Rummaging through the Attic of New England

Brieanne Berry, University of Maine
Jennifer Bonnet, University of Maine
Cindy Isenhour, University of Maine, Department of Anthropology

Abstract/Summary
The concept of the circular economy has taken off, gaining momentum along with concerns about resource depletion, waste, and the impending ‘end of cheap nature’ (Moore 2014). Environmentalists and industrialists alike have promoted the benefits of reuse as a means toward improved efficiency and reduced resource pressure. Some have called for a new ‘culture of reuse’ (Botsman and Rogers 2010; Stokes et al. 2014). It is in this context that we explore repair, resale, and reuse as practices with deep historical precedent and contemporary continuity. Are there lessons to be learned from places that are already home to circular economies and strong cultures of reuse? And are there dangers inherent in a stronger, more formalized reuse sector? This paper draws on an historical and ethnographic analysis of vibrant reuse practices in the rural northeastern state of Maine. While there is a popular tendency to explain Maine’s persistent reuse practices as a response to economic and geographic marginality, our empirical observations suggest that these explanations do not adequately capture the complexity of reuse markets, discount the power of human agency and sense of place, and preclude important lessons for reuse policy in other contexts. Insights from Maine suggest that any effort to promote reuse would benefit from looking beyond purely economic rationales to attend to matters of place, sociality, and market relationality.

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New England Patriots fans seemingly want their team to shop for bargains on Black Friday. In this week’s mailbag, we received questions about whether the Patriots should sign Dontrelle Inman, Jordan Matthews and Dez Bryant in light of last week’s lack of depth at wide receiver. Read on to see where we stand. Can someone like Yodny Cajuste be put on active roster from NFI or does this count as one of the 2 IR moves (already made)? Do you see us picking up Matthews or Inman as WR insurance if Dorsett or Sanu seem to be out for a couple more weeks? — @RommelRoo Patriots third-round pick Yodny Caj In Jezebel’s newest series Rummaging Through the Attic, we interview nonfiction authors whose books explore fascinating moments, characters, and stories in history. For our first episode we spoke with Kristen Richardson, author of The Season: A Social History of the Debutante, a nonfiction work that explores the history of the debutante in society. The Sandy Hook Veterans Historical Society donated their entire collection of over 700 items in 1994. And anything that was here is considered part of the field collection. As the park service has gone through each building here it has found more and more things. We also made some purchases. Like a postcard we got on eBay. It had a view of the lighthouse that we didn’t have showing the east side. It’s very helpful because they’re restoring the lighthouse keeper’s house. I was doing a temporary exhibit about the lighthouse and I saw a box called correspondence in our collect