



Green Consumption: The Global Rise of Eco-Chic

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Green lifestyles and ethical consumption have become increasingly popular strategies in moving towards environmentally-friendly societies and combating global poverty. Where previously environmentalists saw excess consumption as central to the problem, green consumerism now places consumption at the heart of the solution. However, ethical and sustainable consumption are also important forms of central to the creation and maintenance of class distinction.

Green Consumption scrutinizes the emergent phenomenon of what this book terms eco-chic: a combination of lifestyle politics, environmentalism, spirituality, beauty and health. Eco-chic connects ethical, sustainable and elite consumption. It is increasingly part of the identity kit of certain sections of society, who seek to combine taste and style with care for personal wellness and the environment. This book deals with eco-chic as a set of activities, an ideological framework and a popular marketing strategy, offering a critical examination of its manifestations in both the global North and South.

The diverse case studies presented in this book range from Basque sheep cheese production and Ghanaian Afro-chic hairstyles to Asian tropical spa culture and Dutch fair-trade jewellery initiatives. The authors assess the ways in which eco-chic, with its apparent paradox of consumption and idealism, can make a genuine contribution to solving some of the most pressing problems of our time.

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