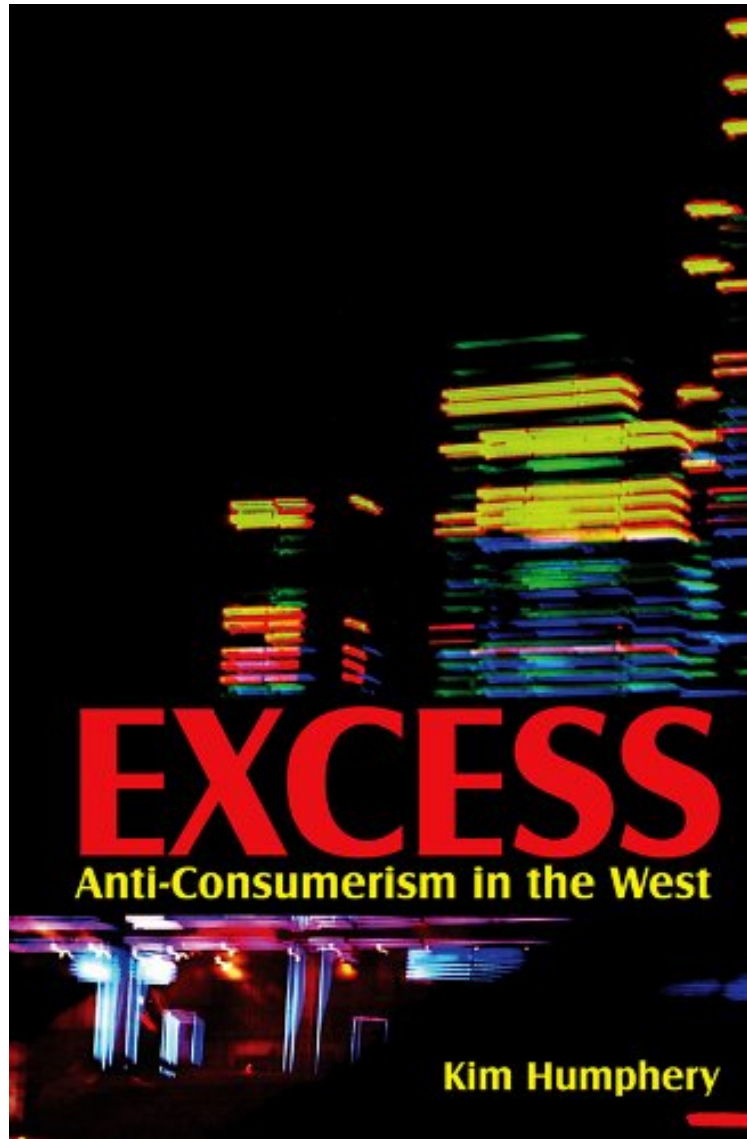


[Free] Excess: Anti-consumerism in the West

## Excess: Anti-consumerism in the West

*Kim Humphery*

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**Kim Humphery : Excess: Anti-consumerism in the West** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Excess: Anti-consumerism in the West:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Informative and InterestingBy MechPebblesThis scholarly book covers anti-consumerism in the Western world. At first glance, it may not seem that suitable for lay persons but somehow I liked it quite a bit. The writer has this strange style where she would introduce terms without directly explaining them (as if she was afraid of compromising her scholarly credibility) but a paragraph or three later, an explanation would be subtly inserted in her discussions. She did this so consistently I seriously doubt it was mere

coincidence; some strange literary device I have never encountered before. Considering that this is my first book on anti-consumerism and I had no difficulty understanding it, I must say the book is hugely accessible even though the writing style is scholarly. It is also very well written. Overall, I have found this book informative and engaging. If you're an intelligent lay reader who likes some academic meat in your books, I strongly recommend this. This is the first book I have read which ideally combines scholarship and accessible readability outside the fields of history and theology.

Over-consumption is one of the key issues of our time, especially in the Western world. Over the past decade, in the face of historically unprecedented levels of consumer spending in the West - and the more recent impact of recession - a vigorous politics of anti-consumerism has emerged in a range of wealthy nations. This timely and original new book provides a comprehensive overview and analysis of what has come to be called the 'new politics of consumption'; a politics embodied in movements such as culture jamming, simple living, slow food and fair trade. The book offers an examination of anti-consumerism at a time when the idea of 'consumer excess' is being re-framed by a global economic downturn, and crucially explores what this means for the future of political debate. Drawing on interviews with activists across three continents, and offering a refreshingly accessible discussion of contemporary commentary and theory, Kim Humphery sympathetically explores anti-consumerism as cultural interpretation, lifestyle change, and collective action. Whilst analysing the positive advances of the anti-consumerist movement, *Excess* also challenges contemporary critical thinking on consumption, taking issue with the return to theories of mass culture in contemporary anti-consumerist polemic. Alternatively, Humphery begins to forge a politics of anti-consumerism that addresses the complexity of material acquisition and which avoids treating consumers as mere dupes in the logic of capitalism, viewing them instead as active participants in a culture which is capable of transformation.

"Highly recommended. Graduate students/faculty." Choice "A fascinating exploration of what anti-consumerism (as cultural interpretation, lifestyle change, and collective action) means for the future of political debate, especially in the context of the recent economic crisis." Long Range Planning "Written in accessible if academic prose, Humphery's book explores this question in more complex and nuanced ways than is often the case in existing theoretical and populist reactions, which naively reject consumerism outright." Green World "[A] sophisticated analysis of consumerism." The Australian "There could hardly be a more timely issue - nor a more compelling study of the historical and political implications of the excess that may well be crushing the world as we knew it." Charles Lemert, Wesleyan University "Excess offers an insightful view of the many dimensions of consumption reformers must address; from the waste economy to environmental degradation, and from unhappiness at too much choice to the stress of too little money. Humphery dares us to hope that we can create a better vision of the good life without giving up our pleasures." Sharon Zukin, Brooklyn College, and author of *Point of Purchase: How Shopping Changed American Culture*

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About the Author Kim Humphery, Associate Professor of History and Social Theory, RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia