

Critical Thought Paper

We spent the beginning of the course discussing how capitalism is connected to commodity fetishism, affecting consumers' decisions, habits, and spending, especially in developed, global north (GN) countries and the increasing middle classes in emerging economies (EEs). We then spent the second part of the course focusing on how capitalism connects to resource availability, usage, and waste, and how this system is not sustainable as it currently operates.

Your objective is to consider how the current system of production and consumption challenges sustainability. In answering these questions, you should offer specific examples to support your points from assigned course readings and videos, the virtual tours, and reconsider the consumption log you tracked for Response 1 for examples and evidence. Answer these three questions. In answering these questions, don't forget to consider that the GN doesn't exist in a vacuum: It has a symbiotic relationship with the GS in a global system.

1. Eating animal products (especially meat) and food waste are the biggest factors contributing to global warming. Explain why these have far greater implications than the average person would realize.
2. When it comes to consumption in GN countries (call it whatever you want—consumer culture, conspicuous consumption, hypercapitalism, commodity fetishism), why is degrowth both the best, yet most improbable solution for a more sustainable future?
3. Reflecting on your responses to Questions 1 and 2, consider what changes you feel you should make and what changes you are willing to make/have already implemented that would affect your impact on other people and the planet.

By the end of your paper, you should have discussed the main topics we covered this semester, including:

- Fast fashion
- Plastics
- Fair trade
- Food
- Water
- Waste processing
- The many Rs- reducing, reusing, repairing, repurposing, and recycling
- Energy

Writing/Submitting Details

Make sure you're not just summarizing readings or videos, but instead explain how and why they connect to the concepts to examine the issues. I highly encourage you to write everything in your own words, as you interpret the readings and media, rather than relying

on quotes and paraphrasing the authors' words. If you absolutely feel the need to cite specific information, refer to the way the reading/media is listed on the course schedule and use the author or most basic obvious descriptor possible (About Plastic, Cappuccino, Decarbonize, etc.) in parentheses after your quote or paraphrase. When writing, avoid writing out the titles and saying things like 'the author says' or 'the article says'.

The following standards for writing apply:

- **1800 word maximum** (about 6 -6 ½ pages) -10% for each block of 50 excess words
- Times New Roman 12 pt. font (or Mac comparable)
- Black font
- Double-spaced
- Write in the third person except when discussing your personal experiences
- Avoid the common grammatical errors (confusing homonyms, making acronyms possessive (i.e., MNCs v. MNC's; NGOs v. NGO's), etc.)
- Edited and proof-read so that paper is well-written
- Write in appropriate length paragraphs
- The University Honor Code applies, so make sure everything is in your own words ir appropriately referenced

Submit your typed paper in a word document to Canvas (and absolutely not a link to a cloud document). Make sure you can open and view your document. If I cannot open your file, you will receive a zero. See course schedule for due date and time, along with late submission terms.

In the event that Canvas is down, send your paper as an email attachment to me (so I know you finished it on time) then submit via Canvas when it becomes available. If you do not submit your paper to Canvas, you will receive a zero.

This paper is worth 20 points.