

DIY Repair and the Repair Movement in Estonia: Material Decay and Sustainable Future

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This presentation focuses on the reemergence of do-it-yourself (DIY) repair and an emerging repair movement in Estonia. From the view of the study of material culture, repair can be perceived as a reaction to material decay, and as a material practice that has cultural potential. Repair as a DIY practice has personal, economic, political and ecological meanings, and some are more specific to certain generations. This presentation is based on a collection of repair stories collected by the Estonian National Museum, interviews with repairers, and ethnographic fieldwork conducted at the first Estonian public repair workshop *Paranduskelder*.

Repair as a DIY practice has gained attention and popularity in recent years in Estonia as a sustainable consumption practice. This, at least partly, is cultivated by local activists, whose activity is inspired by the global Right to Repair movement and the international trend of Repair Cafes. *Paranduskelder* as a public repair workshop and makerspace was established in 2019 as a private non-profit organization. Their mission is to popularise repair as an option in consumption culture and encourage people to repair their commodities themselves. The activists and visitors of the repair workshop are strictly driven by environmental concerns and the will to learn skills for a more sustainable future. Ultimately, the younger generation of activists has political and social aims by challenging the current growth-oriented capitalist economic system, consumerism and mass consumption.

Nevertheless, repair is still not a forgotten practice among the older generation in Estonia because of the Soviet past, where DIY repair and reuse were common. While many people still value handicraft skills and are used to repair things, not everybody does it in reaction to environmental problems. Personal meanings and memories linked with their personal belongings are sometimes more significant. However, repair as a common practice and skill for the older generation has become a part of the sustainable consumption culture for the younger generation.

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