

Abstract :

Kate Soper argues that we need new ways for finding other pleasures and desires and "alternative outlets for 'transcendence' that are not provided by Western Industrialist consumerist culture which remove us from a natural simplicity or immanence, rather than return us to it,"^[1] if we do want to maintain a world that both humans and non humans can happily and healthy continue to live in. She argues that even if could we continue to exploit and consume as we do, it would not necessarily enhance human happiness and wellbeing. From her writings on 'alternative hedonism,'^[2] I am interested in her ideas of developing new modes of satisfaction that do not necessarily require goods but rather new modes of experience that are possibly more sensory, sensual and slower than what we usually give value to.

But how to work these ideas work with this....

"Today, being environmentally responsible, and to try to reduce the personal carbon footprint, has become a sort of fashion. The socially accepted image of "taking care of the personal health and also give the impression of caring about nature" is permeated by socio-economic aspirations motivated by superficial advertising campaigns and political slogans. This way of "light" and uninformed living has spread in the middle class of many developed countries around the world. But the essence of the real ecological problem is trivialized, while thousands of companies profit from the mediatic image of being environmentally responsible, sometimes incurring in lies by only adding a green logo on their packaging of products.

After so much advertising fervency, and so diverse and unclear arguments, it is not easy to decide what kind of personal approach to take. The excess of pseudo information has become our worst enemy, because it has generated a greater uncertainty in the people who really care about these issues.

Then, how to address problems that need urgent and effective solution, such as deforestation, animal abuse and the proliferation of genetically modified products? Are we aware and ready as a society to make decisions that could dramatically transform our lifestyles and traditions? Some of them that have prevailed for a long time?"

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These are issues that I want to discuss with you.....

^[1] Kate Soper, "The Politics of Nature: Reflections on Hedonism, Progress and Ecology" *Capitalism Nature Socialism* 10 (2), June, 1999 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10455759909358857>

^[2] see Kate Soper on Alternative Hedonism.