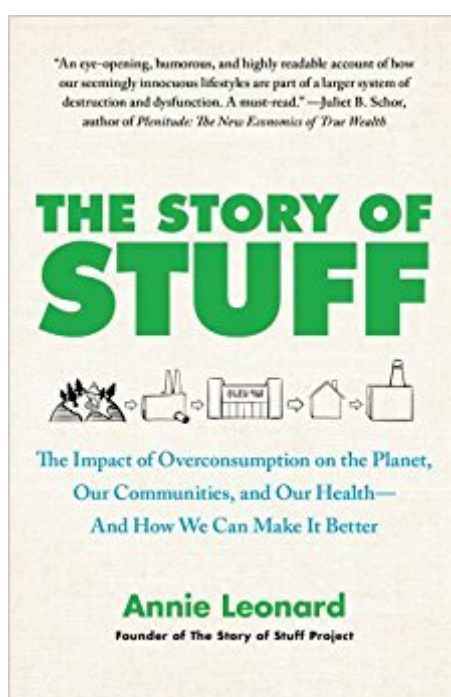


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The Story Of Stuff: The Impact Of Overconsumption On The Planet, Our Communities, And Our Health—And How We Can Make It Better



Synopsis

A classic exposé in company with *Overconsumption* and *Overkill*, *The Story of Stuff* expands on the celebrated documentary exploring the threat of overconsumption on the environment, economy, and our health. Leonard examines the “stuff” we use everyday, offering a galvanizing critique and steps for a changed planet. *The Story of Stuff* was received with widespread enthusiasm in hardcover, by everyone from Stephen Colbert to Tavis Smiley to George Stephanopolous on Good Morning America, as well as far-reaching print and blog coverage. Uncovering and communicating a critically important idea that there is an intentional system behind our patterns of consumption and disposal, Annie Leonard transforms how we think about our lives and our relationship to the planet. From sneaking into factories and dumps around the world to visiting textile workers in Haiti and children mining coltan for cell phones in the Congo, Leonard, named one of Time magazine’s 100 environmental heroes of 2009, highlights each step of the materials economy and its actual effect on the earth and the people who live near sites like these. With curiosity, compassion, and humor, Leonard shares concrete steps for taking action at the individual and political level that will bring about sustainability, community health, and economic justice. Embraced by teachers, parents, churches, community centers, activists, and everyday readers, *The Story of Stuff* will be a long-lived classic.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Leonard examines conspicuous consumption and its human and environmental costs in an

expansion of her short documentary of the same name. The analysis is accessible, and Leonard is skilled at breaking down large and abstruse concepts for the listeners. She's less winning as a reader, however: her bubbly voice and predilection for overemphasis are grating—and occasionally, her explanations and prescriptions veer into condescension. These failings aside, here is a wealth of very important information. As a bonus, the MP3 CD includes the original video, but omits the charts and graphics in the book. A Free Press hardcover (Reviews, Jan. 25). (Mar.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Starred Review Why is there so much garbage, and where does it go? A Time magazine Hero of the Environment, Leonard has traveled the world tracking trash and its wake of destruction. Her investigations convinced her that the impossible dream of perpetual economic growth and the rampant consumer culture it engenders are the root causes of today's environmental crises. A rigorous thinker in command of a phenomenal amount of information, Leonard believes that we must calculate the full ecological and social cost of our "stuff." So she takes us through the extraction of natural resources and the production, distribution, consumption, and disposal of various products, documenting ecohazards and the exploitation of workers along the way. Drawing on her extensive research, gutsy fieldwork, and efforts to live "green," Leonard condemns the endless barrage of advertisements, the plague of toxic synthetic chemicals, and such covertly deleterious inventions as the aluminum can. Not one to tout simple approaches to complex predicaments, Leonard instead offers hard facts, diligent analysis, and an ambitious vision in this comprehensive critique, calling for strict environmental laws, an end to overconsumption, zero waste, and a new social paradigm based on quality of life, not quantity of stuff. --Donna Seaman --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Did you ever wonder what happens to all that trash set out on your street on garbage day? Where does it go? While living in New York City, Annie Leonard wondered about that question and ended up studying Stuff for 20 years before writing this book. Other questions addressed include: "What is the real cost of Extraction (of raw materials), Production, Distribution, and Disposal of all that Stuff?" In the course of addressing such questions as these, Leonard invites us to consider the impact of toxic chemicals and ingredients of Stuff, and how those toxics affect the miners/extractors of raw materials, production workers, purchasers of the Stuff, AND how they affect the people who live in areas where the Stuff with its toxins (if any) are dumped. An overarching issue is our carbon

footprint (individual, corporate, etc.) and Global Warming. Whether you believe global warming is a hoax or a real crisis, "The Story of Stuff" has something to say to you. If you believe your responsibility in the matter of global warming is only to recycle or reuse Stuff, this book has something to say to you. Leonard encourages recycling, among other things, as one action individuals can take. But she also warns that we must not let recycling keep us from becoming engaged in larger matters such as holding corporate polluters accountable. To read the book is to see how over-consumption, pollution, and similar actions affect not only the United States, but other nations as well. It will cause you to ask questions you haven't considered yet. If you are concerned about how you can better care for the earth, I highly recommend "The Story of Stuff."

It took me a long time to finish this book. I found the subject matter so distressing, that I would put it aside and read something else. But I always came back to it and the more I read the less distressed I was. This is a serious book about an extremely important subject and I recommend it to everyone. So many times you will hear someone rave "This book changed my life!" Usually they are referring to some sort of self help book. This isn't a self help book but it is a life changer for anyone who reads it.

Only a few years old, but quite the classic. If you want to know why our environment is going downhill and why our children and grandchildren will not enjoy the clean air, forests, and waters we did in our youth, you need go no further than Annie's book. An exceptional and very readable layout of the industrial wastelands we are rapidly making of our planet.

I had to read this for a class. Surprisingly, as someone who isn't an environmentalist, this actually impacted me. It was shocking to learn that our recycling is shipped off to third world countries where people there 'recycle' the product, dying of cancer at young ages due to all of the chemicals. Now I put clothing goods and other like product in recycling, and avoid using the trash for non-perishables. This should be required reading for all Americans.

A very polarizing book because it criticizes the very foundation of our American economy and way of life. It is like having your parents tell you that you were really adopted and your real father was a serial killer - you have to start all over with your assumptions about who you are, how you want to live and wonder if you have a future or if you are doomed by your past. Unfortunately most people would rather put their head in the sand than know that their way of life might come to an end, and that the

way they are living now is depriving others of a decent life. The book is both thought provoking and guilt producing (for those who tend to those feelings.) Although most people say they don't trust the government, really they want to believe that the government is looking out for their best interests, health and well being. They hope to achieve the "American Dream" of owning an enormous house, having a huge wardrobe and owning a fleet of cars and being the envy of all they know because of it. Everyday they are bombarded with advertisements that tell them that they will be happier if they just buy more stuff. This book takes all the fun out of that- which is a good reason to hate it and find fault in it. I saw the terrific "Stuff" video which inspired me to read the book. The book is not perfect except to set out a case for more action by detailing the way our "stuff" is made and to "out" those who make it. Enough consumer pressure and public outcry and good old American ingenuity will force those perpetrators to come up with more sustainable solutions to providing the goods and services that Americans expect. No matter how smart Annie Leonard is, there is no way she can solve all these problems. I think her "Hope" tips are her way of saying that we are smart enough to fix things but really we (collectively) have to want to do it first. This book is a wake up call for all those who keep hitting the snooze alarm.

I love that book! I totally recommended to all of you, from compulsive consumers or strict "ecologist" to governments and companies, all of us should have a look to "The Story of Stuff". Because it will change your view about the World, and how bad are we treating it. Hopefully it will wake you up from the dream you might be living, and guide you to a life changes that can contribute to your family, community and country. We need to work all together and find solutions for a better future.

It was very informative and very alarming, that we are destorying our planet to this extent. We most find better ways of saving our planet and the living things that occupy the earth, this shoilf be a true mission in preserving our food, plants, and water to make sure we all have enough to go around.

Well-researched, clearly written and superbly organized. Annie Leonard's work is as inspiring as it is vital to understanding the nature of our political economy. I can't say enough good things about this book!

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