



Radical Consumption: Shopping for change in contemporary culture

Jo Littler

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Ethical consumption, fair trade, consumer protests, brand backlashes, green goods, boycotts and downshifting: these are all now familiar consumer activities - and in some cases, are almost mainstream. They are part of the expanding field of 'radical consumption' in a world where we are encouraged to shop for change.

But just how radical are these forms of consumption? This book offers an interdisciplinary approach to examining contemporary radical consumption, analyzing its possibilities and problems, moralities, methods of mediation and its connections to wider cultural formations of production and politics.

Jo Littler argues that we require a more expansive vocabulary and to open up new approaches of enquiry in order to understand the area's many contradictions, strengths and weaknesses. Drawing on a number of contemporary theories, terms and debates in media and cultural studies, she uses a range of specific case studies to bring theory to life.

By analysing practices of radical consumption, the book explores a number of key questions:

- Is ethical consumption merely a sop for the middle classes?
- What are the contradictions of green consumption?
- Should we understand corporate social responsibility as a form of consumer-oriented greenwash?
- Who benefits from the new forms of cosmopolitan caring consumption?
- Can such forms of consumption ever move beyond their niche market status to become an effective political force?
- Can we really buy our way to a better, more equitable or sustainable future?

Radical Consumption is important reading for cultural, media and sociology students.

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