



Cohen, Maurie <mcohen@njit.edu>

Your campaign SCORAI Newsletter (Sustainable Consumption Research and Action Initiative) has been sent

1 message

Constant Contact <support@constantcontact.com>
To: mcohen@adm.njit.edu

Tue, Apr 1, 2014 at 10:59 AM



Dear SCORAI Maurie Cohen,

Your campaign '**SCORAI Newsletter (Sustainable Consumption Research and Action Initiative)**' was sent on 04/01/2014 around 10:53 AM EDT.

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Subject: SCORAI Newsletter (Sustainable Consumption Research and Action Initiative)



April 2014

Dear SCORAI,

Happy Spring SCORAIers! This issue will fill you in on some upcoming events, job opportunities, post-consumer jokes, and more.

All the best,
Catie, Debbie, & Maurie

Update on the Second Biennial Conference of the GRF-SPaC Conference in Shanghai



As previously announced, the SCORAI Executive Board has been working closely in recent months with the [Global Research Forum on Sustainable Production and](#)

[Consumption \(GRF-SPaC\)](#) to convene the Forum's Second Biennial Conference at Fudan University in Shanghai on June 8-11, 2014. Other partners and co-sponsors involved in this event include the Tyndall Centre Fudan, the SWITCH Asia Project, the World Resources Forum, the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (Japan), One Earth, and the Tellus Institute. The conference is also endorsed by the European Environment Agency.

The event features more than 100 presentations by both international and Chinese scholars. Keynote speakers include **Bill Rees** (Professor Emeritus, University of British Columbia), **Zhu Daijian** (Professor of Economics, Tongji University), **Ashish Kothari** (Founder, Kalpavriksh (India)), **Zhang Zongyi** (President, Southwestern University of Finance and Economics (China)), and **John Ashton** (Former Special Representative for Climate Change, UK Foreign Office). The second preliminary draft of the program is now available on the [conference website](#). Questions can be directed to the GRF-SPaC conference co-chairs at grfspac@gmail.com.

SCORAI Colloquium Series on Consumption and Social Change

The **V. Kann Rasmussen Colloquium Series** gets underway at the [Tellus Institute](#) this month with the first presentation in this year-long discussion on consumption and social change.

The first speaker featured will be [David Snow](#), Distinguished Professor of Sociology at the University of California-Irvine on April 16.



The colloquium builds on recognition that mass consumer society is being increasingly questioned as the organizational logic of social life and the foundation of economic well-being.

Executive Board

Jeffrey Barber
Integrative Strategies Forum

Halina Brown
Clark University

Maurie Cohen
New Jersey Institute of Technology

John Stutz
Tellus Institute

Philip Vergragt
Tellus Institute and Clark University

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At the same time, the contours of possible alternatives remain rather vague and so is the understanding of how a transition beyond consumerism might take place. The goal of the colloquium is to examine and synthesize theories and empirical experiences of social change from a wide range of disciplinary perspectives. The series seeks to bring together scholars and practitioners concerned with social change into sustained and free-flowing interaction that will hopefully generate novel insights, inform policy processes and political activism, and contribute to new research directions. The colloquium will culminate with a workshop during the fall of 2015 to synthesize collective understandings and assess opportunities for a putative transformation.

Upcoming speakers this Spring will be [Claus Offe](#) (Professor of Political Science at the Hertie School of Governance in Berlin, Germany) on May 14 and [Douglas Holt](#) (CEO and co-founder of the Cultural Strategy Group) on May 28. Confirmed invitees for colloquium sessions during Fall 2014 and Winter 2015 include [Erik Olin Wright](#) (Professor of Sociology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison), [George Ritzer](#) (Professor of Sociology at the University of Maryland), and [Juliet Schor](#) (Professor of Sociology at Boston College).

Questions regarding the colloquium can be directed to Halina Brown at hbrown@clarku.edu.

For SCORAI-ers outside of the Boston vicinity, a video of each session will be posted to the SCORAI website in the days following each event. The SCORAI Executive Board acknowledges the [V. Kann Rasmussen Foundation](#) for its financial support of this colloquium series.

News from SCORAI-Europe



SCORAI (Europe) Workshop on Sustainable Consumption

Dates: 30 September - 1st October, 2014

Venue: Royal Society of Arts, London

Keynote Speakers: [Adrian Smith](#), Science Policy Research Unit (SPRU), University of Sussex and [Anne Thorpe](#), Luum.com

architecture and design has provisionally confirmed.

This two-day workshop aims to develop our understanding of innovative approaches to sustainable consumption by sharing and reflecting upon research and practice relevant to themes suggested by participants in recent Sustainable Consumption Research and Action Initiative (SCORAI Europe) workshops.

Those wishing to contribute papers for presentation at the workshop should address one or more of the following themes, which will form the basis of the workshop content, regarding the research and action initiative elements of the SCORAI acronym and connections among sustainable consumption and production. An abstract of 250-500 words (maximum) should be sent by email to Audley Genus, the workshop coordinator at a.genus@kingston.ac.uk by **16 May, 2014**.

Abstracts will be evaluated by the workshop steering committee: Maurie Cohen (New Jersey Institute of Technology); Francis Fahy (National University of Ireland, Galway); Marfuga Iskandarova and Audley Genus (both Kingston University). Numbers will be restricted to twenty delegates to facilitate high-quality dialogue.

Themes

1. Action: roles for researchers and practitioners in developing and diffusing sustainable practices
2. Integrating sustainable consumption and production
3. New perspectives and methods

For more information on these themes and the workshop visit this [website](#).

Halina Brown Updates on the New Economy Coalition



NEW ECONOMY COALITION

Formerly the New Economics Institute

Notes from a March 13, 2014, New Economy Coalition Consultative Call

Updates:

- NEC is growing. Several new staff members; Looking for interns
- June 6-8: [NEC conference](#), to be held at Northeastern University in Boston. The deadline for submitting proposals for workshops has passed, but if you have a great idea please contact Mike Sandmen at mikesandmel@

neweconomicsinstitute.org

Based on the early signs, it will be a very large and important event.

- June 9-10 NEC convention, Northeastern University

Presentations and discussion

This webinar recognized the challenges facing the organized labor movement in the United States today, as exemplified by last month's highly public vote at Volkswagen's Chattanooga, Tennessee plant. The webinar highlighted the work of two groups pioneering new labor organizing models.

The [Freelancers Union](http://www.FreelancersUnion.org) is the nation's largest group representing the growing independent workforce. The union's 230,000 members are building collective solutions to our economic challenges--from creating affordable healthcare, childcare and other benefits to connecting for mutual aid. Dan Lavoie is Executive Communications Strategist for the Freelancers Union. A former journalist, Dan oversees message development, public relations, and outreach. Caitlin Pearce is Strategic Projects Manager at the Freelancers Union. Caitlin focuses on how to structure, frame, and push forward early stage initiatives to support the growing movement of independent workers.



The presenters emphasized the need to build a solidarity culture among unemployed people and freelancers. They talked about the quiet revolution taking place, including the conversation about redefining the meaning of work in one's life. The terms "Quiet Revolution" and "New Mutualism" are part of the emerging [new language](#).



Michael Alden Peck, the North American delegate for Mondragon talked about 1worker1vote.org: a national organization advancing union co-ops, a model that combines the democratic and entrepreneurial spirit of worker cooperatives with the political muscle, legacy, and resources of traditional labor unions. This model

has been pioneered in Cincinnati through the [Cincinnati Union Cooperative Initiative](#), a project jointly launched by a historic agreement between Spain's Mondragon Corporation and the

United Steelworkers. Among their initiatives: an online Mondragon MBA.



On March 26, the United Steelworkers (USW), Mondragon, and the Ohio Employee Ownership Center (OEOC) announced the union-coop template, <http://www.union.coop>, to create worker-owner hybrid projects and businesses with the goal of revamping American manufacturing through worker empowerment and ownership. This movement is now operating in eleven municipalities in the United States. This past January, Michael helped to launch the non-profit "1:1" (www.1worker1ote.org), dedicated to addressing America's unhealthy and unequal opportunity, mobility, and wealth divides through broad-based, equal share worker ownership.

SEA ANNUAL MEETING 2014: Energy and Economy

The [Society for Economic Anthropology](#) will be having their annual meeting this spring.

Location: Austin, TX

Dates: April 24-26, 2014

FIVE REASONS TO BE THERE:

- Cutting edge research on energy and economic issues around the world as well as posters on all topics in economic anthropology
- Special workshop "Energy Basics for Social Scientists"
- Keynote address by [Charles Hall](#) and distinguished lecture by [Joseph Tainter](#)
- Walking tour around Austin
- Saturday banquet--Catch up with SEA colleagues and meet new ones

[REGISTER NOW!](#)

BOOK ROOMS [HERE](#). The special rate expires April 3rd.

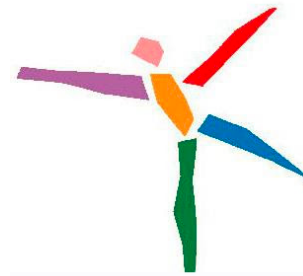
Juliet Shor Receives ASA Public Understanding of Sociology Award

SCORAI affiliated scholar [Juliet Shor](#) is a [recipient a major award from the American Sociological Association \(ASA\)](#). The ASA awards are conferred on sociologists for outstanding publications and achievements in the scholarship, teaching, and the practice of sociology. Award recipients are selected by committees appointed by the ASA Committee on Committees and the ASA Council. The Public Understanding of Sociology award is given annually to a person or persons who have made exemplary contributions to advance the public understanding of sociology, sociological research, and scholarship among the general public.



Postconsumers.com Announces Earth Day Competition

[Postconsumers.com](#) has launched a citizen Get Satisfied Award with the winner receiving \$500 on Earth Day for the best idea to inspire "the satisfaction of enough for today" in the mainstream. The group is based in Los Angeles, with a social marketing team directed from Pennsylvania, and the award judges span many other parts of the United States.



Using [humor and irony](#), Postconsumers.com is building a United States-based market brand without profit to help move society beyond addictive consumerism with its Get Satisfied web course and other offerings. The deadline for award entries is **April 10** and details can be found [here](#).

Also check out [Mike Swofford's postconsumer cartoon gallery](#) for some comic relief!

Employment Opportunities

Web Developer for Sustainability & Degrowth E-commerce Website with Pollytix® Benefit Corporation, New Jersey



We invite a developer or team to inquire about building for our organization an online marketplace, shopping cart, or similar e-commerce platform which enables people to

transact goods and services in a manner similar to, but also unlike barter.

This non-binding solicitation asks those interested to respond with requested information from our complete solicitation of interest (SOI), after which we will provide project details. This paid work may be completed by an independent contractor or may be offered as direct employment within our company at our option. Varied levels of expertise will be considered as well as remote or on-site work arrangements.

Complete SOI document may be viewed [here](#).

[Zeppelin University](#) seeks two part time (80%) research associates (PhD candidates) for the Energy Cultures Junior Research Group at the next possible date. The Research Group is funded by the German Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) for four years; a one-year extension is possible.



More information about the position can be found [here](#).

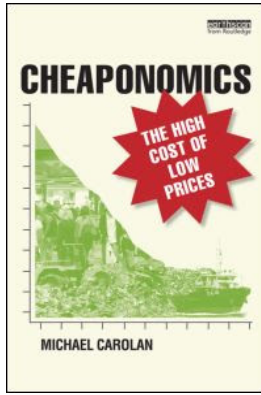


New Publications

Sahakian, M. and H. Wilhite. 2014. "Making practice theory practicable: towards more sustainable forms of consumption." *Journal of Consumer Culture* 14(1):25-44.



In recent years, there has been growing interest in applying social practice theory to theorizing consumption, specifically in relation to transforming practices that have problematic environmental impacts. In this paper, we address the questions: how do changes in practices occur, and what are the levers for influencing change towards more sustainable consumption practices? We argue that a view of agency distributed across people, things and social contexts is fruitful. We also explore learning through membership in communities of practice, where people are involved in experiments with or exposure to new practices. We relate three case studies in the arena of food consumption practices then discuss the practicalities and pitfalls involved in translating social practice approaches into practicable recommendations for encouraging more sustainable forms of consumption. The article is available [here](#).



Carolan, Michael S. 2014. *Cheaponomics: The High Cost of Low Prices*. New York: Routledge (Available in both paperback and hardcover).

Do you really think you are getting a good deal when given that free mobile phone for switching service providers, if a multinational retailer undercuts its competitors, or by the fact that food is relatively cheaper today in many countries than ever before?

Think again!

As Michael Carolan clearly shows in this compelling book, cheapness is an illusion. The real cost of low prices is alarmingly high. It is shown for example that citizens are frequently subsidizing low prices through welfare support to poorly-paid workers in their own country, or relying on the exploitation of workers in poor countries for cheap goods. Environmental pollution may not be costed into goods and services, but is paid for indirectly by people living away from its source or by future generations. Even with private cars, when the total costs of this form of mobility are tallied it proves to be an astronomically expensive model of transportation. All of these costs need to be accounted for.

The author captures these issues by the concept of "cheaponomics". The key point is that costs and risks are socialized: we all pay for cheapness, but not at the point of purchase. Drawing on a wide range of examples and issues from over-consumption and waste to over-work, unemployment, inequality, and the depersonalizing of communities, it is convincingly shown that cheapness can no longer be seen as such a bargain. Instead we need to refocus for a better sense of well-being, social justice and a balanced approach to prosperity.

Further information on the book is available [here](#). (Our very own Maurie Cohen and Philip Vergragt provided endorsements for the book's back cover!)

Rosen, Richard A., and Edeltraud Guenther. 2014. "The Economics of Mitigating Climate Change: What Can We Know?" *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*.



The long-term economics of mitigating climate change over the long run has played a high profile role in the most important analyses of climate change in the last

decade, namely the Stern Report and the IPCC's Fourth Assessment. However, the various kinds of uncertainties that affect these economic results raise serious questions about whether or not the net costs and benefits of mitigating climate change over periods as long as 50 to 100 years can be known to such a level of accuracy that they should be reported to policymakers and the public. This paper provides a detailed analysis of the derivation of these estimates of the long-term economic costs and benefits of mitigation. It particularly focuses on the role of technological change, especially for energy-efficiency technologies, in making the net economic results of mitigating climate change unknowable over the long run.

Because of these serious technical problems, policymakers should not base climate change mitigation policy on the estimated net economic impacts computed by integrated assessment models. Rather, mitigation policies must be forcefully implemented anyway given the actual physical climate-change crisis, in spite of the many uncertainties involved in trying to predict the net economics of doing so.

The article is available [here](#).



Schor, Juliet, Lindsey B. Carfagna, Emilie A. Dubois, Connor Fitzmaurice, Thomas Laidley, Monique Ouimette, and Margaret Willis. 2014. "An emerging eco-habitus: the reconfiguration of high cultural capital practices among ethical consumers." *Journal of Consumer Culture* 14(2):1-21.

Bourdieu's concept of habitus describes a set of tastes and dispositions operating according to a class homology--for example, a working-class preference for utility, or a bourgeois orientation toward luxury. In the United States, Holt found that high cultural capital consumers were characterized by their cosmopolitanism, idealism, connoisseurship, and affinity for the exotic and authentic. In this article, we use Holt's analysis as a comparative case, finding an altered high cultural capital habitus incorporating environmental awareness and sustainability principles, in a configuration that has been called ethical or "conscious consumption." Using both quantitative survey data of self-described conscious consumers as well as four qualitative case studies, we argue that ethical consumers are overwhelmingly high cultural capital consumers, and that high cultural capital consumption strategies have shifted since Holt's study in the mid-1990s. We show that on a number of dimensions cosmopolitanism, idealism, and relation to manual labor--a new

high cultural capital consumer repertoire privileges the local, material, and manual, while maintaining a strategy of distinction. While the critical literature on conscious consumers has suggested that such practices reflect neo-liberal tendencies that individualize environmental responsibility, our findings suggest that such practices are hardly individual. Rather, they are collective strategies of consumption--what we have termed an emerging high cultural capital "eco-habitus."

This article will be in the next issue of the [Journal of Consumer Culture](#).

New SCORAI Affiliates

A warm welcome to the following new SCORAI affiliates joining us during the past month which brings our total number to 636.

Helen Ball
Colette Bos
Nicki Faull
Nathan Fosse
Aija Freimane
Adam Goch
Lisa Green-Young
Markus Hametner
Matthew Hoffmann
Sascha Kornek
Geory Kurtzhals
Henrike Rau
Kristof Rubens
Marc Schmidt
Rosanne Verbree
Danica Straith
Katia Vladimirova

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