKEA's broadening perspective on the best interest of the child" https://www.globalchildforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/GlobalChildForum_IKEA_Case_Study_2016.pdf Accessed: September 12, 2018.

¹¹¹ The report and the pledge on IKEA's international website <https://about.ikea.com/en/newsroom/2021/04/21/ikea-supports-2021-as-the-un-international-year-for-the-elimination-of-child-labour> Accessed: October 1, 2021.

interview with Stina, and directly follows the excerpt in example 7.5. Stina continues to talk about the importance of “a child perspective” and “a child’s perspective” for Children’s IKEA, and especially for designing soft toys for children. In the analysis, I am mainly interested in how these notions are linked to safe play.

Example 7.6

Stina: ...From Children’s IKEA’s point of view, our biggest contribution is developing a product range that is good for children and supports what children have the right to when it comes to development and children’s needs. But also how we work with a child’s perspective, that is, how we listen to children and how we use children’s input. “Sagorskatt” is an example where this is very clear, because they [children] are the designers. But we also have more examples of how we invite children into the product development process for them to... so that they teach us, they’re experts at being children. So, they teach us about what they like and what they need, and how they, how you can play with a product and, in other words, what the product needs to be able to sustain. And if you look at the soft toys, for example, a typical thing would be how is it as a soft toy... now that we’ve learned, how does it feel to hug, what is an extra play value of a soft toy, what kind of situations is it going to be exposed to? Yeah, siblings are probably going to fight over it.

Yelyzaveta: Ha, okay.

Stina: Haha.

Yelyzaveta: Haha.

Stina: You put it in your mouth, so it shouldn’t shed fibers, it shouldn’t get easily ripped. It should also be cozy to hug. It should also have an expression so that it looks kind and fun and you can have a dialogue with it, so it’s like... And all of this we also learn from children.

In this account, IKEA’s work with “a child’s perspective” is presented as a way of binding together the safety and playability of IKEA’s soft toys. Stina says that the company involves children in product development to learn about “what they like and what they need” and about “how you can play with a product.” This is because IKEA considers children to be “experts” in being children: having the knowledge about what they need and like. Children are assigned competence in play: they are able to try

out products and help IKEA to assess what Stina calls the “play value” of a toy. In this account, the conventional positions of adults teaching children are turned upside down: instead, Children’s IKEA is said to learn from children. This is emphasized through repetition: “they teach us,” “now that we’ve learned,” “all of this we also learn from children.” In Swedish there is almost an imperative in that competent children “should” teach IKEA (“*de ska lära oss*”) about themselves and how they play with toys. As a result, as Stina presents it, the toys are durable, do not “shed fibers,” and are not “easily ripped” (safe); they are soft and “cozy” to cuddle, fun and kind-looking enough to have a conversation with (playable).

Placing this account alongside the examples discussed earlier in this chapter, we are again faced with a complex ideal of the playing child. On the one hand, we see a vulnerable child in need of protection from potential hazards. On the other hand, it is also the child who is assigned competence and “expertise,” in play in particular. This figure of the child is fluid enough to contain complexity. I suggest that what enacting this complex figure achieves for IKEA is to consolidate the company’s presentation of itself as an expert in children, children’s play, and everyday life. This also allows IKEA to speak to different potential audiences.

One may ask how, for example, very young children can “teach” IKEA about play. In the interview, Sara mentioned that she has worked on a collection called “PS.” She said that this collection aimed to challenge the traditional boundaries between toys and furniture because children’s play incorporates many more objects than just toys designed for children. As part of developing the collection, IKEA run tests: an international panel of children was offered prototypes to play with freely. The test was filmed and documented for later analysis and assessment. Sara elaborated one of the purposes of the tests in the following way:

Sara: ...even if we try with all the knowledge that we have, all the imagination we have as adults to understand how children could use this product, we still can’t figure out how they would use it. So, during a test like this, it could be: “Ah, that boy or girl did this with that piece of furniture and it wasn’t safe. No, then maybe it shouldn’t be part of the collection.”

The tests that Sara describes and Stina mentions (Example 7.6), take place at the product development stage. The stated purpose is to identify possible ways in which children can use products that are not accessible to IKEA's designers through any other means. The purpose is also to identify and eliminate any potential safety concerns before the items go into production. So, arranging for a group of children to try out prototypes under test conditions is yet another way in which IKEA says that it negotiates potential safety concerns, in addition to using a child perspective in product development and the factory tests discussed earlier.

Seeing through "children's eyes," or "pediocularly" (Cook, 2004a), has been used by marketers and producers since the early days of the market for children's goods. Children's IKEA presents its vision of product design as child-focused in the sense that it relies on both a child perspective and a children's perspective. What is different from the early to mid-20th century USA (Cook, 2004a), however, is the centrality of children's rights in IKEA's vision. The company presents its products as being such that they attend to the needs of the children who play with them *as well as* taking into consideration the rights of the children along the supply and retail chains who may be affected (as discussed in the analysis of example 7.5).

Marketers have used child-centeredness as a tool to appeal to both child consumers and their parents (Cook, 2004a). It is also worth mentioning that toy companies have also used play groups of children to test toy prototypes as a tool for market research (Seiter, 1993: 201). Ellen Seiter (1993) describes toy production and sale as a "high-risk industry" because children change their preferences often, and young children in particular, who cannot read, are difficult to reach through advertising. This makes testing children's interest using prototype toys a way of addressing the possibility that the toys will not sell once they are released onto the market. Seiter's (1993) study was published some years ago now, so it is possible that the situation on the toy market has changed. But it is worth noting that engaging children in product development seems to help IKEA negotiate several different concerns. One of these is anticipating safety concerns, and the other is that the toys will not appeal to child consumers.

Children's toys – for adults?

After being carefully manufactured and thoroughly tested, the “Sagorskatt” toys are finally out on the market. All the concerns discussed earlier have presumably been resolved. Yet, in the interview, Stina calls the “Sagorskatt” collection an “acquired taste.” She mentions something that surprises me, namely that children do not necessarily prefer the “Sagorskatt” toys:

Example 7.7

Yelyzaveta: You mentioned that many children hesitate and don't choose the “Sagorskatt” toys to begin with. Have you investigated this, or why do you think this happens?

Stina: I think that children like... it's incredible that children drew something, but you want... either you want something you drew yourself or something children connect, or very easily connect, to. Like a bear or a dog, or something that looks like something real. [...] Children dream about having their own dog and so you can buy a dog that looks like a dog. They [the “Sagorskatt” toys] are very unusual, so this is also something that you're not used to seeing. It's not that they're not appreciated, because they are, but it's quite a small volume if we compare it to our animals that look like real animals.

This account positions the “Sagorskatt” toys as “unusual,” in contrast to IKEA's “ordinary” soft toys, which resemble existing animals. The appeal of realistic toys here is that they can be a replacement for a pet, while the fantastic creatures are only appealing if the child created them her/himself. This is something of a paradox: according to Children's IKEA, the unusual look of the “Sagorskatt” toys, the exact thing that makes them stand out among “ordinary” soft toys, is not necessarily an attractive feature to child consumers. If the “for kids” part of “by kids, for kids” is understood as child consumers, rather than child beneficiaries of charity, the exchange does not align all that smoothly.

This is an interesting example of the market's failed attempt to sell children a normative idea about themselves. And, presumably, it is a more successful attempt to sell *adults* an idea about children as enjoying fun, colorful, and quirky playthings (cf. Låby, 2018). In the interview with Charlotte and Sara, when I brought up the question of who the

promotion of the “Saguskatt” toys primarily addresses, they made sure to say that the target audience is parents, since IKEA cannot advertise directly to children (cf. Martinez, 2014; Sjöberg, 2013). Sara then added: “adults think this is much more fun.”

Thinking back to the “Anatomy of the hippo-crocodile” and the videos narrating the animated toy’s adventures, the idea that the campaign “by kids, for kids” is to a large extent actually *for adults* makes sense. Cute and cuddly teddy bears and photographs of children holding teddy bears can sometimes reflect adult nostalgia and longing for a seemingly carefree childhood (Cross, 1997; Jenks, 1996/2005; Seiter, 1993; Sparrman, 2009). But for the nostalgia to hold, the ideal of childhood as innocent and carefree seems necessary, which brings us back to the romantic ideal of innocent childhood. The ideal that, as the interview with Stina made me realize, I myself hold, which is why what Stina says about the “Saguskatt” toys as an “acquired taste” came as a surprise to me. Despite conducting research in critical Child Studies, without realizing this I had expected young children to like the bright colors, asymmetrical shapes, and whimsical characters of the “Saguskatt” toys. Creatures such as the spiky purple monster, or the sausage dog with unicorn wings and a horn seemed to embody playfulness, fun, and creativity. Reflecting in hindsight, I notice how romantic ideals of children have influenced my own thinking about what appealing children’s playthings look like. This does not diminish the irony that a collection of soft toys “by kids, for kids,” carefully designed and tested to be safe for children to play with, may be more popular with adult consumers (such as, apparently, myself). This is perhaps why, at the moment of writing, the collection has not been discontinued and four more “Saguskatt” collections came onto the market during the period 2018–2021. The paradox still raises a question: who are these soft toys, marketed with the slogan “by kids, for kids,” *actually* for?

Concluding thoughts

So, what can soft toys and the rhetoric around them tell us about corporate children’s charity and the values of children mobilized within it? My examination of the value of safe play and concerns about safety mobilized in IKEA’s campaign made several things visible. The play that

IKEA's toys and other products for children is meant to make possible is enacted as universally natural and free, fun and educational. Yet, although potentially destructive, it does not involve safety hazards for the playing child. The ideal of the child who plays with IKEA's products is enacted as creative and natural, but also vulnerable. However, the child whom IKEA claims to engage in product design is also desiring, knowing, and competent (cf. Buckingham, 2007; Cook, 2004b, 2009; Sparrman, 2009, 2015b). The ideal child in the "Sagoskatt" campaign is thus ambiguous and fluid enough to contain frictions and paradoxes between values such as innocence and competence.

IKEA coordinates the value of safe play with the potential concerns that poorly manufactured toys may pose. The two central concerns are that the child may physically harm themselves, and that, by being cautious, parents may inhibit their child's free, unrestricted play. These potential concerns are also enacted as controllable: they can be foreseen and prevented, unlike the bullying and discrimination discussed in an earlier chapter, which can only be partially and locally addressed. To refer to this type of potential and containable concern, I have used the word "risk," which is also used in IKEA's own promotion. Unlike other types of concern, risks are constructed as knowable and manageable, and dealing with them is presented as the company's own responsibility.

I have also argued that IKEA coordinates the value of safe play with concerns about safety, and I have referred to this type of coordination work as "anticipating." One prominent way of anticipating concerns presented in the promotional materials and the interviews is through a well-thought-through product design. In particular, a design that relies on a child perspective and engages children's own perspective; for instance, by inviting children to test prototypes. The other prominent way of negotiating concerns in the promotion is to present the successful factory tests conducted by IKEA. Visually, this is achieved by displaying the successful test results and textually by claiming, for example, absolute 100% safety. By constructing risks as knowable and controllable, IKEA displays expertise in making products for children. Together with the stated well-thought-through design, this also helps IKEA to present the company's expertise in knowing children: their preferences, needs, and rights. This includes not only the child consumers of the toys, but also children on the production side.

The emphasis on the company's expertise in understanding children puts IKEA in an interesting position as an agent in children's charity. We can think of charity campaigns where the for-profit partner funds the work of the non-profit partner, which holds most of the expertise on the charitable cause. In the "Saguskatt" campaign, both partners claim to have expertise about children, albeit of different kinds. This dynamic may be interesting in the light of arguments that, in the non-profit sector today, organizations are more and more often forced to professionalize in order to secure funding (Moor, 2007; Osvaldsson & Sköld, 2018; Wijkström, 2011). For example, to have employees and provide a service, rather than working with volunteers (Osvaldsson & Sköld, 2018), or to strengthen their branding and marketing to an extent that was not previously needed (Moor, 2007). So, if non-profit organizations become "more like" companies, a potential future question is whether for-profit companies with large CSR divisions become "more like" non-profit organizations.

My analyses have shown that, in IKEA's vision of product design, including children's perspectives is claimed to be crucial for making good and safe products. Among IKEA's range of products for children, the "Saguskatt" toys stand out because children's engagement in the production is even more extensive and made more explicit since children are said to have "designed" these soft toys. What does this mean in practice, when children from all over the world "design" IKEA's products, which are then sold for charity? In the following empirical chapter, I explore the drawing competition and how IKEA enacts children as designers.

Chapter 8. The child designer: Children's drawing competitions for charity

Introduction

In the previous chapters, three parts of the “Sagoskatt” campaign have been discussed: the charitable cause, the monetary donation, and the “Sagoskatt” soft toys themselves. Let us not forget, however, that an important part of how these soft toys are produced is through IKEA's drawing competition for children. The fact that the toys are based on the winning drawings from this competition makes “Sagoskatt,” at least in part, a campaign “*by kids*” as well as “for kids.” One of the versions of the “by kids, for kids” expression that IKEA uses to refer to the “Sagoskatt” collection is “design by children – for children.”¹¹² Furthermore, the page on IKEA Sweden's website dedicated entirely to “Sagoskatt” that was active at the time of the campaign reads: “The collection makes it possible for children to help other children through their imagination and design” (“*Kollektionen gör det möjligt för barn att hjälpa andra barn genom fantasi och design*”).¹¹³ This quote suggests an answer to the question posed early in the thesis about *how* children are said to help children in the campaign: with imagination and design. But what does it mean to say that children design products for a large international company? How IKEA presents children as designers and how and what values of children are mobilized in the drawing competition will thus be the key questions for this chapter.

Firstly, I will bring in research from Child Studies to discuss competitions for children as an activity. These studies point out the complexity of competitive activities, where winning intersects with having fun, leisure with education, hobbies with work and investing in a future career. I will suggest that, as activities that blend “play” and

¹¹² “Sagoskatt” 2017 press kit, IKEA Sweden's website http://press.ikea.se/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/IKEA_SAGOSKATT_pressmaterial_oktober_2017.pdf (link no longer active). Accessed December 6, 2017.

¹¹³ Announcement of the drawing competition in 2017, IKEA Sweden's website <https://m.ikea.com/se/sv/pages/avdelning/teckningstavling/> (link no longer active). Accessed February 2, 2018.

“work,” competitions for children encourage further questions about the division between childhood and adulthood, with which “play” and “work” are conventionally associated (Prout, 2005). In the analytical section of this chapter, the focus will be on the presentation of the drawing competition, and especially on examples where the words “designer” and “design” are used to refer to the child winners of the competition and their drawings. I will argue that there are implicit concerns about children as designers of commercial products which IKEA has to negotiate in the campaign.

Competitions for children

Child Studies research has shown that various competitions for children, from sports content to creative competitions, are common, both historically and today. During the early to mid-20th century in Sweden, there were children’s photo competitions and so-called A-child contests, where children were judged for their physical health (Hallberg, 2017). During the latter part of the 20th century, there was also a range of drawing competitions for children, some of which resulted in published volumes and exhibitions (Låby, 2018). Nowadays, children compete with their drawings (Eriksson, 2014; Heikkilä, 2014; Martola, 2014), and with knowledge and skills on children’s TV programs (Pettersson, 2013). Children take part in sports contests (Brembeck, 2007; Cardell, 2008), beauty pageants, and competitive after-school activities such as chess and dance (Levey, 2009, 2013). Competitions for children are organized by a variety of actors who often collaborate with each other. These include public actors, such as schools, after-school centers, museums, and governmental phone companies (Eriksson, 2014; Martola, 2014; Levey, 2009; Låby, 2018), but also for-profit companies such as McDonald’s (Brembeck, 2007; Cardell, 2008), and non-profit organizations, for example, the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), and Save the Children (Låby, 2018; Martola, 2014). However, across studies, it becomes apparent that competitions occupy an uneasy position at the intersection of leisure and education, entertainment and work.

When we think about drawing, crafts, or sports competitions for children, it may be tempting to see them as merely fun activities where

children and families can spend their leisure time and win prizes. In her study set in the USA, Hilary Levey (2009, 2013) interviewed children who engage in a range of competitive after-school activities, including beauty pageants, chess, and dance. Many of these children said that they consider competitions to be fun regardless of whether they win or not because it is an opportunity to engage in a favorite activity and spend time with friends. At the same time, the children and parents in Levey's studies (2009, 2013) regularly invest considerable resources in these competitions. They spend time on practice, financially invest in traveling, rehearsing, and practicing, and in acquiring the things they need for preparations and performing. Parents also see competitions as investments in their children's future careers, skills, and personalities. All this leads Levey (2009) to argue that competitive after-school activities, which occupy considerable amounts of time in the lives of many children in the global north, can be understood as a form of "children's work" (see also Samuelsson & Engwall, 2008). Since "work" has a range of definitions, it is worth clarifying that, by "children's work," Levey (2009) means that through such after-school activities children acquire capital, such as status, prestige, and skills, which they can make use of immediately or in the future.

Levey's (2009) argument makes an interesting contribution to discussions around the invisible work that children perform: tasks and activities that are often labeled as fun, learning, or helping out (Zelizer, 2005). A widespread norm in the global north is that adults work while children go to school (see e.g. De Coninck-Smith et al., 1997; Sandin, 2020; Zelizer, 1985/1994 on child labor and schooling). The only socially acceptable types of work that children can perform are part-time jobs that do not interfere with school, such as a paper round, or a short-term summer job in a café (James et al., 1998; Samuelsson, 2008, 2012; Sjöberg & Smith-MacGowan, 2017; Smith, 2010; Söderlind & Engwall, 2008; Zelizer, 1985/1994, 2002, 2005). But scholars of children and childhood have pointed out a range of unpaid tasks that are not readily classified as work but can easily be understood as such (Samuelsson, 2008, 2012; Sjöberg & Smith-MacGowan, 2017; Söderlind & Engwall, 2008; Zelizer, 1985/1994, 2002, 2005). For example, children provide medical care for family members; in immigrant families, children act as translators and interpreters; and children help out in small family

businesses such as shops and farms (Näsman & von Gerber, 2003; Samuelsson, 2008; Zelizer, 2005).

In Sweden, there is also a practice of schoolchildren making commission sales: selling goods such as socks, salami, and sweets to collect money for school trips (Engwall et al., 2008; Halldén et al., 2008; Sjöberg & Smith-MacGowan, 2017). The ways in which companies advertise these offers to parents and children create the impression that the companies arrange these activities solely for the benefit of the children (Sjöberg & Smith-MacGowan, 2017). For example, to help children make their dream trip into a reality, to have fun, and learn useful skills. But Johanna Sjöberg and Nigel Smith-MacGowan (2017) argue that commission sales are a form of work, which the companies would otherwise have to pay somebody else (an adult) to do. Because children are not paid wages, such commission sales occupy an ambiguous space both within and outside of the labor market (Halldén et al., 2008).

Sjöberg and Smith-MacGowan's (2017) study encourages us to ask what the companies arranging unpaid competitive work tasks for children potentially gain from them. One answer is that companies create an opportunity to both engage with consumers and market their products. Elin Låby (2018) describes a drawing competition co-organized by the Swedish dairy producer Arla during the 1970s. The competition was presented as striving to be a platform for children's voices and to drive social change, and a book of drawings was published the following year. But, as Låby (2018) notes, because some of the drawings pictured cows, milk, and Arla's logo, the book also acted as an advertisement for the company. So, Låby's (2018) example is interesting as a campaign situated at the intersection of a competition for children, a social action, and corporate marketing. This is reminiscent of cause-related marketing campaigns that blur the boundary between marketing and advocating for causes such as breast cancer awareness (King, 2006).

One key difference, however, is that the child winners of IKEA's drawing competition are said to be co-creating commodities. In the promotion, IKEA states that children "design" the toys. In most competitions, children create things that are exhibited, published, and displayed (Eriksson, 2014; Heikkilä, 2014; Låby, 2018), but they are not necessarily mass-produced items that are available for sale. One exception is the Mayflowers mentioned in chapter one, which children

across Sweden sell every year to collect money for charity (Samuelsson, 2008, 2012; Halldén et al., 2008). Currently, the Majblommansriksförbund offers children the opportunity to decide on what the next year's Mayflower will look like (something which is not mentioned in either Samuelsson, 2008, 2012 or Halldén et al., 2008). Children can send suggestions which are then voted for in the Mayflower app. The child whose suggestion was selected for 2020, as with IKEA's campaign, is referred to on the organization's website as the "designer" of that year's Mayflower ("*årets majblommedesigner*").¹¹⁴ The Mayflowers case exemplifies the complexity of competitions for children: it merges the performing of unpaid tasks, which require time and effort and can be seen as work, with leisure and fun, with competing for prizes, and with contributing to charity. The takeaway question from the literature is thus: *how* are these complexities and frictions presented and negotiated in competitions for children?

Presenting children as IKEA's designers

When examining the 2017 "Sagoskatt" promotion on IKEA Sweden's website and social media to determine how the drawing competition is presented and spoken about, I noticed numerous instances where the child winners are called "designers" and the winning drawings are called "designs." To take a few examples from IKEA's website (all emphases are added):

- "Children *designing* for children"¹¹⁵
- "the collection makes it possible for children to help other children through fantasy and *design*"¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ <https://majblomman.se/om-oss/blommans-farg/> Accessed: May 7, 2021.

¹¹⁵ Announcement of the 2017 "Sagoskatt" collection, IKEA Sweden's website https://www.ikea.com/ms/sv_SE/good-cause-campaign/soft-toys-for-education/drawing_competition/index.html (link active but updated). Accessed May 3, 2018. Announcement of the Swedish national finalists in the 2016 competition, IKEA Sweden's website <https://www.ikea.com/se/sv/good-cause-campaign/soft-toys-for-education/kids-design-for-good-cause/index.html> (link active but updated). Accessed March 9, 2018.

¹¹⁶ Announcement of the drawing competition in 2017, IKEA Sweden's website <https://m.ikea.com/se/sv/pages/avdelning/teckningstavling/> (link no longer active). Accessed February 2, 2018.

- “*design* by children – for children” ¹¹⁷
- “*Designer* thoughts” (used to refer to the child winners’ quotes describing their drawings) ¹¹⁸
- Intellectual rights and copyrights for the “*designs*” (mentioned in IKEA’s document “Terms and conditions for the competition”) ¹¹⁹

“Artists” and “art” are two other notions used to refer to the children and their drawings. For instance, the post announcing the winners of the 2016 competition on IKEA Sweden’s Facebook page mentions all the children who submitted a drawing to the competition and says: “HURRAY TO ALL THE CHILD ARTISTS!” ¹²⁰ “Masterpiece” is another art-related term used in IKEA’s promotion. This is how the drawing of a “lion” created by Shane from the United Arab Emirates is referred to in IKEA’s communication on social media (Hrechaniuk, 2021). This toy is part of the 2017 “Sagoskatt” collection and can be seen in the figure 3.2 in chapter three.

“Art” and “artist” are widespread ways to talk about children’s drawings and crafts (Aronsson, 1984; Bendroth Karlsson, 1998, 2014; Sparrman, 2002; Änggård, 2005). But “designer” seems to me to indicate a profession. Especially in the context of IKEA’s product range, designers create tangible practical and functional 3D objects. This requires training and a set of skills different from those needed to make a drawing. We could draw a parallel with the notion of the prosumer (Ruckenstein, 2011, 2015) used in children’s consumer culture studies to refer to children (co-)creating the content they consume. Child YouTubers, on the other hand, especially those who become successful and have family businesses built around their YouTube accounts (Johansen, 2021), can also be seen as prosumers, but on a more

¹¹⁷ “Sagoskatt” 2017 press kit, IKEA Sweden’s website http://press.ikea.se/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/IKEA_SAGOSKATT_pressmaterial_oktober_2017.pdf (link no longer active). Accessed December 6, 2017.

¹¹⁸ “Sagoskatt” 2017 press kit, IKEA USA’s website https://www.ikea.com/ms/en_US/media/pressroom/FY18-Lets-Play/SAGOSKATT_Press-Kit.pdf (link no longer active). Accessed February 12, 2018.

¹¹⁹ “IKEA mjukdjur-teckningstävling 2017: Information och villkor” IKEA Sweden’s website, <https://m.ikea.com/se/sv/pages/avdelning/teckningstavling/> (link no longer active). Accessed May 3, 2018.

¹²⁰ Facebook post from January 6, 2018, IKEA Sweden’s account <https://www.facebook.com/ikeasverige/photos/a.200993761136.128534.199645241136/10155485523691137/?type=3&theater> Accessed February 7, 2018.

professional level. So, what does “designer” mean when this role is assigned to children in a charity campaign?

Coordinating values

Since Children's IKEA is the division of the company responsible for developing soft toys and other products for children, the first excerpt analyzed here comes from the interview with Stina, communication manager at Children's IKEA. Stina explained that, at Children's IKEA, long before the drawing competitions were launched, there had been interest in developing a product range together with children. Children's IKEA first tried out the idea in a handful of markets, first five, then eight. Specifically, they held a drawing competition in which the resulting toys were given to the child winners but were not made into commercial products. These trial competitions were necessary, explained Stina, to see whether it was even possible to produce a toy based on a child's drawing both from IKEA's side and from their suppliers' side. It was also a way to discover whether people would be interested in them. She then continued:

Example 8.1

Stina: And during that time we also worked on whether we should collaborate with children and have children who actually create. Then we must also have a greater value, we can't just have children as designers because it's fun, there must be a meaning to it. So then we decided that ... the sales will be linked to a charity that supports children and children's development. So, this decision was a strategic one from the beginning.

Here, Stina describes a dilemma that arose for Children's IKEA when the company engaged children to design IKEA products. Creating together with children may be “fun” (“*kul*”), but in and by itself this is not a sufficient motivation to engage children. In this excerpt, it is ambiguous whom the word “fun” is referring to: the Children's IKEA's production team or the child participants and their families. Even in the immediate context of this excerpt, it remains unclear who “fun” refers to. Prior to the excerpt, Stina says: “For a long time there's been such a wish to develop [the product range] together with children, and wouldn't it be really fun [*“hemskt roligt”*] to make something that children drew?”

What is clear, however, is that, in addition to the “fun” aspect, there is also a need for what Stina calls a “greater value,” a “meaning” to the activity of creating together with children. In the case of the “Sagoskatt” toys, this “greater value” and “meaning” is contributing to children’s charity. The use of the word “value” in the phrase “a greater value” (“*ett större värde*”) is notable because the value itself is not named. Instead, the phrase is followed by a description of an activity: “the sales will be linked to a charity that supports children and children’s development.” So, by the way in which this account is sequentially organized, the “greater value” refers to “children’s development.”

Thinking in terms of values, I argue that we can understand “fun” and “children’s development” as values in the sense of ideals and principles that guide actions. In this case, they allow IKEA to assess the different ways of engaging children in designing its products. I also suggest that these values are coordinated through a kind of coordination work that can be called ordering.¹²¹ By this I mean the active matching, ranking, and presentation of values that can sometimes be justified or enacted as taken for granted. For example, the relative qualifier “greater,” together with “just” (“*bara*”) in “we can’t just have children as designers because it’s fun” are tools that establish a discursive ordering of values in the normative sense. “Children’s development” is thus discursively ranked higher than “merely” engaging children in a “fun” project.

In this sense, the friction between “fun” and “children’s development” is reminiscent of the conflict between “[IKEA’s] own benefit” and “charity” discussed in chapter 6, where this conflict spoke to an implicit concern. But if we consider how the friction between these two sets of values (“fun” and “children’s development,” and “[IKEA’s] own benefit” and “charity”) is negotiated, there is a clear difference. IKEA presents “our own benefit” and “charity” as a clear contrast, where one *excludes* the other, what I call demarcating, whereas “fun” and “children’s development” are presented as compatible and *complementary*. But

¹²¹ Luc Boltanski and Laurent Trévenot (2006) have proposed the notion “orders of worth” in the sense of higher principles that allow people to reach agreements in disputes and disagreements. “Ordering” as it is used in this chapter is not intended to refer to Boltanski and Trévenot’s (2006) work. Unlike in practice-based studies of valuation, the aim in their work is to offer a general framework, a “grammar of worth,” as Hans Kjellberg and colleagues (2013) call it.

while “fun” and “children's development” are compatible, they are still ranked – the latter is presented as more important than the former.

Annemarie Mol (2002) writes about establishing a hierarchy as a particular form of addition work. In chapter 5, I used addition to describe an instance of coordination where concerns threatening safe sports for children are piled up and grouped without much explanation or justification. But Mol (2002) also uses addition to talk about instances where a hierarchy is established between different diagnostic results. This hierarchy builds on the idea that some results are assigned more weight and importance than others to explain away discrepancies between the results.

This form of hierarchical addition is reminiscent of the ordering introduced earlier in this section. However, rather than creating and upholding a singularity, which is the outcome of the hierarchical coordination work in Mol's (2002) case, the outcomes of ordering work are different. I would suggest that, in example 8.1, ordering helps IKEA to legitimize the “collaboration” with children, particularly by addressing implicit concerns about IKEA's motivation for engaging children as designers. That the “fun” value of engaging children as designers is not sufficient is enacted as a non-negotiable reality. Stina says that engaging children in designing “*must* also have a greater value” and IKEA “*can't* just have children as designers because it's fun, there *must* be a meaning in it” (my emphasis). But why this is the case is not explicitly articulated. The fact that the account enacts this as a taken-for-granted state of things may suggest an attempt to negotiate an implicit concern. For instance, the concern that, if there were no reason other than “fun,” engaging children as designers of IKEA's products may make the company seem to be appropriating children's creativity for its own use. Since IKEA uses “designed by kids” and “by kids, for kids” as the central messages in promoting the “Sagoskatt” toys, it is worth bearing in mind that children's designs provide not only the foundation for the resulting toys, but also the marketing idea for the toy collection.

Articulating concerns that are not explicitly named is certainly a challenging task in the analysis. One thing that led me to analyze the example 8.1 in this way, however, is the following excerpt from the interview with Helena, key account manager at Save the Children Sweden. I asked what Save the Children Sweden thinks about the idea of

children helping children, and Helena's answer was two-fold. She said that, through educational projects such as clubs where children help other children, these children get a chance learn about their rights.¹²² But because, in creating the "Sagoskatt" collection, children's drawings are used for a "commercial purpose," Helena said:

I think the important thing is that it happens in an inclusive way and that children are not used in any way. [...] I can't speak for what Save the Children Sweden think about this, but if we had thought that something made it impossible for us to be a part of this or to accept the money, we wouldn't have done it. I'm sure about that.

In this excerpt, Helena articulates a potential concern about children being treated unfairly, which she also immediately dismisses by expressing certainty that if Save the Children had felt there was any cause for worry, the organization would not have agreed to collaborate on the campaign. Connecting this excerpt back to example 8.1, we can see that there are *potential* concerns about children designing products for a large company. By ordering the values of "fun" and "children's development" in the excerpt, IKEA shows how the company navigates these potential concerns without explicitly naming them.

Children designing for children

In the interview with Sara and Charlotte, employees in the IKEA Family and Group Sustainability divisions respectively, the "fun" aspect of the competition was also brought up. As in the interview with Stina, I also asked Sara and Charlotte about the idea of children creating for children. Within IKEA's drawing competition, IKEA Family as the company's membership club took on the main responsibility for communication around the competition. Jointly with Group Sustainability, the club works, for example, with creating calls for the competition and inviting IKEA Family club members and their children to participate, or announcing the launch of the toy collection. Charlotte and Sara also

¹²² This is not elaborated in the interview, but such children's clubs are one of Save the Children's initiatives that aims to eliminate, among other things, child labor. In these clubs, older schoolchildren receive support and information about their rights, health education, etc. which they are encouraged to pass on to their parents and other community members; e.g. the initiative in Nepal <https://www.raddabarnen.se/vad-vi-gor/trygghet/barnarbete/kamal/>

mentioned that engaging children in the initiative calls for a special purpose.

Example 8.2

Yelyzaveta: How did it come about that children create for children?

Sara: Yes, this idea appeared because we've had many play campaigns in the past, and we probably mostly engaged adults in this. But we wanted to find an activity where we could also involve children to support and help out. And then this competition came up as an idea where it would be children's creativity that results in a collection, which then also helps to help children who maybe have a hard time finding play and development. We wanted to tie it together, so to find an activity which is simple and fun for children to participate in but also has another value connected to it that's maybe a bit more heartfelt.

Describing how the idea of children creating for children came about, Sara says that it has been important for IKEA to engage children in "helping out." Children's creativity and children's drawings serve as the basis for the "Sagokatt" toys, whose sales benefit children who lack play opportunities. The competition here connects children participating in the competition with children who are in need of help, hence the phrase "tie together."

The "fun" mentioned in the last sentence of example 8.2 is reminiscent of the excerpt from Stina's interview (Example 8.1). Here, however, Sara explicitly talks about the drawing competition as a fun activity *for children* specifically. In the last sentence of excerpt 8.2, "fun" and what Sara refers to as "another value" that is "a bit more heartfelt" are brought together. It seems that another ordering of conflicting values is taking place here: the "more heartfelt" value of supporting and helping is positioned more highly than the "fun" value of taking part in the competition. The relative qualifier "more" is the discursive tool that positions the "more heartfelt value," the value which we can read as being related to charity, higher. Yet, unlike in example 8.1, here the fact that the competition is entertaining for children to take part in also appears *necessary*. This is what the last sentence in the excerpt indicates: "We wanted ... to find an activity which is *simple and fun for children to participate in but also has another value*" (my emphasis).

Reflecting on the two accounts together (Examples 8.1 and 8.2), and the relative qualifiers used in both, which as I have suggested do the work of ordering (“greater value,” “a bit *more* heartfelt”), also brings to mind measuring and appraising. Questions of amounts and what counts as “enough,” which I have touched upon in the previous chapters in relation to charitable donations, seem to also emerge here, but this time in relation to the competition and children as “designers” of the toys. One may wonder why it is not deemed “enough” for a competition for children to be fun and enjoyable for the participating children. One possible answer is that otherwise the resulting “Sagokatt” toy collection may seem as though IKEA unfairly engaged children in designing products without proper compensation. But because the children’s designs are included in a charity campaign, IKEA’s economic gain is presumably offset. Thus, it is worth noting the interplay between the values of children and the values of charity. Mobilizing the values of children helps to settle concerns about charity, while an association with the values of charity helps to settle potential concerns about children as designers.

Selecting the winning designs

How do children’s drawings “become” designs? In other words, how are the winning children’s drawings selected in IKEA’s competition? The following excerpt is from the interview with Sara and Charlotte, where they are discussing children’s creativity and its role in selecting the winning drawings. I asked whether either Sara or Charlotte had participated in the selection of the drawings, but neither of them had. I then asked whether they could still elaborate on the selection criteria, to which they responded in the following way:

Example 8.3

Sara: So, first of all it should be based on children’s creativity.

Yelyzaveta: Okay, not the parents’ [creativity].

Charlotte: No.

Sara: No, no it’s like... and it should be as close as possible to... what we consider to be a unique expression... I mean it’s also that children maybe draw something they’ve seen, and that’s how it is. But there we must also make sure that we don’t go and tread on other brands’ toes so it starts looking similar to another character

Chapter 8. The child designer: Children's drawing competitions for charity

that already exists, like when somebody [inaudible: draws] a Pokémon.

Charlotte: Mmm.

Sara: Then we can't, we can't select it.

Charlotte: No.

Sara: No matter how creative we might think it is. But, so there are a few of these criteria where we must also take responsibility as a company. But it's children's creativity and expression that are driving this.

This excerpt opens and closes with Sara making a point of saying that the main selection criterion in the drawing competition is children's creativity. Yet children's creativity here seems to be an elastic notion. It includes both drawings that fit under IKEA's understanding of a "unique expression" and drawings of characters that the child has seen elsewhere and copied, rather than ones they came up with by themselves. But the children's creativity that is prioritized in the selection process is itself restricted by certain criteria. Selecting a drawing that resembles an already existing product, such as Pokémon, and creating a toy based on it, could have legal repercussions for IKEA if manufactured and sold as an IKEA soft toy. In her interview, Stina at Children's IKEA also says that many drawings submitted to the competition portray existing toys and other products, cartoons, and book characters that children have or wish to have. Sara notes, "and that's how it is." Distinguishing between different kinds of drawings is thus presented as important for IKEA so that the company can fulfill its responsibility.

Creativity is not the only criterion by which the children's drawings are assessed. Other criteria that Sara and Charlotte mention in a later part of the interview are manufacturing feasibility and costs. This means that the resulting toy cannot be too complex or expensive to manufacture. In the terms and conditions for IKEA's drawing competition, the list of criteria is given in the following way: "novelty value, uniqueness, commercial potential, and manufacturing feasibility" (*"nyhetsvärde, unikhets, kommersiell potential och möjlighet att tillverka som mjukleksak"*).¹²³ Looking at the list with the concept of

¹²³ "IKEA mjukdjur-teckningstävling 2017: Information och villkor" IKEA Sweden's website, <https://m.ikea.com/se/sv/pages/avdelning/teckningstavling/> (link no longer active). Accessed May 3, 2018.

value in mind, it appears to be a list of values in the sense of norms. These are desirable features in a drawing that have been articulated to guide the jury in the selection process, or in other words ideals guiding people's actions, as I suggested understanding values as norms. In this case, we can also see that values as *norms* are being used to make assessments and *appraisals*, highlighting the interplay between formal and informal valuation procedures.

The list of selection criteria is ordered in the sense that the criteria are listed sequentially, one after another, in the terms and conditions document. Here, the criteria are not explicitly ranked, unlike in example 8.3, where children's creativity is presented as the top selection criterion. In the excerpt, it becomes apparent that this ordering does not necessarily hold when several criteria come into conflict. Earlier in the chapter, I introduced the implicit concern raised by the conflict between the value of "fun" and "the greater value" of charity. Here in this account (Example 8.3), the concern is explicit and articulated. Sara says that children's creativity is the utmost priority – except when the drawing may infringe another company's copyright. Under certain circumstances, it becomes the highest priority for IKEA to take responsibility as a company and not breach copyright, rather than to uphold children's creativity as the main selection criterion. This is a different type of responsibility for its products than the safety concerns discussed in the previous chapter, which are presented as responsibility towards consumers. However, by saying that IKEA "*can't* select" a drawing that copies an existing commercial product, the company's role in deciding which children's drawings are made into soft toys is downplayed. Instead, the market, and presumably the copyright laws, are presented as restraining factors in the selection process.

The analysis so far has shown that I approached how IKEA presents the drawing competition in terms of values and concerns. Values are mobilized, in particular, to motivate engaging children as designers of the "Sagokatt" toys. By ordering conflicting values (e.g. "fun" and "children's development"), IKEA navigates both concerns that are articulated explicitly (about the selection process) and implicit concerns (about children as designers). The analysis has also shown that a competition entails a complex interplay of formal and informal valuation procedures. Set rules and criteria here merge and interact with a range

of informal assessments and appraisals that become visible when we look at how the competition is presented. For example, values as norms (e.g. novelty) are used as guidelines when making appraisals (e.g. selecting the winning drawing). At the same time, informal appraisals (e.g. "greater value") are used as a tool for sorting and ordering values as norms (e.g. "fun" and "children's development"). This suggests that Valuation Studies need to consider both formal and informal valuations and the relationship between them (cf. Hennion, 2017).

Uniqueness and copying

To elaborate upon the children's creativity that is so prized in IKEA's competition, I will discuss the following example, which comes from the "Saguskatt" 2017 press kit from IKEA Canada's website. No other press kit that I collected for this study besides IKEA Canada's and IKEA USA's contains what this page-spread shows: short quotes from all ten child winners of the competition in 2016 entitled "Designer thoughts." The Swedish promotion contains only four quotes on IKEA Sweden's website,¹²⁴ and one in the press kit.¹²⁵

¹²⁴ IKEA Sweden's website

<https://m.ikea.com/se/sv/pages/avdelning/teckningstavling/> (link no longer active). Accessed February 9, 2018.

¹²⁵ "Saguskatt" 2017 press kit, IKEA Sweden's website http://press.ikea.se/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/IKEA_SAGOSKATT_pressmaterial_oktober_2017.pdf (link no longer active). Accessed December 6, 2017.

Example 8.4

“Sagaskatt” 2017 press kit, p. 6, IKEA USA’s website. ¹²⁶ ©Inter IKEA Systems, B. V.

In these quotes, the children describe the character they drew and their motivation for doing so. For IKEA, it is not unusual for the products exhibited in the store to feature information about the (adult) designer/s and the design, such as the name and a photo of the designer/s, together with a quotation (Garvey, 2018; Murphy, 2015). The decision to do the same with the child winners of the competition seems to signal that IKEA takes children seriously, on a par with professional adult designers. Sara and Charlotte mentioned that IKEA interviews the child winners about their drawings, and this is where the quotes come from. The interviews with the winners are also used to communicate the children's ideas in greater detail to the production team. Sara mentions these interviews with the child winners to emphasize that IKEA strives to closely follow the children's original designs: "we want to be as close to the original as possible." She adds: "we don't add other design elements [*annan formgivning*]" besides what's required for it to become a three-dimensional product."

In relation to children's creativity, four toys and their respective quotes are of special interest in the image in example 8.4. The focus will

¹²⁶ https://www.ikea.com/ms/en_US/media/pressroom/FY18-Lets-Play/SAGOSKATT_Press-Kit.pdf Accessed July 3, 2018.

be on the purple monster and the fox in the top row, and the blue bird and the lion in the bottom row. The four quotes are presented below (Example 8.4a, all emphases are mine).

Example 8.4a

MONSTER, Su-ah, 8, South Korea

"In my favourite movie there's a cartoon unicorn whose horn gives special powers. I'd also like that. That's why I gave my soft toy several horns, but I was sure to not make them too sharp."

FOX, Joseph, 6, Australia

"I saw a fox in a picture book and wanted to create my own. I like the orange color of my soft toy, but most of all I like the fox's long ears."

BIRD, Clara, 7, Austria

"I love kingfishers and have a book with one on the cover. This was the image I was thinking of when I drew my soft toy – sitting in a tree and looking for fish."

LION, Shane, 7, United Arab Emirates

"I thought of the timid lion in 'The Wizard of Oz' when I created my soft toy. Even though he's a lion, he has the name 'Tiger' since I was in a hurry when I named him."

"Sagorskatt" 2017 press kit, p. 6, IKEA USA's website.¹²⁷ ©Inter IKEA Systems, B. V.

Su-ah, Joseph, Clara, and Shane, four out of the ten child winners, mention other media influencing their drawings. Su-ah says that she drew her monster with horns because of a cartoon unicorn she likes. Clara and Joseph say they saw their animals, a kingfisher and a fox, in books. Shane says he had in mind the lion character from *The Wizard of Oz*, which could refer to L. Frank Baum's book or its film adaptation. From these quotes, all four children appear to be aware of the sources of inspiration for their drawings. For Joseph and Su-ah, using other media also seems quite deliberate. "I saw a fox in a picture book and wanted to create my own," says Joseph, while Su-ah is quoted as saying: "I'd also like that [a cartoon unicorn whose horn gives special powers]. That's why I gave my soft toy several horns."

¹²⁷ https://www.ikea.com/ms/en_US/media/pressroom/FY18-Lets-Play/SAGOSKATT_Press-Kit.pdf Accessed July 3, 2018.

Thinking back to IKEA's insistence on the uniqueness of the drawings (Example 8.3), how can we understand that these drawings not only qualified for the competition but also won it? One way to explain this would be to say that these drawings are not copies of the book and cartoon characters, but rather take *inspiration* from them. Thus, I want to argue, the quotes in example 8.4a show something different from either the "unique expression" or imitation presented in example 8.3. Likewise, in IKEA UK's press kit for the 2017 "Sagaskatt" collection, one of the stated selection criteria is that "the creature should have never been seen before, that they are really sprung from a child's fantasy."¹²⁸ The bird, the fox, the purple monster, and the lion are not imitations, we can assume, because IKEA did manufacture and sell them as soft toys with no legal challenges of which I am aware.

Even if we accept the lion drawing as an imitation, there is still an interesting tension emerging. From the account above, it is not clear whether Shane is referring to the book *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* by L. Frank Baum, or perhaps the most famous film adaptation *The Wizard of Oz* (1939) starring Judy Garland. The difference between the two is crucial in terms of copyright or intellectual rights. While the book is currently in the public domain, the film is not.¹²⁹ No matter which one Shane "really" means, it is interesting to note that "The Wizard of Oz" is something that many audiences in the global north are likely to recognize. Compared to a strange "never-before-seen" creature, a soft toy that potential buyers have associations with, which they could perhaps connect to their own or their children's positive childhood memories, might have an advantage in commercial terms.

¹²⁸ Sagaskatt" 2017 press kit, IKEA UK's website https://www.ikea.com/gb/en/doc/general-document/ikea-download-pdf-12.2-mb_1364426849772.pdf (link no longer active). Accessed: July 3, 2018.

¹²⁹ For example, in 2011, Warner Brothers film company, which owns the rights to *The Wizard of Oz*, claimed copyright infringement and sued a company that sold merchandise featuring, among other things, images from the film. *Warner Bros. Entertainment vs. X One X Productions* <https://www.leagle.com/decision/infc020110705129.xml> Accessed March 22, 2021. The court's decision that some features of the characters can be copyrighted, although derived from the book, which is in the public domain, has stirred debates about copyright and the possibilities of new film and visual adaptations of Baum's book, e.g. https://www.newmediarights.org/business_models/artist/wizard_oz_public_domain Accessed March 22, 2021.

I suggest that we can think about inspiration as imitation minus concerns. If we imagine the drawings in example 8.4 without the children's quotes, it seems challenging to tell apart the drawings that have been inspired by other media from those that have not. The characters portrayed are no longer recognizable as directly derived from the "original source," especially if the source remains unnamed, which is the case in all but one of these quotes, and so do not infringe upon the "originals." So, while imitation in IKEA's competition qualifies but is not rewarded, inspiration is both accepted and, it seems, even prized because the drawings of the bird, fox, monster, and lion were not only accepted into the competition but also made their way to the final level, and were selected among the ten winning submissions.

As becomes visible in the analysis of press materials and interviews in which IKEA presents the drawing competition, conflicts between the values of the drawings may give rise to concerns, such as potential copyright infringements. To navigate these concerns, in its presentations IKEA coordinates these values through discursive ordering. Distinctions between several different kinds of drawings are made, and these different drawings are not valued in the same way. While drawings that are presented as "unique expressions" are desirable in the competition, drawings that include identifiable imitations are accepted as entries, but are unlikely to win. Finally, I have suggested that there is yet another kind of drawing not explicitly named in the text and talk about the drawing competition. These drawings are neither "purely" unique nor portray a *recognizable* imitation of a known character, but rather take what I have called inspiration from other sources. In the promotion, these drawing are not explicitly assigned concerns in the same way as imitations are, but they may have the advantage of appealing to those consumers who recognize the source of inspiration.

Rewarding the child designers

At this point, one may wonder how the child "designers" with whom IKEA says it "collaborates" (Example 8.1) are rewarded for creating the "designs" of the "Sagokatt" toys. Competitions often include rewards and prizes, and IKEA's drawing competition is no exception. I would like to first sketch out in more general terms how the child participants and

child winners of IKEA's drawing competition are rewarded before moving on to analyzing an empirical example in more detail.

The top prize, which only the international winners receive (ten of them in case of the competition 2016), is a version of their own drawing made up as a soft toy. Sara and Charlotte mention in the interview that this toy is one of a kind and personalized with the child's name on the label. The children being presented with their toys is often turned into a celebration by the local IKEA store. Sara and Charlotte also mention different ways in which the stores can "acknowledge" (*"uppmärksamma"*) the child winners. How each country chooses to do this, according to Sara, is up to the franchisees since there are no standardized global guidelines. This is why some countries invite the child to the IKEA store, others visit the child at school, while yet others create a coloring book featuring the animal from the drawing to give to the child winner. Some make a short video and post it on IKEA's social media, as IKEA United Arab Emirates did. They created a short video featuring the winner, talking about his drawing and the toy while receiving the toy, some balloons, and an IKEA gift card together with his family at the store (I write about this mini-case from the campaign in Hrechaniuk, 2021).

The intention of "acknowledging" the child winner, as Charlotte puts it in the interview, is to celebrate the winner and "give something back" (*"ge något tillbaka"*). The intention to "give something back" is reminiscent of the reciprocity emphasized in the gift literature as an essential part of gift-giving (e.g. Godbout, 1998; Mauss, 1925/2002). However, in the gift literature, it is the recipient who is indebted to the giver whereas, in the "Sagokatt" campaign, there is no direct contact between "givers" and "recipients" but instead IKEA plays a central role as a mediator of charity. It is thus notable that, as a mediator, IKEA also takes on the task of compensating the "givers," in this case the child designers, for their contribution to the campaign.

However, the international winners are not the only ones who receive tangible rewards. All participants at the store level receive a diploma and a small gift.¹³⁰ Those children whose drawings are selected to progress

¹³⁰ "IKEA mjukdjur-teckningstävling 2017: Information och villkor" IKEA Sweden's website, <https://m.ikea.com/se/sv/pages/avdelning/teckningstävling/> (link no longer active). Accessed May 3, 2018. Also interview 3, IKEA Family and Group Sustainability.

further in the competition receive larger prizes. Tim, who is the benefit and rewards leader of the loyalty team in the marketing department at IKEA Sweden, also mentions “acknowledging” the child winners, and that the winners of the competition at the store level receive products to the value of 500 Swedish crowns.¹³¹

It is noteworthy that *all* child participants receive something. This can be seen as an attempt to soften the fact that they have after all competed against each other (Brembeck, 2007; Cardell, 2008). When all participants receive a prize and a celebration, the event becomes more of a fun family activity where everybody is a “winner,” rather than a competition-driven activity where some participants win and others lose (Brembeck, 2007; Cardell, 2008). In the running competitions organized by McDonald's, every child who makes it to the finishing line gets a diploma, a medal, snacks, and a free Happy Meal, meaning that the participants are largely rewarded with the company's own products (Brembeck, 2007; Cardell, 2008). But, unlike McDonald's sports competition, one result of IKEA's drawing competition is a collection of soft toys sold at IKEA stores. At this point, it is also worth noting that, from the moment when the drawings are submitted to the competition, IKEA gains intellectual property rights, including copyright and design rights, over them. The following example can help us to reflect further about the role of children as designers of products. It is an online discussion on IKEA Sweden's Facebook page centered around what kind of reward is and is not sufficient for the child winners to receive from IKEA.

Values of children in public discussions

The post on IKEA Sweden's Facebook page in the following example (Example 8.5) announces that eight-year-old Greta from Sweden was one of the winners of the competition held in 2017 which led to the 2018 “Saguskatt” collection. The photo included in the post shows Greta holding her competition entry: a drawing of a round, green, and spiky character. The drawing is made on IKEA's template, which can be seen

¹³¹ The question posed in the interview specifically concerned the 2017 “Saguskatt” campaign, but from the answer it is a bit unclear whether Tim means this or one of the later campaigns. It was still important to mention as an illustration of what the prizes may look like, which is information that was not available on IKEA's website.

from the IKEA logo in the top left-hand corner, and the boxes in the bottom to fill in with the name of the character, and the child’s name and age. Below (Example 8.5), the screenshot of the post is presented and the caption in IKEA’s post is quoted.

Example 8.5

Facebook post from February 18, 2018, IKEA Sweden’s Facebook account.¹³²
©Inter IKEA Systems, B. V.

Caption in the Facebook post:

CONGRATULATIONS GRETA! Eight-year-old Greta from [a large city in Sweden] is one of five children from all over the world chosen to have their drawings made into real soft toys. Best of all? In the fall, you can become the owner of KOTTEN and all the other wonderful SAGOSKATT characters. Keep an eye out!

At the time when I accessed the post, it had attracted significant engagement: 2 500 reactions, 50 comments, and 15 shares.¹³³ Of these

¹³² <https://www.facebook.com/ikeasverige/photos/a.200993761136.128534.19964524.1136/10155627793876137/?type=3&theater> Accessed: August 7, 2018.

¹³³ For comparison, the post presenting winners of the drawing competition published on IKEA Sweden’s Facebook a month earlier had 282 reactions, four comments, and two shares when I took a screenshot of it. See Facebook post from January 6, 2018, IKEA Sweden’s account

50 comments, the focus will be on a thread of 16 where the discussion revolves around a suitable reward for Greta. Should she, as the winner of the competition, receive monetary compensation for designing the toy, or is the joy of winning and helping others sufficient compensation? The box below (Example 8.5a) shows some of the comments from the thread: the first comment that started the discussions and a few responses (all emphases are mine).

Example 8.5a

Petra's initial comment. I hope that little Greta gets some share of the profits that you're going to make!?!? So that her future is secure 👍.

Comment 1. I'm Greta's mum and no, she doesn't get more than *honor* and her own Kotten when it's done! She is *super happy*, and the fact that the money goes to Save the Children is the biggest *profit*!

Comment 2. She had the *joy* of winning with her lovely contribution and to support children who have it worse. What a *joy*! To win and at the same time contribute to something so important. Wouldn't you be *proud*? 😊

Comment 3. Her "share" is that she gets to see her drawing come to life and that many children across the world can have their own Kotten at home that she can feel *proud* of designing 🤗

Comment 4. Congratulations Greta!!! I work at Children's IKEA and know how many drawings we received, and it wasn't easy to choose, can you imagine the *honor* of BEING CHOSEN when you're eight years old? This is huge! I would have been *proud* and *happy*!!

The discussion begins with the commentor, here named Petra, wondering whether Greta will get a percentage of IKEA's profits. The other 15 comments are responses to Petra's initial comment. All but two of these commenters argue that both winning the competition and contributing to a good cause are more than sufficient rewards. I have quoted four responses to Petra's comment. These four were selected because the commenters explicitly claim that Greta does not need to, or should not, receive monetary compensation. My focus is on how these claims are organized here, especially because the commenters mobilize values to make their claims.

<https://www.facebook.com/ikeasverige/photos/a.200993761136.128534.199645241136/10155485523691137/?type=3&theater> Accessed: February 7, 2018.

Petra's question about monetary compensation is not entirely surprising since IKEA Sweden's post does not mention anything about charity. From the caption and the photo, it appears that, together with other children, Greta has designed a toy that is going to be sold at IKEA stores like any other IKEA product. The final sentences of the caption in the post are: "Best of all? In the fall you can become the owner of KOTTEN and all the other wonderful SAGOSKATT characters." The first three responses to Petra's comment do the work of clarifying that IKEA donates the money from the toys to a charitable cause, as well as providing a link to Save the Children Sweden's website and a screenshot from IKEA Sweden's website. In theory, this is where the discussion could have stopped. After the initial comment and one more question for clarification, Petra did not make any further comments in the thread. But the discussion went on for 11 more comments from nine different Facebook users, including the comments quoted above. This is noteworthy: there seems to be something important yet difficult to pin down that made people join in the discussion and express concern.

This discussion is worth examining in detail as an example of *public* negotiations of values of children. Because the subject under discussion is the reward that Greta *should* receive, it has a lot to do with values as norms – values in the sense of the ideals and principles guiding people's actions. As I will elaborate in the analysis, these values as norms become guiding principles in making an assessment of what is "enough" of a reward for the child winners. This is because, unlike selecting the winning drawings in the competition, a process guided by formal criteria and rules, there are no such criteria to help determine a sufficient reward. What also makes this Facebook discussion worth analyzing in detail is that it brings together a number of frictions that I have identified and unpacked throughout the empirical chapters, such as those between giving and receiving, personal gain and charity, and the values of commerce and charity.

Monetary and non-monetary rewards

Two possible rewards for Greta and the other child winners of IKEA's competition are presented in the comments in example 8.5a. "Some share of the profit" is the phrase used in the initial comment, while the rest of the comments mention rewards such as the joy and honor of both

winning the competition and “being chosen” (comment 4), as well as the joy of helping other children (comments 2, 3, and more implicitly 1). Thus, “some share of the profit” is contrasted with and dismissed in favor of “joy,” “honor,” and the other rewards. I suggest that there is a conflict in the discussion between the rewards, and that we can understand this as a conflict between monetary and non-monetary values. The notions of “monetary” and “non-monetary” are used, for example, by Viviana Zelizer (1985/1994) to refer to quantitative economic values and qualitative sentimental values respectively. In the Facebook discussion, the conflict is negotiated by ordering these conflicting values. In other words, the alternative of a *monetary* reward is ranked lower than the *non-monetary* rewards. The commenters suggest that “joy,” “honor,” and feeling “proud” and “happy,” both about winning the competition and about helping others, outweigh any economic reward (comments 1–4).

To look in more detail at how this ordering is organized, we can zoom in on the word “profit” (“*vinsten*”) in Petra's initial comment and in comment 1. It is used in the initial comment, where Petra seems to be referring to IKEA's potential economic gain from the toys: “some share of the profits that you're going to make.” In comment 1, Greta's mother uses the same word when she talks about the donation: “that the money goes to Save the Children is the biggest *profit*” (added emphasis). While Petra uses “profit” to refer to receiving money, Greta's mother possibly makes a point of using the same word to refer to giving away money to charity. In this second case, “profit” also appears to take on the value of Greta's happiness mentioned earlier in the same sentence: “She is super happy and the fact that the money goes to Save the Children is the biggest profit.” Thinking with the notion of ordering, between these two comments, this second kind of “profit” is ranked higher. The superlative “the biggest profit” in comment 1 is one of the tools that achieves this discursive ordering. So, what I would like to argue is that an outcome of ordering here is to legitimize children as designers of IKEA's products by displacing implicit concerns about them as designers.

No explicit concerns are named in the Facebook discussion; in other words, what might happen if the child winners *did* receive monetary rewards is not articulated. In theory, it is possible to imagine Greta and other child winners of the competition *both* feeling proud and happy

about helping others *and* receiving a monetary reward. One possible answer is that, in such a case, children's designing could count as work, which could be considered (socially) unacceptable for several reasons. Firstly, because work and childhood are traditionally considered incompatible (Prout, 2005). One principle upon which the normative dichotomy between childhood and adulthood relies is that adults work, whereas children play and go to school (Prout, 2005). Secondly, personal gain and charity are conventionally seen as incompatible (Godbout, 1998; Zelizer, 1985/1994). This suggests that, in terms of charity, only unpaid volunteer work is generally acceptable. Either way, in the Facebook discussion, ordering helps to negotiate conflicting values and uphold the seeming incompatibility of monetary and non-monetary rewards for child winners.

Using the concept of ordering values in this chapter has shown that, in IKEA's drawing competition for children, concerns arise that are challenging to resolve. Several concerns have been discussed, primarily explicit concerns about the transition from drawings into commercial products, as well as implicit concerns about children's roles as designers. The ideal of the child designer that IKEA presents in the campaign is complex. On the one hand, the child winners of the drawing competition are "professionalized": they are explicitly presented as designers whose designs are adapted as faithfully as possible into soft toys. The children thus play an active role in the "Sagokatt" campaign and are taken as seriously as adult designers would be. Yet, at the same time, the children's designing is embedded in the drawing competition, which allows IKEA to present it as a fun activity with prizes for the child participants, which also results in a donation to a children's charity.

Concluding thoughts

So, what does the ideal of the child designer that IKEA presents in the "Sagokatt" campaign tell us about children's charity? This chapter began with an overview of the literature about competitions for children, and presents the argument that competitions need to be seen as a complex interplay of leisure, hobbies, and work (Levey, 2009), and in some cases with an additional component of contributing to charity (Samuelsson, 2008, 2012). The analyses have shown that, in the case of

IKEA's drawing competition, the different components do not naturally merge but are actively brought together, and that differences and conflicts are seemingly resolved.

I argued that there are both explicit and implicit concerns that IKEA negotiates in presenting the drawing competition. Explicitly articulated concerns mainly involve the selection criteria, whereas implicit concerns are often linked to the children's role in the competition. The analyses suggest that concerns potentially arise from conflicts between values, and that by undertaking the coordination work of ordering, IKEA negotiates the friction between them. Ordering is the work of discursively ranking values, and in the analyzed examples in text and talk, this is often achieved with the help of relative qualifiers, such as superlative and comparative forms of adjectives ("greater value," "the biggest profit," "more heartfelt value"). An outcome of ordering, which is similar to the other types of coordination work elaborated in the previous chapters, is that it helps IKEA to present the "Sagorskatt" campaign as charity. This is achieved in particular by discursively ranking the charity value of children designing for children higher than other values (e.g. higher than the competition being fun for the child participants, or an exciting collaboration for Children's IKEA). The fact that this ordering of values is presented as taken for granted also seems to put a stop to debates, as we saw in the final example of the Facebook discussion.

The ideal of the child designer discussed in this chapter is ambiguous and complex, much like the ideal of the playing child in the last chapter. It allows IKEA to present the campaign as charity "by kids, for kids," where the child designers are assigned competence and an active position in helping other children through their creativity and drawings. Yet the virtue stemming from this association with a charity campaign also seems to fend off potential concerns about children designing products for a large international company. In a different setting than the "Sagorskatt" campaign, children designing commercial products may be seen as unpaid work. This is to say that, while the ideal of the child designer helps to produce the "Sagorskatt" campaign as charitable, the association with charity helps to present this ideal as (socially) acceptable. The ambiguous child ideal helps to smooth over concerns about charity, while the association with charity helps to smooth over concerns about children as the designers of commercial products.

Looking back at all four empirical chapters together, it can be seen that IKEA and Save the Children have invested a considerable amount of work into presenting all parts of the “Sagoskatt” campaign as credible and necessary. This includes all the key components of the campaign discussed in the empirical chapters: shaping a charitable cause, presenting the donation, the soft toys, and the drawing competition. The analyses have shown that in this example of a corporate charity campaign there are various conflicts between values such as commerce and charity, or personal gain and charity, which may give rise to concerns. Therefore, conflicts between values and concerns were also discussed. For instance, concerns that are said to threaten the values of safe sports, which I suggested help IKEA and Save the Children to motivate the need for the existence of the campaign. My examination of the different ways of coordinating conflicting values, and of coordinating values and concerns, made visible the efforts invested by the partners in presenting “Sagoskatt” as a shared campaign that benefits children.

Chapter 9. Concluding discussion: Children helping children?

This thesis is about corporate children's charity and how it is made as charity. This contemporary configuration brings together a number of events, areas and domains that may conventionally be seen as separate or even incompatible, such as consumption and charitable giving, commerce and charity. The aim of the thesis has been to explore corporate children's charity in practice. This has meant making detailed analyses of one empirical case, the 2017 Swedish "Sagoskatt" campaign organized by IKEA in collaboration with Save the Children Sweden. Combining online ethnographic methods with qualitative interviews made it possible to examine how the campaign was presented to audiences and upheld as charity. A mixture of empirical materials – promotion of the campaign online and at the local IKEA store, as well as interviews with professionals at the IKEA Foundation, IKEA, and Save the Children Sweden – was collected in order to examine the "Sagoskatt" campaign as a whole.

I have argued that we need to approach children's charity by using two concepts that are worth recapping here, values and concerns. As with many charity campaigns, "Sagoskatt" is presented as a means of dealing with a social problem. I have used the notion of concerns to refer to events, situations, and things that are presented as being worth worrying about, such as the concern that children do not play enough or cannot play sports in safe environments. At the same time as charity campaigns claim to deal with social problems, they often also support, install, and promote certain values. Therefore, one of my research questions called for an examination of how for-profit and non-profit actors mobilize values and concerns in children's charity. I also asked how values of children in particular are mobilized in the campaign. Finally, further our understanding of values and concerns, another research question asked: what is the relationship between values and concerns in practice?

Contribution to Valuation Studies

Formal and informal valuations and the question of "enough"

Theoretical and methodological tools from two fields, Child Studies and Valuation Studies, have been combined in this thesis to address the research questions. To begin with Valuation Studies, the thesis draws on the understanding of values as produced through practices (Doganova et al., 2014; Dussauge et al., 2015a; Helgesson & Muniesa, 2013; Kjellberg et al., 2013). The contribution that the thesis makes to this field is the argument that symmetrical attention should be given to both values and concerns. In Valuation Studies, it is often the case that concerns are either not given as much attention as values or are assigned a more minor role in valuation practices (Dussauge et al., 2015a; Kjellberg & Stigzelius, 2014). In contrast, the analyses in this study have shown that values and concerns often co-occur and may be mutually supportive. I have suggested that both valuation and concern-making practices produce what is important, desirable, and worth caring about, but in different ways. This means that we need to both study values and concerns together and look into the relationship between them.

To elaborate further upon the relationship between values and concerns, I have used the notion of coordination work. Drawing on Mol's (2002) understanding of coordination, in the analyses I needed to develop the concept further in order to examine what happens in corporate children's charity and the particular case of the "Sagokatt" campaign. Altogether, four types of coordination work were identified in the analyses. Two ways of coordinating *values and concerns* were suggested – pairing and anticipating – alongside two types of coordinating *conflicting values* – demarcating and ordering. Through coordination work, values and concerns or conflicting values are actively brought together and presented, sometimes in a taken-for-granted manner, and sometimes the match is explicitly justified.

When employing the concept of coordination work, it is important to examine not only *how* this work is done by, in this case, for-profit companies and non-profit organizations, but also the outcomes. The outcomes of different types of coordination work differ depending on a given situation, but one general outcome is worth mentioning in the context of charity. The analyses have shown that the successful work of coordinating values and concerns in the "Sagokatt" campaign helps IKEA and Save the Children to legitimize the campaign for different audiences both online and in stores. For example, pairing safe sports (a

value) with bullying and discrimination (a collective concern) allows the partners to justify the need for and timeliness of the “Sagorskatt” campaign. Here, the partners take on the responsibility to address, although not to completely resolve, these collective concerns. On the other hand, anticipating safety concerns about IKEA’s soft toys by presenting these concerns as knowable and controllable helps IKEA to present itself as a responsible company with expertise in children’s play and in designing products for children. This expertise then helps to legitimize IKEA as an actor engaged in a charity campaign supporting children’s right to play.

The main methodological tool used to examine values has been what I call juxtaposition. By juxtaposing, I mean analyzing different excerpts and examples together within one empirical case, or sometimes between the main and the background empirical materials. Importantly this was done without privileging one account over the other as the “true” version of events, which is why I have referred to this tool as juxtaposing rather than comparing. Analyzing the empirical materials in this way made it possible to identify and denaturalize taken-for-granted values and implicit concerns (Woolgar, 2012; Woolgar & Lezaun, 2013).

Throughout the analyses, texts and interviews have gradually come to occupy a major position, even though the study began with a focus on visual materials and the materiality of the “Sagorskatt” soft toys. This direction taken by the analyses is one of the limitations of the study, since the “Sagorskatt” campaign is rich in images and videos. Visual materials are less commonly used in Valuation Studies (with the exceptions of e.g. Cochoy et al., 2018; Helgesson & Woolgar, 2018; Muniesa & Helgesson, 2013). So, the fact that there is a wider range of studies analyzing values in texts and interviews from which to take inspiration could partially explain why the main focus drifted away from images. However, during the course of the analysis it became clear that images and objects do not stand on their own but are always accompanied by various texts and talk. Even so, in cases such as “Sagorskatt,” images and videos constitute an important site where values are *also* produced, sustained, and contested, which calls for a closer analytical attention to be paid to them.

In terms of valuation, the analyses have shown that in corporate charity various formal and informal valuations take place and, importantly, intersect and interplay with one another. This is the second

contribution that the thesis aims to make to the emerging field of Valuation Studies. Valuation Studies has paid most attention to what I have called formal valuation practices: technical devices and formal procedures, such as rankings and tests, used by people and institutions to establish the worth of something. At the same time, Valuation Studies literature and studies in economic sociology have argued that people and institutions still grapple with applying these formal devices to elusive things that are difficult to quantify, such as establishing the worth of nature (Fourcade, 2011), or the price of life or labor (Zelizer, 1985/1994, 1998, 2005).

Throughout the empirical chapters, I have used the question of what counts as “enough” to suggest that actors doing children’s charity frequently grapple with assessments and appraisals for which no formal procedures exist or for which formal assessments could be considered morally inappropriate. The actors do so through what I have called informal valuations or in other words discursive appraisals of things, events, and situations. A few examples of these informal assessments are: How much is enough to donate to children’s charity? How can we assess whether a charity campaign generates enough social change? How can we determine a sufficient reward for the child designers of the “Saguskatt” toys? Examining values and concerns together has helped me to make visible such attempts at informal appraisal.

Informal appraisals may raise questions, stir up debates and concerns *about* corporate charity, which is why focusing on these practices is important in the context of charity. In the “Saguskatt” campaign, the donation is presented to consumers in terms such as “everything” or the “entire turnover,” which I suggested can be understood as informal appraisals. “Everything” implies that the donation could not have been bigger, yet, as discussed in chapter 6, the *enough-ness* of this amount has been questioned. The suspicion that there is more left to give, if not more that has been gained, seems to haunt corporate charity and the for-profit companies engaging in it (e.g. Foster, 2014; Tornhill, 2019).

Looking into informal valuations has also brought to the fore the question of what values are produced through them, especially since “value” is used to refer to a number of very different things. For instance, Zelizer (1985/1994, 2005) has made a distinction between economic monetary values and non-monetary values, such as moral and

sentimental values. I have suggested that it is necessary to distinguish between values as norms – ideals and principles that can guide people's actions – and values as the results of appraisals – numbers, orders, and categories. Appraisals can concern money but they not always do so (e.g. “*very good* for most children” and “*the most important* people in the world”). This is why thinking in terms of norms and appraisals may be a more helpful way of respecifying Zelizer's (1985/1994, 2005) distinction.

This said, throughout the empirical chapters, the analyses have shown that norms and appraisals are often intertwined. Norms can be used to explicitly make appraisals; for instance, when creativity is used as a criterion to select the winning drawings in a competition. Values as the results of appraisals, on the other hand, may implicitly strengthen or challenge norms. For example, the winning drawing in a children's competition may reinforce the norm of free and natural children's creativity. At the same time, this explicitly stated norm may be challenged if, for instance, despite uniqueness being among the selection criteria, some of the winning drawings are presented as having been inspired by other media.

These observations about the interconnectedness of norms and appraisals speak once again to the need for studies of values to focus both on practices such as ratings and rankings as well as on the discursive production of value – and, most importantly, to look into the relationship between the two. One of the limitations of this thesis is that it was not possible to include formal valuation procedures, such as the process of selecting the winning children's drawings in IKEA's competition. Observing how the jury negotiates the selection criteria and competition rules to choose a handful of children's drawings out of hundreds of submissions (cf. Lamont, 2009) could have opened up further discussions about the way in which formal and informal appraisals and norms interact with one another.

Contribution to the studies of corporate charity

Values and questions of responsibility in corporate charity

Examining how IKEA and Save the Children coordinate values and concerns also led my analyses towards questions of expertise and responsibility. Demonstrating awareness about what is valuable for

children, and what concerns need attending to, helps for-profit companies and non-profit organizations to enact their competence in dealing with these concerns to different audiences both online and at IKEA stores. After the campaign has ended, accounting for its results can be seen as another means of presenting competence and responsibility. For-profit companies do not have such strict requirements to account for their charitable work as non-profit organizations,¹³⁴ and they rarely disclose to consumers the size of the donations raised via cause-related marketing (Einstein, 2017). As the analyses have shown, in the “Sagorskatt” campaign, social media posts of gratitude to consumers who contributed to the campaign and selective reports of the amount raised are part of how IKEA distributes responsibility as an agent of corporate charity. This allows IKEA to claim responsibility for some aspects of the campaign (such as for the safety of the soft toys) while distributing other aspects to other parties (such as determining the donation sum). Demonstrating responsibility is published on IKEA’s website and social media platforms shoulder to shoulder with product releases and current deals, hence it also notably merges with marketing and promotion.

It appears logical that, in a campaign based on purchase-triggered donations, it is important to sell as many products as possible in order to collect the biggest possible donation. Yet, the resulting blend of charity and marketing may give rise to criticisms of corporate charity. For example, in the literature it is often asked whether for-profit companies may benefit more, in terms of branding and marketing, from doing charity than the amount they invest in the campaigns (e.g. McGoe, 2015; Tornhill, 2019). Ironically, in cause-related campaigns, companies might spend more on marketing than the sum donated to charity (King, 2006).

Analyzing the “Sagorskatt” promotional materials has also made visible the fact that IKEA has used the soft toy collection beyond the scope of the campaign, which is not something I had foreseen when beginning to work on the study. For instance, the “Sagorskatt” collection is displayed in the IKEA catalogue as an example of the company’s work with the safety of products for children; and it is used to demonstrate the company’s work with children’s rights, a child perspective, and children’s

¹³⁴ E.g. see the annual reports on Save the Children Sweden’s website <https://www.raddabarnen.se/arsrapport/>

perspective in a press release.¹³⁵ A toy from the 2017 collection was also used to display values of the company that are not directly linked to children or charity. Specifically, IKEA Australia published a photo of the rainbow-colored cloud toy from the 2017 collection together with a heart emoji in the caption on the day when same-sex marriages were made legal in Australia.¹³⁶ In comparison, Save the Children Sweden promoted the “Sagorskatt” campaign only sparingly, preferring to focus on its long-term collaborations with IKEA.¹³⁷ For Save the Children Sweden, the donation from the “Sagorskatt” collection was a one-off opportunity to receive funding, with little certainty about whether it would occur again. Such differences encourage us to continue asking questions about how corporate children’s charity works today and how actors across for-profit and non-profit sectors collaborate for children.

To sum up, compared to “merely” donating a monetary sum or specific products to a cause, corporate charity campaigns allow businesses to integrate charity and marketing while, potentially receiving less critique which usually follows this combination. Suddenly, selling as many products as possible is presented as good and beneficial, not for the company or even for consumers, but for a group presented as being in need of support. At the same time, the responsibility for putting a “price tag” on charity, in other words, determining the sum of the collected donation, is removed from the involved companies. Instead, this responsibility is placed on the market – the number of products sold – and, in a way, on the consumers who buy, or do not buy, these products.

Contribution to Child Studies

The ideal of the child in corporate charity

To explore corporate children’s charity, of which consumption is a significant component, this thesis has combined Valuation Studies with

¹³⁵ Press release from April 11, 2018, IKEA Sweden’s website
<https://preview.thenewsmarket.com/Previews/IKEA/DocumentAssets/506781.pdf>
Accessed: September 12, 2018.

¹³⁶ Facebook post from November 15, 2017, IKEA Australia’s account
<https://www.facebook.com/ikea.au/photos/a.276205668287/10155898711233288/?type=3&theater> Accessed: June 25, 2018.

¹³⁷ Interview 4, Save the Children Sweden.

Child Studies and with studies of children's consumer culture. The "Saguskatt" campaign brings together consumption and commodities for children, charity, and a drawing competition for children, and thus requires an approach which combines several areas of scholarship. Examining how children are presented as givers in the "Saguskatt" campaign required combining insights about children as active and competent consumers (Buckingham, 2007; Cook, 2004b, 2008; Marshall, 2010; Sjöberg, 2013; Sparrman, 2009) with research about competitions for children as complex activities that merge leisure, hobbies, work, and in some cases doing charity (Levey, 2009; Samuelsson, 2008, 2012).

From Child Studies this thesis borrows an important goal of unsettling the taken-for-granted norms and values of children¹³⁸ (Cardell, 2015; James et al., 1998; Jenks, 2005; Lee, 2001; Prout, 2005, 2019; Sjöberg, 2013; Sparrman, 2019; Sparrman & Sandin, 2012; Zelizer, 1985/1994). Already the "new" sociology of childhood developed during the 1980s and '90s has strived to unsettle the seemingly stabilized, natural, and solid "truths" about children and childhood (James et al., 1998). Thus, drawing on Child Studies, this thesis aims to contribute to the field by examining values *in practice* in corporate children's charity. Although the notion of values is frequently used in Child Studies, it is rarely defined, and rarely used as a theoretical and methodological concept to conduct detailed empirical analyses. Bringing more clarity into the use of this notion, or even developing values as a theoretical and methodological concept through detailed empirical study, could only benefit the task of continuously destabilizing normative ideals of children, and their implications for children and adult institutions alike. So, this is one of the gaps that this thesis has aimed to address by introducing analytical tools for studying values from Valuation Studies. It also argues for attending to both values as norms, more common in Child Studies, as well as values as the results of appraisals, and the relationship between them.

I have argued that the fluid and ambiguous ideal of the child in the "Saguskatt" campaign allows the partners to present a single shared campaign. On the one hand, children in the campaign are presented as

¹³⁸ See also norms and values of parenthood in e.g. Lind et al. (2017), Lindgren (2015), and Sjöberg (2012); and family values in Buckingham and Tingstad (2010).

competent consumers, as experts in play and creativity; and hence, they are ascribed an active position in the campaign. Yet, on the other hand, children are also presented as vulnerable and in need of protection: concerns about bullying and toys safety seem to surround children in different parts of the campaign. This is not to suggest that children cannot be both competent and naive and vulnerable at the same time. Studies in children's consumer culture have argued that children as consumers are neither only savvy and competent nor merely vulnerable (e.g. Cook, 2004b, 2008; Sparrman, 2009).

The question is rather: what does this ambiguous ideal of the child helps accomplish in the campaign and what other ideals and values are implicitly enacted or sidelined as a result (Law & Mol, 2008; Mol, 1999; Woolgar & Lezaun, 2013)? For example, in the campaign it is taken for granted that children are well adjusted socially and want to play team sports in sports clubs. Thus, alternative ideals and values become sidelined or downplayed. "By kids, for kids," "for children to help other children," and "children designing for children" all allow for the ambiguity of the ideal of the child in the campaign. The expression "children designing for children" demonstrates this particularly well because "for children" may equally well refer to the children playing with the toys designed by children or to the children who are said to benefit from the donation to the "High Five" program.

In the "Saguskatt" campaign, children are assigned an active and agentic role: they can participate in the drawing competition to help others with their designs and creativity, or contribute by buying a soft toy. This is a significant leap compared to humanitarian aid campaigns where children are often portrayed as being, if not entirely passive and vulnerable, then trapped in dire circumstances (e.g. Chouliaraki, 2010; Wells, 2009; Zarzycka, 2016). But, at the same time, this active role is also toned down. The child helping others *also* participates in the drawing competition for fun and to set free their own creative expression, as well as to get a toy, either won as a prize or bought. The ideal is of the child *consumer* who receives perhaps as much as, if not more than, they give. This brings us to a crucial question: in campaigns such as "Saguskatt," where companies act as mediators of charity and the consumers and supposed beneficiaries neither meet nor are likely to be aware of each other – we can really call this "*children* helping children"?

The question: “children helping children?” is posed both in the title of this chapter and in the title of the whole thesis and is therefore worth elaborating. The phrase “by kids, for kids” used in IKEA’s promotional material creates the impression of a direct link between children by ignoring all the other actors involved in the campaign, whose importance I have emphasized throughout the thesis: IKEA, Save the Children Sweden, and (adult) consumers. This phrase, especially the version “children designing for children,” also conjures up an image of money-less charity. As IKEA’s website clarifies, children help other children by means of their creativity and design. This image of charity may tap into the traditionally uneasy relationship between children and money in the global north (e.g. Näsman & von Gerber, 2003; Zelizer, 1985/1994). The norm is that children should not work and thus do not earn their own money (Prout, 2005). Yet the low retail prices, which are a cornerstone of IKEA’s brand, make it possible for children to use their allowances or pocket money to buy a toy that starts at 15 Swedish crowns (or 1 euro at the time of writing ¹³⁹) and contribute to the campaign in this way. So the phrase “by kids, for kids” downplays other possible contributions of children beyond design and creativity.

Finally, in addition to ideals and values, concerns about children enacted in *corporate* charity are worth discussing separately. My analyses have shown that, while safe sports for children and children’s right to play are presented as serious matters that are worth worrying about, there is a striking difference between their presentation in the campaign and in other kinds of children’s charity. Humanitarian aid campaigns by non-profit organizations that focus on problems such as poverty, hunger, or lack of educational opportunities often convey a strong sense of urgency and gravity (Chouliaraki, 2010; Wells, 2009; Zarzycka, 2016). Whether these fundraising campaigns feature images of suffering and pain or of smiling barefoot children, the images are used to encourage action and to get potential donors involved (Burman, 1994; Chouliaraki, 2010; Dubinsky, 2012; Manzo, 2008; O’Dell, 2008; Wells, 2008, 2009, 2013; Zarzycka, 2016). Aid campaigns appeal to potential donors through shock and distress, calling for empathy (Chouliaraki, 2010, Wells, 2009). In contrast, cause-related campaigns create allure through convenience, affordability, and “permission” to consume for the

¹³⁹ Interview 2, Children’s IKEA.

good cause. This “permission” enables purchases that audiences concerned with the environmental and social effects of consuming (Carrier, 2012) may otherwise be wary of. In the “Saguskatt” campaigns, consumers are called upon to care and be concerned about children’s right to play, but with less urgency. Instead, what is pronounced in the promotion is the suggestion that IKEA *already* cares, is concerned, and is taking measures to support children’s right to play.

To conclude, I want to suggest that analyzing values and concerns together can be beneficial for more cases and areas of social life than corporate children’s charity alone. One possibility that comes to mind is studying moral panics about children – for example, in the media, in online parental forums, or social media. Such panics need to be studied in terms of values (Sparrman & Sandin, 2012), and I would also suggest that these values need to be studied in relation to concerns as I have outlined in the thesis. There are numerous moral panics and anxieties about children: about children’s and young people’s mental health (Bergnehr & Zetterqvist Nelson, 2015; Kvist Lindholm & Wickström, 2020; Skagius, 2020; Wickström & Kvist Lindholm, 2020); about the media and technology (Buckingham, 2000; Sparrman, 2002; Sparrman & Aarsand, 2009); about children and consumption (Buckingham 2007; Seiter, 1993, Hutchinson 2012; Strandgaard Jensen 2012); and about children and sexuality (Sparrman, 2014, 2015a). Interrogating what values and concerns are mobilized by people and organizations, and how they do so, seems particularly important when these values and concerns are used to motivate political action, policies, and practices.

In addition to interrogating moral panics that, much like the “Saguskatt” campaign, still unfold on public sites, conducting analyses using values and concerns together could benefit the study of cases that are only partially or not at all in the public eye. Could we perhaps think about children’s mundane practices using values and concerns, and incorporate more objects and materiality alongside texts and talk? Whatever the domain of social life that is being studied, examining values and concerns together can open up opportunities for broader conversations about how things, events, and situations come to count as important and desirable.

Sammanfattning

Allt fler företag engagerar sig i välgörenhet för barn, i synnerhet i så kallade "cause-related marketing"-kampanjer. I dessa kampanjer donerar företag hela eller delar av omsättningen från försäljningen av en produkt till ett välgörande ändamål. I den här avhandlingen undersöks en sådan kampanj som är ett samarbete mellan det internationella möbel- och heminredningsföretaget IKEA och den internationella ideella organisationen Rädda Barnen. I reklamen beskrivs den som en kampanj där barn hjälper andra barn genom design och kreativitet. Frågetecknet i avhandlingens titel – Children helping children? – signalerar att välgörenhetskampanjer där barn förväntas hjälpa barn är ett spännande men långtifrån självklart fenomen. Vilka roller vinstdrivande och icke-vinstdrivande aktörer har i välgörenhetskampanjer för barn samt vem som hjälper vem och vad "hjälpen" egentligen innebär är ofta otydligt. Kampanjer som bygger på att företag marknadsför och säljer sina egna produkter väcker frågor kring hur välgörenhet blir välgörenhet och vad som kan räknas som välgörenhet idag.

Syftet med den här avhandlingen är att undersöka hur IKEA i praktiken skapar välgörenhet *för* barn tillsammans *med* barn (corporate children's charity). Det görs genom en empirisk undersökning av 2017 års svenska välgörenhetskampanj "Sagoskatt". Kampanjen består av flera delar varav en del är en global teckningstävling för barn som IKEA arrangerat årligen sedan 2014. Tävlingsens vinnande teckningar tillverkas i en begränsad kollektion av gosedjur och säljs på IKEA:s varuhus. Sedan den första "Sagoskatt" kollektionen släpptes i 2015 har IKEA årligen donerat delar av eller hela omsättningen från försäljningen till ett välgörande ändamål för barn. I den svenska kampanjen 2017 skänkte IKEA Sverige hela omsättningen till Rädda Barnens program för trygga idrottsmiljöer, "High Five".

I fyra empiriska kapitel undersöks olika delar av kampanjen. Fokus är på: 1) hur IKEA och Rädda Barnen tillsammans skapar det välgörande ändamålet med kampanjen, 2) hur donationen och donationssumman lyfts fram i kampanjen, 3) "Sagoskatt"-gosedjurens roll i välgörenhetsprojektet och slutligen 4) organiseringen av själva

teckningstävlingen. Tillsammans visar analyserna i kapitlen hur det går till när kampanjen ”görs” till och blir välgörenhet.

Material

För att undersöka kampanjen som helhet har olika typer av empiriskt material samlats in. Principen vid insamlingen av materialet har varit att undersöka kampanjen så som den blir synlig för olika konsumentgrupper. För att samla in marknadsföringen av ”Sagoskatt”-kampanjen online har etnografiska onlinemetoder använts (Hine, 2000, 2015; Pink et al., 2016). Marknadsföringen i butiken samt hur gosedjuren skyltats för konsumenterna har studerats genom fysiska besök i en IKEA butik. Onlinemarknadsföringen består av 98 olika empiriska ”fynd” så som pressmeddelanden, villkoren för IKEA:s teckningstävling och inlägg i sociala medier. Onlinematerialet är hämtat från IKEA Sveriges och svenska Rädda Barnens officiella webbsidor samt från sociala medieplattformar (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter och YouTube). Utöver onlinematerialet har fem kvalitativa intervjuer (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Gubrium & Holstein, 2001; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009) genomförts med anställda vid IKEA Foundation, IKEA och Rädda Barnen. Samtliga personer har intervjuats utifrån sina professionella funktioner och deras relation till ”Sagoskatt”-kampanjen. Det empiriska materialet är på så sätt heterogent eftersom det består av såväl texter och bilder som videoklipp och tal.

Välgörenhetsforskning

En översikt av tidigare välgörenhetsforskning visar att normer, ideal och principer anses vara viktiga för hur välgörenhet ”blir till” (t.ex. Foster, 2014; Rajak, 2011). Dessa normer och principer skulle kunna kallas värden (jfr Graeber, 2001) eftersom de av välgörenhetsaktörer, som exempelvis IKEA och Rädda Barnen, framställs som värdefulla och viktiga. I avhandlingens litteraturöversikt kombineras flera för studien relevanta vetenskapliga områden. Bland annat omfattar den forskning kring hur företag tar socialt ansvar, socialt ansvarsfull konsumtion, antropologiska gåvoteorier, och även forskning om barn och konsumtion, historiska studier av barns bidrag till insamlingskampanjer under första och andra världskrigen och slutligen visuella studier av

samtida välgörenhetsinsamlingskampanjer. För att kunna diskutera välgörenhet som drivs av företag på ett djupare plan argumenterar jag i avhandlingen för att det är viktigt att undersöka *hur* olika värden ”görs” och förhandlas när vinstdrivande aktörer och ideella organisationer bedriver gemensamma kampanjer.

Värden, oro och problem – begrepp som teoretiska och metodologiska verktyg

Teoretiskt och metodologiskt kombinerar den här avhandlingen två tvärvetenskapliga forskningsfält, Child Studies (barn- och barndomsstudier) och Valuation Studies. Child Studies är idag ett brett forskningsområde där den mest grundläggande principen är att barn studeras som sociala och kulturella aktörer här och nu (James et al., 1998; James & Prout, 1997; Jenks, 1996/2005). Mycket forskning inom barn- och barndomsfältet ifrågasätter förgivettagna normer och uppfattningar om barn. Bland annat studeras hur och i vilket syfte barnideal och barns värden (values of children) används av stat, offentlig- och privat sektor, privatpersoner och företag. Det finns en konstant cirkulation av värden kopplade till såväl barn som barndom. Eftersom Child Studies inte specifikt specialiserar sig på studiet av hur dessa värden blir till i praktiken, blir det extra intressant att kombinera barn- och barndomsforskningen med fältet Valuation Studies som vuxit fram i skärningspunkten mellan marknadsforskning och teknik- och vetenskapsstudier (Science and Technology Studies, STS). Valuation Studies bidrag till studien är att uppmuntra till noggranna undersökningar av vad som ”görs” och blir värdefullt i praktiken, exempelvis för vem, vad och på vilket sätt något tilldelas värde (t.ex. Helgesson & Muniesa, 2013; Kjellberg, 2013; Dussauge et al., 2015). Enligt Valuation Studies är det just i praktikerna som värden ”blir till” (enacted) (Helgesson & Muniesa, 2013). Det betyder att värden är resultat av de handlingar som utförs i sociala relationer snarare än resultat av på förhand givna och förutbestämda egenskaper. Genom att studera värderingspraktiker, det vill säga praktiker genom vilka värden görs och blir till, kan man synliggöra *hur* värden görs och vilka följder och verkningar de får (Doganova et al., 2014; Helgesson & Muniesa, 2013).

Ett av de viktigaste argumenten i avhandlingen är att begreppet värde inte står helt ensamt. För att vi ska förstå hur värden uppstår och hur de får betydelse behöver de kombineras med det engelska begreppet "concerns". Begreppet concerns är svårt att översätta till svenska eftersom det på engelska inbegriper såväl bekymmer och oro som problem. Med concerns avses här händelser, situationer och saker som görs till bekymmer eller oro och på så vis kan uppfattas som eller göras till problem, till exempel en oro över att barn inte leker tillräckligt mycket. Begreppet går alltså inte att översätta med ett enda ord därför kommer jag att även i denna svenska översättning använda begreppet concerns.

Begreppet concerns nämns i Valuation Studies men det får inte alls lika mycket uppmärksamhet som begreppet värden (Dussauge et al., 2015a; Kjellberg & Stigzelius, 2014). I den här studiens empiriska analyser blir det tydligt att värden (values) och concerns ofta samexisterar och stöder varandra. Genom att kombinera values och concerns blir det möjligt att se hur något som görs problematiskt i praktiken också blir viktigt och/eller värdefullt eller tvärtom (Dussauge et al., 2015a). Det vill säga att värden, så som exempelvis trygg idrott för barn, blir förstärkt när det framställs som hotat av problem som mobbing. Avhandlingen visar att det är i kopplingen mellan begreppen som vi kan få syn på hur välgörenhet för barn blir till.

Koordinering - att analysera värden, oro och problem

För att undersöka kopplingen mellan värden och problem används ytterligare ett begrepp, "coordination" (koordinering) (Mol, 2002). Begreppet används metodologiskt för att undersöka hur olika entiteter eller ting anpassas, sorteras och rangordnas för att framstå som sammanhängande och enhetligt (Mol, 2002; Woolgar & Lezaun, 2013). För att göra det möjligt att i detalj se hur värden och concerns koordineras i praktiken i "Sagoskatts"-kampanjen utvecklas i studien Mols (2002) koordinationsbegrepp. Fyra typer av koordinationsarbete (coordination work) lyfts fram i analyserna. I två av fallen handlar det om att koordinera *värden och concerns* genom att "para ihop" (pairing) dem och för att kunna "förutse" (anticipating) potentiella concerns. De andra två fallen handlar om att koordinera *motstridiga värden* genom att "avgränsa" eller "särskilja" (demarcating) och "ordna" eller "styra"

(ordering) motstridiga värden. Genom koordinationsarbetet sker en aktiv förening av värden och concerns eller motstridiga värden som IKEA och Rädda Barnen presenterar antingen som förgivettagna eller som de uttryckligen motiverar.

Genom koordinationsarbetet blir det tydligt hur IKEA och Rädda Barnen lägger ned mycket arbete på att framstå som experter på barn och som legitima och trovärdiga välgörenhetsaktörer. I IKEA:s kampanjmaterial är det exempelvis tydligt att de visar att de känner till barns behov, rättigheter och hur man skapar bra och säkra produkter för barn. Genom att visa medvetenhet om vad som är värdefullt för barn, vilka problem som barn omges av och hur företaget tar itu med dessa problem, presenterar sig IKEA som ett ansvarsfullt företag. Samtidigt som IKEA framhåller sin expertis och sitt ansvar, marknadsför de också sina egna produkter och sitt varumärke. Sådär ser det ofta ut i så kallade "cause-related"-kampanjer där företag säljer sina egna produkter till förmån för välgörenhet (jfr King, 2006). Eftersom det är försäljningen som avgör donationssumman slipper, i det här fallet IKEA, från ansvaret att sätta en "prislapp" på sin välgörenhet. I stället läggs ansvaret på marknaden och konsumenterna eftersom donationen är beroende av hur många produkter som säljs och köps.

Barnideal och barns värden

Analyserna visar hur det tvetydiga barnidealet blir till i "Sagoskatt"-kampanjen. Det är denna dubbeltydighet som gör det möjligt för IKEA och Rädda Barnen att samarbeta och presentera "Sagoskatt" som *en* sammanhängande välgörenhetskampanj. Barnen framstår både som kunniga designers och som sårbara konsumenter. Exempelvis skrivs de barn som deltar i teckningstävlingen fram som kompetenta designers samtidigt som deras roll som bidragsgivare till välgörenhet för andra barn tonas ned. Barnen lyfts snarare fram för sin kreativitet och som mottagare av gåvor från IKEA när de får sina gosedjur som IKEA tillverkat baserat på deras vinnande teckningar. Det saknas med andra ord en kontakt mellan barnet som ger och barnet som får. IKEA bygger snarare upp en kontakt mellan sig själv och det givande barnet.

Att analysera koordineringen av värden och concerns tillsammans kan hjälpa oss att undersöka fler fenomen i barns sociala och kulturella liv än företags välgörenhet till barn. Det skulle exempelvis vara fruktbart

att använda begreppen för att studera traditionella moralpaniker eller mediepaniker som ständigt bryter ut i relation till barns världar i föräldraforum online eller i grupper i sociala medier (jfr Sparrman & Sandin, 2012). Att fråga sig vilka värden och problem som mobiliseras av individer och organisationer, och hur de mobiliseras, är inte minst viktigt när värden och problem används för att motivera politiska åtgärder, policyer och metoder.

Sammantaget visar studien att välgörenhetsarbete som drivs av företag väcker frågor inte bara om välgörenhet, utan att det också lyfter fram större frågor om värden vi tillskriver barn. Dessa frågor är viktiga när det blir tydligt, som i den här studien, att forskning, ideella organisationer och konsumtionssfären i allt högre grad använder samma teoretiska begreppsapparat. Begrepp sprungna ur forskningen som "barnperspektiv" och "barns perspektiv" (se Halldén, 2003) och även barns rättigheter används numera allt flitigare av kommersiella aktörer för att stärka varumärken. Vilken betydelse det får för barn och vilka värden det tillskriver barn behöver granskas ytterligare, med fördel med hjälp av det tvärvetenskapliga synsätt som barn- och barndomsforskningen i kombination med Valuation Studies erbjuder.

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Table 1. Overview of the empirical material

Table 2. Overview of the interview material

Appendix. Interview questions

This is a general list of questions that was adapted to each specific interview and translated into Swedish when necessary:

Could you describe your current role at [organization/division of the IKEA company]?

Could you say a few words about [organization/division of the IKEA company]? What is its role in the IKEA concern?

The “Saguskatt” campaigns

From your position as a [job title], could you tell me about the 2017 “Saguskatt” campaign in Sweden and the respective drawing competition organized in 2016?

What is the role of [organization/division of the IKEA company] in the “Saguskatt” campaigns?

From the perspective of [organization/division of the IKEA company], what would you say is the main goal with the “Saguskatt” campaigns?

From the online promotion it seems to me that there is a link between the “Saguskatt” and the earlier campaign “Soft toys for education” and the ongoing campaign “Let’s play for change”? What is the link, if yes?

How did the idea of creating soft toys based on children’s drawings emerge?

The drawing competition is a global activity but as I understand it, it was organized a bit differently in different countries. What did it look like in Sweden?

How have you worked with the communication of the “Saguskatt” both online and at the stores?

What kind of prizes or rewards can the children who participate in the drawing competition receive? What is the main prize for winning in the competition?

In the online promotion of the campaign, the “Saguskatt” soft toys are called “design by kids, for kids”? I’m curious, what is meant by “design”? What is meant by “by kids, for kids”?

Why are the “Saguskatt” soft toys manufactured in two different sizes?

I have noticed that the “Saguskatt” toys are sold during a limited period of time only, why is it so?

I know that for quite some years IKEA has applied a child perspective in its work. What does it mean for [division of the IKEA company] to take a “child perspective”?

What does Save the Children think about the idea of “children helping children”? What do you think is meant by the phrase “by kids, for kids” which IKEA used in their promotion?

What do you think it means for a for-profit organization to take a child perspective?

I am curious about the future of the “Saguskatt” campaigns. If I understand it right, a new “Saguskatt” collection will be released around November 2018. Will the sales of this collection also contribute to charity and which one in that case? If not, what was the reason for the change?

The “High Five” program and the partnership

As I understand it, IKEA donated the entire turnover from the sales of the 2017 “Saguskatt” collection to Save the Children’s project “High Five”. What does this mean in more detail? What was the size of the donation? What has it meant for the “High Five” program?

Could you tell me more about the “High Five” program?

What divisions of IKEA have you collaborated with in the “Saguskatt” campaign?

In the 2017 “Saguskatt” campaign in Sweden, the donation was made to Save the Children Sweden’s project “High Five”. Could you tell me more about how this collaboration works?

Will there be any further collaborations with IKEA Sweden regarding the “High Five” program?

I noticed that in the latest posts about the “High Five” on Save the Children Sweden’s social media there is no information about either IKEA’s donation or any explicit connection to the “Sagoskatt”. What could be the reason for this?

How did you decide to support the “High Five” program and not another initiative? Who or what decides on the sum that is donated to charity?

Could you tell me about Save the Children Sweden as the local Swedish branch in relation to the global Save the Children organization?

How come that Save the Children as a non-profit organization collaborates with for-profit companies? What is the goal of such collaborations?

I believe that Save the Children has a long history of partnership with IKEA. Could you tell me a bit more how this partnership works from Save the Children’s perspective? Is IKEA Foundation considered to be a separate partner of Save the Children or is it rather a joint partner together with IKEA?

General

Is there something that you think that I should have asked but did not?

Is there anybody at [organization/division of the IKEA company] or at another division who you think should be interviewed for this study?

More and more companies are engaging in cause-related charity campaigns. In such a campaign, the revenue from sales of a product are partially or entirely donated by the company to a charitable cause. This thesis examines one such case, a collaboration between IKEA and Save the Children, which is advertised as a campaign in which children help children through design and creativity.

The thesis argues that, to make sense of corporate charity, where for-profit companies and non-profit organizations collaborate, we need to examine how they negotiate "values" and "concerns." The analysis shows that coordinating what is worthy, important, and desirable (values) with matters of worry (concerns) allows the partners to present their collaboration as a shared charity campaign for a children's rights cause. However, as a result, some values and ideals of children and of charity are amplified, while others are taken for granted.

This thesis is situated at the intersection of two interdisciplinary fields, Child Studies and Valuation Studies.

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