



GrayIsGreen

About Gray Is Green

Gray Is Green is the leading environmental communications, education, and advocacy organization for older adult Americans. Our greenest generations are calling for a cleaner, healthier future for everyone.

Gray Is Green is the “go to” organization for America’s expanding generations of older adults interested in leaving a green legacy of resilience, sustainability, and conservation to children, grandchildren and on. We respond to the future question, “What did you do when you knew?”

Visit us at <http://grayisgreen.org> to access our Curriculum for Gray-Green Living, sign up for our periodic newsletter, enjoy our storyboard, access scholarly articles, and more.

Visit us on FACEBOOK at www.facebook.com/grayisgreen to follow our immediate updates on items of interest.

We serve as a clearinghouse for older adults interested in greening their lives, learning about sustainability, advocating for sound climate change policy, and mentoring others involved in sustainability.

We invite your support as a contributing member at www.grayisgreen.org/home/donate

www.grayisgreen.org

World Views Consumer Economy

When it is said the economy is doing better or worse, what is meant is people are buying more stuff or less stuff. Our country evaluates economic health by measuring how much money and stuff changes hands in a given period.

In this consumer economy, success is defined by growth and profit: more things produced and sold, more money for a select few. This system does not account for many of the costs, or externalities, of how those things are produced, transported, and used. Externalities include things such as air and water pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, destruction of species populations, deforestation, and hazardous working conditions.

Despite the rise of corporate social responsibility and green products, a system that values objects and cash more than human and environmental health can by definition not support the health of humans and our planet in the short or long term. Green living¹ is the start of a more fundamental shift in how we interact with money, stuff, and nature.

A Sustainable Economy Produces Well-Being

The well-being of people and planet will be highly valued² in a sustainable economy. This economy is taking hold locally around the country. Refer to the New Economy Coalition³, a project of the New Economics Institute, to find organizations operating in your region or on your issue of choice.

A Sustainable Economy Chooses Balance Over Growth

Rather than striving to buy and sell more, defined as “growth” in our current economy, we can strive to maintain a balance⁴ between natural resources consumed, energy use, and population. Rather than focusing our collective energy on production and selling, we can focus it on well-being and joyful experiences. Learn more about challenging the misguided goal of economic growth⁵ from the Center for the Advancement of the Steady State Economy.

A Sustainable Economy Is Local

When you choose food grown close to home, your meals are tastier and healthier and you support your farming neighbors. As the Business Alliance for Local Living Economies puts it: “We’re all better off when we’re all better off.” Learn more about localism on their website⁶: <http://bealocalist.org/Localism-101>.

There are many ways to strengthen local economies without owning a business. Plant flowers that attract bees and other pollinators, keep your money at regional banks and credit unions, and talk to your friends, family, and neighbors about how to increase your community’s resilience⁷. If you want to organize with your local businesses, check out Bill McKibben’s tips for launching a local business alliance and promoting localism⁸.

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World Views: Consumer Economy – References

It is becoming increasingly evident that the kind of good life possible in the future is one with much less material consumption.

Source: <http://neweconomy.net/publications/what-can-we-hope-world-2075>

A successful economy will maintain or increase human well-being especially among those who now lack the essentials for a healthy life... The economic system must [also] maintain and, where necessary, rehabilitate, the productive resources required to preserve or increase human well-being in the future.

Source: http://www.ase.tufts.edu/gdae/Pubs/te/Goodwin_WorldFutureReviewOct2010.pdf

A New Economics for the Twenty-First Century, by Neva Goodwin <http://neweconomy.net/content/new-economics-21st-century>

Eco-Mind: changing the way we think, to create the world we want,
by Frances Moore Lappe (Small Planet Institute, 2011)

Slow Money: investing as if food, farms, and fertility mattered, by Woody Tasch (Chelsea Green, 2008)

¹ <http://www.greenamerica.org/livinggreen/>

² <http://neweconomy.net/content/new-economics-21st-century>

³ <http://neweconomy.net/new-economy-coalition>

⁴ <http://steadystate.org/discover/>

⁵ <http://steadystate.org/act/use-our-outreach-materials/>

⁶ <http://bealocalist.org/Localism-101>

⁷ <http://www.ilsr.org/about-the-institute-for-local-self-reliance/>

⁸ <http://www.billmckibben.com/local-economies.html>



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