A photograph of a bright yellow building with a bicycle parked against it. The building has a textured yellow wall and a white roofline. A silver bicycle with a blue bag on the back is parked against the wall. In the background, there is a balcony with a metal railing and a blue railing. The sky is overcast.

THE OTESHA UK HANDBOOK

ABOUT THIS BOOK

To you, dear reader

Hello there.

We're ever so pleased that you've taken the time to open and read our masterpiece and lovingly flip through its pages. Hopefully it doesn't stop there, though! As you read this book, we'd love to hear what you've been thinking, learning or doing - so whether it's turning your old bike tyres into stylish belts, getting your local shop to stock Fairtrade chocolate, or sneakily planting strawberries on roundabouts, please let us know! Send your ideas to us and we'll share them with the world on our website and maybe, just maybe, in the published version of this handbook. (Email us at info@otesha.org.uk or find us here: www.otesha.org.uk). We can't wait to hear from you.

On top of being a big, collaborative project, this book is also special because it was printed on 100% post-consumer paper, using dyes made from linseed oil. It was even printed on energy efficient printing presses! All of its content is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution Non-commercial Share Alike License 2.0 England & Wales. This means that you can use, share, and even build upon our work. (Want to write a new chapter all about waste? Go right ahead!) But you've got to give us credit (hey, we like our glory), you can't make any profit off it and you must licence the resulting work the same way. To view a copy of this license, visit: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.0/uk>

This project was made possible with a grant from the Centre for Innovation in Voluntary Action (CIVA) and the ongoing support of the Vodafone UK Foundation and v, the youth volunteering charity. Thank you!

*Centre for Innovation in
Voluntary Action*



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People who helped



This book is a true collaboration.

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With our deepest thanks and gratitude, *The Otesha UK team*



FASHION

OTESHA PROJECT UK HANDBOOK

THE BASICS



less with the
entire contents of
her wardrobe

I have a favourite pair of jeans. You know the sort I'm talking about—I've worn life into their very seams. They hang together by a few bare threads, and my multiple patching attempts haven't been able to save them.

However, on the odd Sunday afternoon I'll rescue them from the bottom drawer and put them on. As I zip them up, I sigh and smile, reveling in their absolute comfort. Why do I love those jeans so much?

Why does any item of clothing appeal to me? After all, it's just a piece of material sewn together isn't it? Then I remember the hours spent in front of my wardrobe trying to decide exactly what I wanted to wear for that first day of school, that job

interview, that first date. The hundreds of loads of washing I have done in my lifetime. The jackets, the shoes, the belts—entire days spent shopping. The hours spent earning money to buy that favorite pair of jeans. How my attitude and confidence levels change depending on my personal packaging. The constant flux of new and old clothing, coming in and out of my wardrobe, life, and identity.

Is it just material? I'm not so sure



*FYI

- Clothing industry workers in Bangalore (making clothing for Western shoppers) are paid an average of only 13p per hour.¹
- Sir Terry Leahy (CEO of Tesco) earned the equivalent of £2220 per hour in 2006/7.²
- Portion of Nike's advertising budget needed to raise the wages of workers in Nike's 6 Indonesian factories to a liveable standard: 1%.³
- Number of children between the ages of five and fourteen involved in exploitative child labour around the world: 250 million.⁴
- Sweatshops* exist throughout North America and Europe (including Toronto, L.A. Northern Italy and Eastern Europe), not just in developing countries.⁵
- Percentage of the world's annual pesticide and insecticide consumption that is applied to cotton plants: 10% and 25%, respectively.⁶
- According to the World Health Organization, (WHO) pesticides used in cotton production cause 270,000 deaths a year. Of this figure 20,000 are accidental poisonings; the remainder are suicides.⁷

***Sweatshop:**

Any workplace where workers are subjected to extreme exploitation, including low wages (lower than the living wage), long hours, working conditions that endanger safety or health, and/or denial of basic human rights. A sweatshop can exist even when the factory is following local laws..



Definitely not
where we'd want
to work!

Unfortunately, my beloved jeans have a dark side.

When I sit and think about it, I can't believe all the worker exploitation, inequality and chemical pollution that can lie behind just one pair of jeans.

The number of suicides from the pesticides use alone is terrifying. Often, farmers are lent chemical pesticides before a harvest and asked to pay for them afterwards.⁸ If their crops fail, the farmers can't repay the loan and often fall into heavy debt. Drinking the chemicals then becomes the easiest way to escape the spiral of debt.

And sometimes I find myself worrying that every piece of clothing in my wardrobe has a story just like this.



TRUE OR FALSE?

Things we're trying to wrap our heads around

Do corporations know how little their factory workers are getting paid?

Without a clue? Since so much work is sub-contracted, multinational corporations usually have very little interaction with the factories that actually make their goods. If they sign agreements with sub-contractors who promise to respect minimum wage and child labour laws, how can they know when these laws are getting broken? Are they responsible if their contractors break the law?

All clued up? It's useful to keep in mind that companies choose the contractors who make their products in other countries. From looking at the amount they're paying the contractors, it doesn't take a mathematical genius to work out whether or not these contractors are paying a fair wage to their workers.

The verdict: If shoppers value price above all else when making purchasing decisions, companies will choose contractors on that basis as well. But if we demand fair working standards, then improvements won't take long to happen. After all, the whole fashion industry is concerned with keeping up with the times and is terribly worried about what people think.

Of course, we don't always have the right information when we're standing in a shop comparing two different pairs of jeans - it's hard to know what choices the designer, producer, and clothes shop made at every step along the way. But we can research online or trade recommendations with friends to learn more, and one thing is certain: quality and status have always been a really important part of fashion. And if clothing companies want to create high quality and high status clothes, their production shouldn't be based on any penny-pinching, exploitative measures.

Do sweatshops give people much-needed jobs?

Yeah, they're doing people a favour: Let's face it – being out of a job is crap. Almost any kind of paid work beats unemployment. Besides, people are always free to say no to jobs in sweatshops. Migration statistics show that many people in developing countries around the world are flocking from rural areas into cities, where all the low-paying factory jobs are. Doesn't this mean that they want these jobs, that they're choosing this work?

No, they're exploiting cheap labour: Most people who work in sweatshops don't earn enough to meet their basic needs, which is what getting paid is all about. Sweatshop workers (who are 90% women)⁸ almost always earn less than the living wage.

Translated, this means that they don't actually make enough money to afford the basic necessities of food, water and shelter, or to send their kids to school.

Sure, people might choose to move to the city and take on low-paying jobs, but this is usually because the alternative is much worse. All over the world, it's becoming harder to earn an income as a farmer⁹, so it's easy to see why they might want to sell their land to pay off debt and pack up for a new life in the city. (See the food and trade chapters for more info on this.)






So then does it help to only buy clothes made in 'developed' countries instead?


Yeah, it's helpful: Since many governments in the global south want to attract foreign companies, they end up competing against each other to provide the most favourable conditions. This 'race to the bottom' often involves lowering minimum wages, weakening laws protecting workers and the environment, giving favourable tax breaks and trade tariffs, and waiving fees for water and electricity. And if another country offers even lower costs somewhere else the next week, a company can pack up overnight and leave the local workers, environment and economy devastated.

Hitting unethical companies where it hurts – right in the wallet – is a good way to encourage them to change their practices. By refusing to buy clothes made in the developing world, consumers can reduce our chances of supporting sweatshop labour.

No, it's hurtful: But sweatshops don't just exist in the developing world. They're also cleverly tucked away in the UK, the rest of Europe and the United States too – and not only in the fashion industry. Sweatshop-like conditions exist in the electronics, agricultural, meatpacking, and service industries (particularly restaurants), among others. So since buying goods from the developed world doesn't guarantee that



“In this era of concern for civility, decency, and family values, sweatshops are repugnant to our moral core. It is wrong to value fashion when we do not value the people who make fashion real... Sweatshops reflect too vividly how we as a nation feel about the weakest among us. And it is such an ‘underground’ problem that there is no definitive source on how many sweatshops operate in this country. But we know this: one is one too many.”¹⁰



Alexis Hermau, US Secretary of Labour (1997–2001)

they were made under fair working conditions, boycotting products from developing countries doesn’t actually stop the problem. And in the short term, boycotting companies which use bad labour practices can force them to close up shop and move their factories elsewhere, rather than improving conditions for their existing workers.

The verdict: Within our current global economic system, everything is interconnected. Since we’re consuming much more now than in the past, and since the items we consume are now made in so many different parts of the world, our buying patterns can have a huge impact— either positive or negative— in every industry and every country around the globe, including in our own back yard. So by asking if clothes were made under fair working conditions regardless of what the “made in...” label says, we can show that consumers really do put their money where their morals are.


Will the price of our clothes go up if companies pay their workers more?

Without a doubt: At first glance, it seems logical that if clothing costs more to make, then companies will have to pass this cost along to buyers and we'll see higher price tags in shops around the world.

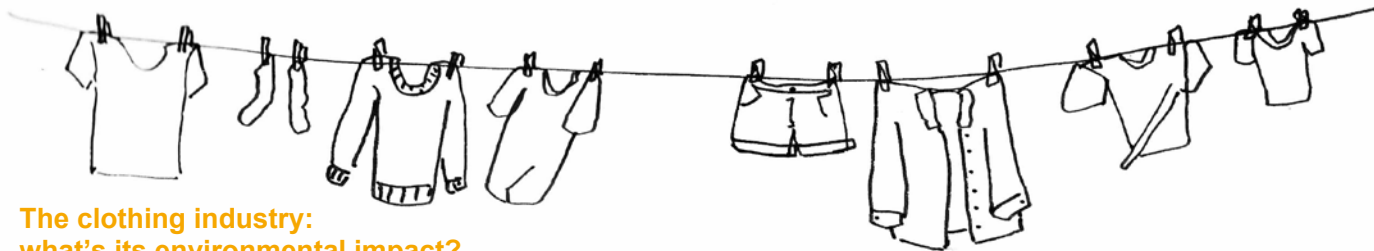
Not a chance: When you start to pull on the threads of this seemingly well-woven theory, it unravels pretty quickly. Dr. Robert Pollin, a Professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts, found that a men's shirt retailing for \$32 in the US costs \$4.74 to produce in Mexico. Of that amount, \$0.52 goes to production workers and \$0.52 to factory supervisors. 'You could double the production workers' wages, and hardly anyone but the workers would be able to tell the difference', Polin argues¹¹.

The verdict: The availability of funds to pay for a fair working environment boils down to how responsible a company chooses to be, So it's possible for us, as consumers, to insist on fair wages, decent working conditions, and affordable clothing.

The dirt on one shirt¹².



How one item's costs breaks down:	
Government (via VAT)	17.5%
The brand	25%
The shop	50%
Transport	11%
Materials	13%
The garment workers	0.5%



The clothing industry: what's its environmental impact?

Pesticides: Cotton is the most heavily pesticide-sprayed crop in the world¹³ and also one of the most heavily irrigated (water-consuming)¹⁴. Other fabrics – like those made from hemp and bamboo— are much less dependent on pesticides and much more durable.

Dyes: Whether you like your jeans in a slick dark, indigo or a faded stonewash, do you ever stop to wonder where the colour comes from? Jeans (and most of our other clothes) are dipped into all sorts of toxic chemicals to get their colour. As a result, workers and their local waterways are exposed to chemicals such as caustic soda, chlorine, detergents, peroxide, oxalic acid, and sodium bisulphate¹⁵.

Oil: Polyester shirts begin life as just a few tablespoons of petroleum. Each polyester shirt we buy helps sink a few more oil wells into the ground. Then, the process of refining petroleum into polyester sends carbon dioxide into the atmosphere— in fact up to 9 times more CO² than the polyester's weight!¹⁶

Laundry: Machine wash and dry a t-shirt ten times and we've already used as much energy it took to manufacture it in the first place. Plus, we've released soap (and possibly bleach) into the water system¹⁷. If one million people washed their clothes in cold water for a year, up to 228,000,000 tonnes of CO² would be eliminated from mankind's carbon bill.¹⁸



These fabrics may be beautiful,
but what kind of dyes were
used to make them?

Transportation: Moving clothes and other goods around the world in planes, boats, and lorries to our shops releases tonnes (literally, millions of tonnes!) of carbon dioxide, contributing to climate change.

The verdict: Most of our clothes are far from environmentally benign. But there are options out there with a much smaller impact – some producers are making clothes from organic cotton and bamboo, and hemp's making a surprisingly chic comeback, having shed its grubby hippie image from days of yore.

And then there's the bags...

Every shopping trip seems to add one more oil-based plastic bag to the 10 billion that are used in the UK every year¹⁹ (some estimates put the figure at 1.2 trillion a year worldwide²⁰).

It takes 11 barrels of crude oil to make one tonne of plastic.

Ethical clothing companies: a stylish alternative or ugly knitted jumpers?

You may not be able to find ethical clothing at many high street shops yet, but thanks to thousands of consumers who asked for more, and creative entrepreneurs who put their values into their business, there are actually tons of great options out there. Have a look at the stories later in this chapter to see what they've achieved.

But perhaps the most ethical clothing of all can be found at your local charity shop. Every time you buy a piece of used clothing, you can rest assured that no new resources were used, no additional pollution seeped into the environment, and no one toiled away in a factory for your purchase. As a bonus, you can usually save some pennies too by buying vintage or second hand. You

could also do a clothing swap with your friends (see the 'Things you can do' bit later on in this chapter) or learn how to sew your own.

Tip: if you want to avoid getting saddled with scary jumpers, make sure to swap only with friends who have impeccable taste.



Our web editor
extraordinaire, Devise, models
the latest in organic fashions

HOW BARBORA GOT INTO FASHION



Not everyone is born a saint!

I still remember the times when I used to open my overstuffed closet, whining and whingeing that I had nothing to wear. If I had the right top I didn't have the right skirt; if I had right trousers I didn't have the right shoes and so on. What was good for one season wasn't good enough for the next.

My wardrobe grew and grew to a point where I couldn't even keep track of what was in it. Have you ever had one of those moments when you go through your clothes, pull something out and say 'hey... didn't know that was in there', the shirt I bought ages ago that still looked brand new BUT unfashionable.

Then about six years ago, the beginning of my transformation started. I moved from Bratislava to London. Whatever I'd saved up at home didn't translate to very much money in the UK. I lived in a warehouse space in Hackney with no television. With my tight budget, women's magazines were one of the first things to go. So NO television and NO Elle! I thought that it would be a misery but it changed my life, the way I view myself, the clothes I wear, their functionality and the story behind their production. Somehow I felt different, as if I really started to get to know myself. As if I started to learn what the real me likes and thinks. Once I cut off the external voice telling me what to wear and what to be like, I saw the world around me in a different

light. I re-analysed what fashion meant to me and what its purpose was. For the first time, I thought of clothes as serving certain functions – like whether jeans would be good for dancing or climbing over fences.

But this was still only the beginning. The prolonged absence of media influence gave me full freedom to choose what I wanted to find out about. I started to look into the clothing industry: I learned about conventional cotton, the level of pesticides used in the cotton growing industry and the effects of the harmful chemicals on those who work with them. The story went on and I discovered child labour, sweatshops, unfair factory worker wages

and the heavy advertising agendas of the giant corporations that I had previously supported.

Moments came when I felt ashamed about the clothes that I owned.

Sometimes, I even felt that when I walked out in my Adidas branded shirt I had failed, I had succumbed to the industry's perseverance and had failed to be myself. On the other hand all these revelations, even though painful, made me stronger and full of hope. It was as if all of sudden I woke up from some kind corporate paralysis. Paralysis that was making me buy more and think of clothes as just a temporary fad. Paralysis that was causing human suffering and environmental damage.

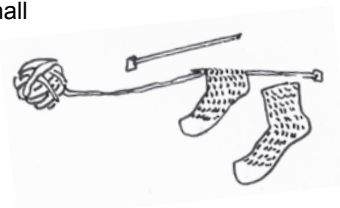


For the first time,
I thought of clothes
as serving certain
functions – like
whether jeans would
be good for dancing
or climbing over
fences.

Well, you may wonder what I'm up to now.

These days, things are so different. I don't buy many clothes. I try to get what I need by nipping down the charity shops or getting some organic fair trade clothes. I love it...I get so excited when I buy something new because it is so special. You could count the pairs of shoes I have on one hand. How about that! I really think about what I buy, its functionality, where and how it's made.

But the story doesn't end here. The future looks bright. I have met some amazing friends who know how to knit and sew. So, my next plan is 'Do it yourself!'. I can't wait to learn how to use that sewing machine and transform my old clothes - - OR MAYBE even make my own brands. I shall be the new, transformed D.I.Y clothing master!



The future DIY queen,
contemplating her first
move!

So what's the verdict from Jess?

Reading Barbora's story gives me a strange feeling in my stomach. When I look in the mirror now, trying on new clothes at the shops, her words are in the back of my head. And I can't help but look at myself, and my actions, in a whole new way. I now know that companies can move their factories from country to country wherever the wages are lowest, exploitation is the easiest, and the pollution limits are the most lax. I also know that as a consumer, I am often part of the problem.

My friend Simon loves to say, 'Our wallets are like election polls right next to our bums.' As consumers we have tremendous power: we can either choose to continue supporting the current system and all of its

negative impacts, or choose to support one that is in line with our ideals and values. So I suppose if I want a world where waterways aren't polluted with pesticides and toxins and where workers are given fair wages, I need to start with my own actions.

So, off to the polls I go—to vote for those companies that pay their workers a living wage and produce organic cotton. Change lies on the bottom line, and happens one pound and one shopper (me!) at a time.



THINGS THAT WORK

What other people did

Gossypium

Gossypium is one of those companies you can't help but admire. Its ethos is simple: put the farmers first and everything else follows. All of its clothes are made from 100% organic Indian cotton made on hand-powered looms to minimize energy use. The cotton growers are supported by the Agrocel farmers' centre, based in Gujarat, which helps farmers to grow their crops organically and ensures that they're paid a fair price for their produce.

Abigail Garner, a director of the company, knows how important it is to treat not just the farmers well, but the earth too. So instead of chemical colours, she uses vegetable dyes, and no waxes or chemical treatments are used to spin the cotton. The company uses fair trade certified factories

and, what's more, the directors have set up an education fund linked to the garments, where each item stitched means more money to buy books for local schools.

Gossypium is bent on not just altering the fashion industry but turning it on its head to give power to the producers. Because of this, all profits are shared between Agrocel and the design/sales part of the company. The aim is to get as many farmers into Agrocel as possible, giving them the freedom to work without endangering themselves with pesticides and to be paid fairly for their work.

www.gossypium.co.uk

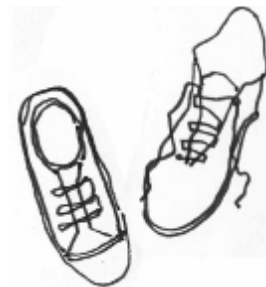
Junky Styling

Junky Styling is the brainchild of Kerry and Annika, who studied at college together in the early 90s and made their own clothes to wear out clubbing at the weekends. They started making clothes for friends, and the word spread from there. In their East-London based shop just off Brick Lane, old clothes are recycled into new garments by a gang of tailors (who are all paid a fair wage!).

One of the most ingenious things they do is 'wardrobe surgery', where they restyle an old suit. If you have a suit that you love but the shape isn't quite fashionable anymore they will nip, tuck, add, reduce and restyle

the suit into something totally 'now'. This is true recycling - a new suit could be redesigned again and again! When Junky Styling started up their ideas seemed totally off the wall to a lot of people, but they like to think they're forging the way in bringing sustainability to the fashion industry.

www.junkystyling.co.uk





It's even got
recycled tire
soles - nice
tread!

Worn Again: Giving birth to a world-changing shoe

If someone had told Cyndi Rhoades when she was a wee girl that one day she'd be making shoes and bags from recycled prison blankets, ex-military parachutes and disused bicycle inner tubes, she wouldn't have believed them. Fast forward to 2008 - her company, Worn Again, does just that.

Worn Again was born from Cyndi's desire to tailor-make a career path that would also reflect her passions. One hot evening in 2004, while hosting an entertainment-meets-issues event for Anti-Apathy (a charity set up by Cyndi), she discovered the shoe company

Terra Plana. It was a match made in heaven and they fell in love. No less than nine months later the beautiful, sexy and guilt-free Worn Again trainer was born, made from a whole host of weird and wonderful recycled materials, including fireman's uniforms, scrap leather from car seats, airline seat covers, and old men's suits.

Every year, in the UK, 900,000 tonnes of textiles are thrown into landfills. Some things are just too good to go to waste.

www.wornagain.co.uk

The Face of Conscious Style

In 2006 the BBC and the Ethical Fashion Forum ran a competition called BBC Slink - a teenage modelling competition to find 'The Face of Conscious Style'. There were an overwhelming number of entries from young models, all with an awareness of the issues facing the fashion industry and a passion to see change come about. The winner, Szjerdene, came out ahead because of her commitment to buy at least one ethical item of clothing for every two that she buys. This may seem like a small thing, but if every person committed to do the same, we would see huge change in the fashion industry.

Remember that favourite pair of jeans? I think they just might be the last pair of new jeans that I buy without first looking at the conditions they were made under. The clothes I wear are a big part of my identity, but I now believe that for me, that identity goes deeper than the texture, colour, or cut of my clothes. I want a wardrobe full of clothing that I feel makes a difference.

I really love how the the writer Barbara Ehrenreich defines 'solidarity' (see the box on the right). From this day forward, the clothes in my wardrobe, the dollars I spend, and my identity, are going to support this very kind of solidarity



Solidarity:

'The old fashioned word for the love between people who may never meet each other, but share a vision of justice and democracy and are willing to support each other in the struggle to achieve it.'



Wise words!



Off the shelf - things you can do

Host a swishing party

When you feel the urge to go shopping because you're bored of what you see in your wardrobe why not invite a group of friends round for a clothes swap party instead?

All you need is a group of friends and a pile clothes that you don't wear anymore. Fight over the best clothes, watch your friends fall in

love with your tired old togs and wait for the urge to spend money in a high street shop to disappear.

If you want to kick it up a notch with your clothes swap, there are instructions for how to throw a posh swishing party online here:

www.swishing.org

Another thing you can do

Hold a sneaky ethical fundraiser

What you need:

- 30 used single-colour T-shirts from a charity shop ideally all different colours and styles
- A few friends the more the merrier
- Designs that you and/or your friends have made, or a message that you want to spread

How to do it:

1. Turn your t-shirts inside out.
2. Put a catchy slogan or design on 'em. You can stitch, stick, print, draw or transfer these on.
3. Set up a table at your school or college with an info sheet explaining the messages, giving information about child labour and sweatshops and anything else you think is interesting.
4. Sell the T-shirts!
5. Give the money you've made to an organization fighting child labour or sweatshops like Labour Behind the Label.

And one more idea...

Make a Rag Rug

Some clothes are too old or precious to be sent to a charity shop once you're done wearing them. So why not make them into a rag rug? These kinds of rugs have been made for hundreds of years. Try it and let us know how you get on.

What you need:

- Old clothes, sheets, socks, pants, etc
- A piece of hessian sackcloth in the size you want your rug

How to do it:

1. Cut the fabric into strips approximately 2cm wide and 5cm long.
2. With a pencil, push the end of the strip of fabric into a hole in the hessian. As the hessian has a loose enough weave for you to be able to do this without cutting holes out and then pull the end back up through a different hole in the fabric. At this point, both ends of the fabric will be sticking out of the same side of the hessian. This is the top of the rug.
3. Repeat with a new fabric strip.
4. Repeat again and again all over the hessian and you'll see a rug start to appear.

ESCALATE

How to feed a big idea

Things to Read

- Jacqueline DeCarle Fair Trade: A Beginner's Guide (Beginner's Guides series), Oneworld Publications 2007
- Victoria International Development Education Association (1999). Sweatshop Clothes: The Real Cost of the Clothes We Buy
- Jill Esbenshade (2004) Monitoring Sweatshops: Workers, Consumers, and the Global Apparel Industry
- Craig Kielburger and Kevin Major (1999). Free The Children: A Young Man Fights Against Child Labour and Proves That Children Can Change the World. Perennial.
- Co-op America. Guide to Ending Sweatshops. Available at: www.coopamerica.org/PDF/GuideSweatshops.pdf

Free The Children, founded by 12 yr. old Craig Kielburger, is the largest network of Kids helping Kids in the world.



Things to do

- Start a Free The Children group: www.freethechildren.com
- Make your school sweatshop free: www.studentsagainstsweatshops.org/resources.php
- Host a sweatshop free fashion show: www.maquilasolidarity.org/tools/campaign/fashionshow.htm
- Go through your wardrobe & find out where your clothes, your school uniform and your gym kit were made, then research them at www.responsibleshopper.org or by using this Fair Wage calculator: www.fairtradecalculator.org.
- Field trip! Visit a local textiles factory, or clothing store, and ask about the materials used and the labour standards the organisation upholds.

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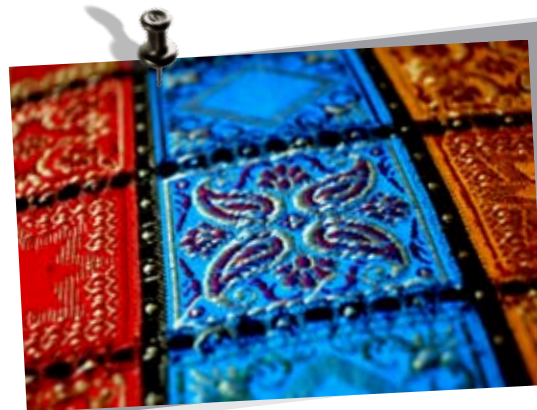
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ENERGY

OTESHA PROJECT UK HANDBOOK

THE BASICS



This chapter's
lovely narrator

We live in interesting times. Actually, we live in pretty absurd times. It's weird what we consider normal. It's weird that it's normal for so many people to spend most of their week trapped in buildings where the air is heated, cooled, re-circulated and pumped up and down and around and around. It's weird that once the daily grind is over, so many people are straight back onto another treadmill (in the gym). It's also weird that all gyms don't harness the energy produced by all those people pushing around or being pushed around by bits of machinery whilst they run, row and cycle in stasis and indoors.

I've just watched a delivery driver leave his van running outside my house for 10

minutes as he delivers a package. It was noisy, it was polluting and it was pointless. It's absurd that I regularly see drivers speeding up to the lights only to slam on the brakes. It doesn't take a lorry load of common sense that habits like that are bad for a vehicle's lifespan, road safety, noise pollution, the driver's wallet and the planet. A whole lot of badness.

We may not know exactly when we're going to run out of fossil fuels, but at the rate we're squandering them it's going to happen sooner rather than later. In which case, it would seem sensible to save them for something slightly more worthwhile than a TV left on standby overnight or a vehicle that's going nowhere.

What's the deal with carbon emissions anyway?

So let's tell a little story. Perhaps we've all heard it before. Once upon a time, dinosaurs roamed the earth, which, by the way, was pretty lush and green around this time, with big tall plants all over the place. The plants grew so tall because of energy from the sun, which they stored. Eventually the dinosaurs stomped all the plants down, which got pushed far underground and became fossilized.

Fast-forward a few million years, when people came on the scene. They discovered fire and started burning things around them to make energy, like trees, bushes – whatever was flammable. This energy kept them warm, cooked their food, and fought off danger. And if they started using too

much, they knew it right away because the trees around them started to disappear.¹ So they needed to maintain a pretty careful balance (well, or move somewhere else).

But then one day, about 900 years ago, some particularly clever people decided to light a lump of coal and see what happened. And, like magic, we started living off the stored sunlight. Around 1850 in Pennsylvania, another particularly clever person decided to drill into the ground and see what he could pump out. Black stuff spurted everywhere – on his clothes, all over the ground, way up in the air. And so began the age of oil.²

The point? Fossil fuels, like oil and coal, essentially represent hundreds of millions of years of stored energy. And we're going to use it all up in a few hundred years. Clearly we're living beyond our means, and we're getting immensely dependent on this lifestyle.



Liz's two cents
on this whole age
of oil thing

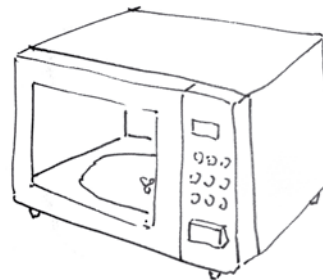


How all fossil fuels
started out, 300 million
years ago

What's more, when we burn this fuel, we're releasing 300 million years of stored up carbon dioxide into the air in a really short period of time – which causes the temperature of the air to rise. Since carbon dioxide traps heat in the atmosphere, these emissions have thrown the earth's entire system off balance. This is why climate change is so scary. We've never messed with our planet's system this much in such a short period of time, and there's no way to tell for sure what the consequences will be.

Since these millions of years of trapped energy are really cheap and easy to use, we started being incredibly wasteful with fuel. We didn't see the oil disappearing when we used it, so for a long time, we didn't think

it was going to run out. On some level, we still don't believe that it ever will. The result? We've created all these products and processes, from cars to kettles to homes, that use way more energy than they actually need to. And now we need to change it, and fast.





Yes - that's pedal power at work

* How many bikes?

If we pedal-powered all our energy needs for a day, just how hard would we have to cycle?³

- To power a laptop: 1 bike
- To juice up a sound system: 2 bikes
- To give sound to a 5-piece band: 4 bikes. Not too bad for live music.
- To make a piece of toast: 12 bikes. Better start inviting our mates round for breakfast.
- To boil the water for a cup of tea: a whopping 50 bikes. That's 100 legs spinning for the amount of time it takes the kettle to whistle.

TRUE OR FALSE?

Things we're trying to

wrap our heads around

So how much does the UK contribute to these carbon emissions?

Barely anything? When you look at global emissions, our puny contribution seems pretty insignificant: just over 2% of the world's total. Maybe we shouldn't be too bothered about saving energy since we're using much less than, say, China or India.⁴

Too much to bear? If we consider carbon dioxide that's emitted all around the world on Britain's behalf, the situation changes pretty dramatically. Through the process of globalization, countries like China, India and Africa are using huge amounts of energy in order to supply the UK with all sorts of consumer products from soap to soup spoons to shoes.

'Britain's apparently light carbon footprint gets a lot bigger when worldwide investments made with British money are taken into account,' says environmental research company Trucost.⁵ Britain benefits directly from those investments, either by bringing cheap goods to the UK or by creating profits which flow right back into the British economy. So when all the emissions we're responsible for are included, we actually create between 12% and 15% of the global total.⁶

The verdict: Since Brits account for a shade less than 1% of the world's population but are responsible for 12-15% of emissions worldwide, we're definitely producing more than our fair share. Twelve to fifteen times our share, to be precise. Ouch.

Does anything I do to use less energy actually make a difference?

Just a drop in the bucket? Sadly, Jo is not going to single-handedly combat climate change just by compulsively switching lights off. Should she stop fussing around with turning her appliances off and focus on larger actions, like encouraging local councils to invest in small-scale renewable energy projects or lobbying our national government to stop building coal-fired plants?

A crucial part of the solution? On the other hand, personal contributions to energy use are by no means insignificant. Almost a full third of the energy we use goes right into our homes, satisfying our cravings for steaming cups of tea, relaxing hot showers and nice bright rooms.⁷ So just by straining

ourselves to get up and turn the telly off standby, we can achieve a fair bit – that is, if others are doing it too. This is where tools like The Nag (www.thenag.net) or i-count (www.icount.org.uk) are pretty useful – they both track and map the number of people who've done tiny, simple actions (like switching that little red light on the telly off).

The verdict: The answer lies somewhere in the middle – one person's actions don't do much, but even if a few of us started turning lights off and practised stumbling around in the dark, we'd notice a pretty big difference. And if we start by putting our energies into making our own homes efficient, there's actually quite a lot we can do on our own.

Encourage your MP to support good energy policies. Find out how to send a letter, email or fax: www.theyworkforyou.com





We still can't believe
that it takes 12
people cycling to
make this work!

Can technology get us out of this mess?

Yep: Technological advances made over the past few years have made the idea of a fossil-fuel free future much more possible. Cars can now run on waste veg oil, innovations in design have produced some really low energy-consuming products, and renewable technologies (like solar panels and wind turbines for your back garden) have moved forward in leaps and bounds.

Nope: But, even with these new advances, most people who've done the math seriously doubt that they'll be enough to stop rising CO₂ emissions.⁸ Most research shows that no renewable source can ramp up quickly enough to let us keep consuming the amount that we do.

Earth Hour

On March 31, 2007, millions of people in Sydney, Australia decided to take collective energy-saving action.


For one hour, 2.2 million people and 2100 local businesses turned off their lights. All of them. Including the Harbour Bridge and the Sydney Opera House. Some people even got married by candlelight. The result? Energy demand in the city was reduced by 10.2% for the hour – the same as taking almost 50,000 cars off the road.

In 2008, Earth Hour will be happening all over the world – see www.earthhour.org for a list of participating cities.

And even if new technologies could completely replace traditional energy sources, some of 'em, like electric cars or biofuels, have pretty major drawbacks. For example, it takes over 70 barrels of oil to produce just one electric car.⁹ What's more, the electricity for the car is only as clean as the source that powers its grid. In the UK, much of our electricity is coal-powered – not so clean and green after all.

The verdict: While cleaner technologies, renewable energy, and high-efficiency products are all great, they're unlikely to solve all our energy-guzzling-related needs in the short term. We probably need to actually do a few things differently in order to slow climate change.

If the Swedes can do it,
then so can we.



Going 100% renewable, Swedish-style

Back in 1997, the city of Malmö, in Sweden, decided to do something totally audacious, something that had never been done before: build a fossil fuel-free neighbourhood.

What's more, city officials decided that the renewable energy powering the area had to be 100% local (no offshore wind farms or far-off hydroelectric dams allowed)!

The result? A thousand-home neighbourhood in Malmö's Western harbour which uses wind, solar and groundwater energies to supply all its power. Most of the homes are extremely energy-efficient (with thick walls, lots of windows, and good ventilation) and there's lots of green space to encourage walking, cycling and to draw in local wildlife. The town was even built on a former landfill (cleaned up, of course).¹⁰

Fine, but what about nuclear?

A dream solution? Nuclear power stations produce almost no carbon emissions once they're up and running. Since the UK has committed to cutting its emissions by 20% by the time 2010 rolls around, this carbon-neutral option could be part (or even all) of the solution.

In our dreams? Two of the biggest problems with oil are that it's getting more and more expensive to get out of the ground and it's running out. So, our -term alternative is uranium – which is *also* getting more and more expensive to get out of the ground and is *also* running out. Eh? (Estimates say that Australia's supply – almost half of the world's reserves – could be gone in 20 years if, as predicted, demand for nuclear doubles).¹¹

Even if we found a limitless supply of uranium tomorrow, turning it into power is a dirty process. Building a new generation of nuclear power stations will emit 20 million tonnes of CO₂ per station, mostly from the production of all the concrete and steel that goes into each new nuclear reactor and all its surrounding buildings.¹² To top it off, the conversion and enrichment of uranium uses chemicals that are 10,000 times more potent greenhouse gases than carbon dioxide.

Creating nuclear power is also a pretty expensive process. If the UK wants to meet our emissions reduction targets through nuclear power, we'll need to spend at least £10 billion over the next few decades.



Read on for the verdict....





Getting friendly with greenhouse gases

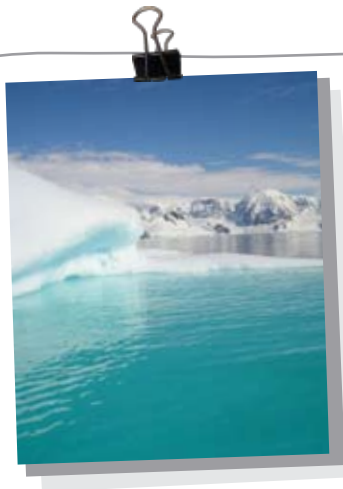
And this doesn't even take into account the other concerns around nuclear – like its potential impacts on health, its connections to the global arms race, the link between uranium mining and social justice (many uranium mines are located on indigenous lands¹³), health (rates of cancer and birth defects are often much higher in communities located near mines¹⁴) and, of course, what to do with the highly radioactive waste.

The verdict: Not cheap and not practical. Next time someone says that nuclear power is clean and easy, ask them: where do you mine the uranium? Where do you put the power stations? How will you power the plants once we've mined all the uranium?

Yeah yeah, so we're already up close and personal with our favourite greenhouse gases (or GHGs as we lovingly call them).

Or are we? Quick – name three. And then read on if you, like us, could use a refresher:

- The main greenhouse gases are: water vapour, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide and ozone.
- They contribute to the greenhouse effect by trapping warm air in the atmosphere instead of letting it escape into outer space.
- As with most controlling and clingy relationships, GHGs cause all kinds of problems with the earth's climate. They mess with global temperatures, rainfall patterns, ocean currents, and all kinds of other pretty important systems.
- Some greenhouse gases occur naturally in the atmosphere, while others result from human activities like burning fossil fuels or farming cows.



Are our actions really going to make this disappear?

Okay, so are people really the ones causing climate change?

Would it happen anyway, with or without people? The earth is an incredibly complex system and it's always changing. Even though we like to pretend that we understand how it all works, the truth is that a few hundred years of scientific exploration isn't going to unravel the mysteries of a few billion years of evolution. In the past, the climate has always shifted, so why should we expect it to stay the same now?

Or maybe we're messing with the climate? At the end of last year, the world's leading group of scientists studying climate change, the IPCC, announced that they're over 90% certain that humans are responsible for global warming. Or, as they put it: "There is very high confidence

that the net effect of human activities since 1750 has been one of warming."¹⁵ This is actually thought to be a pretty conservative estimate.¹⁶

The verdict: Sure, the climate is always changing, but the kind of changes we're seeing right now usually happen over the span of 10,000 or more years, not within a single generation. And evidence that climate change is indeed caused by human behaviour continues to mount, as CO2 emissions and global temperatures continue to rise in step. This one goes to the scientists.

Still not convinced? Read the IPCC report or rent *An Inconvenient Truth* for more gory details.

Does it cost more to be an energy saint instead of a sinner?

Do sinners pay less? Switching to renewable energy might cost a little more. And efficient products, like low energy lightbulbs or washing machines, usually have a higher price tag. So what gives – does it actually cost money to save energy?

Do saints win out? They do if they think long-term. Energy efficient appliances and light bulbs tend to last a lot longer than their energy-guzzling counterparts and they actually cost less to use, as they don't require much to run. For example, an energy saving light bulb will last up to 12x longer than an ordinary light bulb and could save up to £100 on electricity bills over the bulb's lifetime.¹⁷ Score one for energy efficiency.

Verdict: In the long run, using less energy really does pay off. Like, leaves-you-with-more-money-to-spend-on-other-things pay off – as well as the environmental thing.

Insulate and save:

Insulating our houses is the most effective thing individuals to reduce energy consumption at home. Whilst it might seem expensive (especially for renters), insulating a loft can put between £180 and £220 right back in our pockets

Check the “Energy Saving Grants and Offers” section of the Energy Saving Trust’s website (www.energysavingtrust.org.uk) for a list of local authorities and power suppliers up and down the UK who are subsidising domestic insulation.



It pays to wrap up warm!

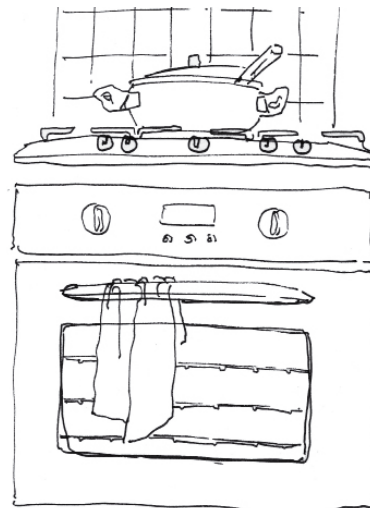


FYI

- An energy-efficient lightbulb costs £2.14 a year to run, and a normal one costs £13.60 a year.¹⁸

- If everyone in the UK wrapped up & insulated their lofts, it would be like taking 710,000 homes off the grid.¹⁹

- In Britain, we can get 85% of our electricity from renewable sources (20% from wind, 20% from the sea, 40% from microgeneration, and 5% from biomass and solar.) At the moment, we only get 5%.²⁰



HOW KYLA GOT INTO ENERGY



I first became aware of climate change when I was asked by a theatre director to help him devise an educational road show about global warming and climate change. The pre-requisite for the job was 'must care about the environment'.

'That's me!' I thought. I always fancied myself as a bit of a tree-hugging, whale-saving, placard-waving leftie. I was sure I could do this show with my eyes closed.

In fact, just the opposite happened. The more research I did for the show, the more my eyes widened. The three of us who were building the show spent a month reading newspaper cuttings, articles, websites and debating climate change, global warming

and its effects. I learned that climate change was no passing fad and no bandwagon to jump onto but rather an incredibly complicated and dangerous reality.

We put something together and performed our first show at the Shoreditch Car-Free day in London's East End. It was a loud and colourful affair, and at the end we gave out free energy efficient light bulbs and got the audience to sign pledges to do their bit.

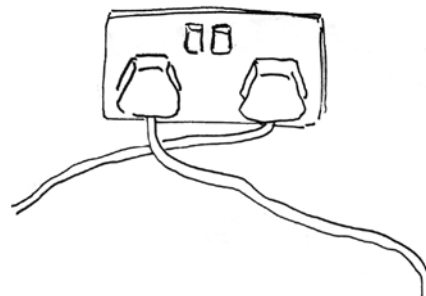


We then went back to the drawing board and refined the show a little more. We wanted to make it less of a lecture and more child-friendly as we had just got some primary schools interested in having us round to do the show. The more we worked on the script, the more I realized that this issue was taking over my life.

At first the changes were subtle. I started to notice specific items on the news: floods in Cornwall, heat waves in France, hurricanes in America, and I started to link them together. What was causing them? Why were they increasing in frequency? Then I began to take on board some of the solutions we offered in the show to 'stop global warming and start saving energy'.

I turned off lights when I wasn't using them, turned off the TV and all appliances instead of leaving them on standby, changed my light bulbs to energy efficient ones,

unplugged my mobile charger, reused all my old jars and plastic containers, recycled as much packaging as possible, washed my clothes at 30 degrees, carried my own reusable shopping bags, shopped at farmer's markets and independent, smaller shops, bought a compost bin and started composting my organic waste. I even switched to a renewable energy supplier, bought a bicycle, turned the heating down and off when it wasn't necessary, and started to buy all my clothes from charity shops.





Kyla's FYI:

-Each household in the UK creates around six tonnes of carbon dioxide a year.

- The average household can reduce carbon emissions by 33% (around two tonnes of CO2) a year by improving energy efficiency.

“Being confronted forced me to think about what I valued.”

Suddenly, one day, I looked around and my life had changed! All those little things that I had been doing day in day out had now become habits. I was no longer living my life for convenience alone. Instead, I'd become aware, pro-active and very, very vocal about what I was doing and why. I felt pleased with myself! I felt like I was saving the world single-handedly.

This feeling didn't take long to disappear. One day, I mentioned to my boyfriend and my flatmate that I was going to the Amazon (a life-long dream of mine) to hug some trees and marvel at the lushness of nature.

‘How are you getting there?’ they asked me sweetly, leading me into their trap.

Then they proceeded to take me down a peg, pointing out how bad flying is for, y'know, the environment. That, in fact, it was actually the worst thing I could do. A woman of my credentials!

They had me. I couldn't argue my way out of it. No matter how much I claimed that I deserved a trip, I was going to appreciate nature, and I was still a good person (!), I knew they were right. I was a hypocrite. I had taken the easy actions and basked in their glory but as soon as I was confronted with something I found truly uncomfortable to give up, I tried to worm my way out of it by justifying it as necessary and essential.

I realized, with a sinking feeling, that I'd been passing the buck and waiting for someone else to deal with the real problem so that I could get on with my life.

Being confronted with that really forced me to think about what I valued. Was it more important for me to fly to the Amazon for two weeks, emitting almost two tonnes of carbon into the atmosphere so that I could satisfy a whim? Or was it more important for me to know that I was living a sustainable life, making choices that may help people in Bangladesh in years to come not to have their homes flooded by rising sea levels?

These are now the kinds of choices I am making every day when deciding to buy

tomatoes from Kent instead of Morocco, choosing to repair something instead of throwing it away and deciding who I will vote for in the next election.

In the end, I'm no extremist climate militant. I'm only human and I've still got a few 'energy addictions' to deal with, but I'm trying. I'd still like to go to the Amazon though.



Kula working on her climate change road show

THINGS THAT WORK

What other people did

The Magnificent Revolution: How to host a pedal-powered party

Even holding a trashing house party involves powering a sound system and a likely visit from the noise control unit. But, thanks to pedal power, even house parties can go off-grid. The Magnificent Revolution, a small collective from Cambridge, put together a whole pedal-powered system that can power all sorts of events, and they love a house party. Although just because your party's as green as they come, you're not any more likely to befriend the neighbours .

It doesn't take much to pedal-power a sound system – two bikes churning out about 60-70 watts each will do the trick. The

system is simple: two road bikes are hooked up to two training stands. The training stands each have a small wooden platform attached to them. Then, onto the platform goes a scooter motor with a skateboard wheel attached. When a bike is secured into the training stand, its back wheel tensions against the skateboard wheel.

When a hot pair of legs starts biking, the bicycle wheel spins, in turn causing the skate wheel to spin, which in turn causes the motor to spin and presto – you've got energy...wicked! So there you go. Couple of punters on bikes, a bit of wiring and the party is on.

www.magnificentrevolution.org



Next step:
figuring out how
to pedal-power
the lights too

Doing it together: Transition Towns

This network, which started in Kinsale, Ireland in 2005, links together communities that are actually doing something about climate change and peak oil (a fancy-schmancy term for the moment when we've used half of the world's oil supply and it goes into irreversible decline) into a global community-based movement.

The network is developing resources and training courses for "the great reskilling", helping to break our needy relationship with fossil fuels by teaching everything from gardening to clothes-dyeing to creating composting toilets. By learning to do things locally, Transition Towns are becoming less dependent on those pesky fossil fuels. In the end, low-carbon living doesn't have to be about sacrifice – it can actually lead to a fairer, more resilient and, dare we say, more fulfilling way of life.

www.transitiontowns.org

The eco-village response: BedZED

In the UK's largest eco-village, 100 residents work together to see how carbon-neutral they can become. BedZED's key features include rooftop gardens, wastewater recycling, natural light, solar panels, pedestrian-friendly walkways, waste woodchip heating, efficient lighting and appliances, and top-notch insulation (starting to see a pattern here?).

As a result, homes here use about 10% of the energy for heating compared to a normal London house. But BedZED's engineers didn't stop there – they sourced over half of their construction materials locally and used wood from sustainable sources. What's more, the housing is mixed use, with an on-site children's nursery and some commercial spaces, so that people can live where they work (makes doing away with the car a lot easier, doesn't it?).²¹

*Think we can convince
all our friends to build an
eco-village with us?*

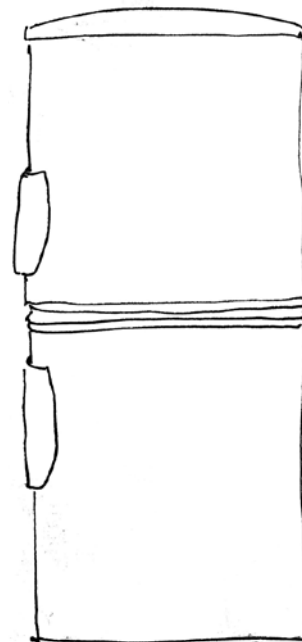
Lambeth Climate Action Group


Members of this London-based citizen's group have come up with some brilliant ways to stop using such a ridiculously large amount of energy without too much effort.

Take Duncan, one of their pioneer members. In his Brixton home, he grows his own food, composts organic waste, keeps rooms warm with extra insulation, buys renewable electricity, and reuses grey water from the shower in his garden. When you take into account his other energy-saving measures (like cycling absolutely everywhere!), he's managed to reduce his carbon emissions to about 4 tonnes per year. The average Brit creates about 13 tonnes, so this is no mean feat.


Electrisave / energy monitoring devices

An Electrisave (available from www.ethicalsuperstore.com) is a wireless electricity usage monitor which shows you how much electricity you use at home, how much it costs you, and how much harmful CO2 emissions you are contributing to the environment through your electricity usage. They say that most people can save up to 20% of their electricity just by becoming more aware of where it's actually being used in the house.





On average, each household in the UK spends £470 per year on packaging alone.²²



Think of how many weekends away in Wales that could buy!

Unpackaged: declaring freedom from food wrapping

When we really start thinking about how we use, store and save energy, lots more questions start bubbling up.

Saving energy in the home is all well and good, but what about the energy used to make things that we bring into the home? Food that travels thousands of miles is a huge energy guzzler, so eating local (or growing our own!) must help save energy. (See the Otesha UK Handbook's food chapter for more on this.)

An even bigger question is what to do about all the plastic, paper and Styrofoam packaging that it comes wrapped up in. This is where Cath Conway comes in. She decided that food packaging was

silly, wasteful, expensive, and could be done away with altogether. So she created Unpackaged, where people bring their own containers and fill them up with tasty bulk goods – she stocks everything from flour to chocolate almonds.

What started as a market stall has turned into a shop in north London. And we hear rumours that she's about to take on Tesco and the other big boys to see how much bigger this idea can go.

www.beunpackaged.com

What it all boils down to

After we've filled the kettle (with the only amount of water we need, of course) and made ourselves a cup of tea, what it all boils down to is that excessive energy use is really a symptom of over-consumption, and not a cause. We're living off more than we've got, and it's catching up with us.

But this urgent need to stop using so many fossil fuels is actually a huge opportunity – by addressing climate change, we also have the chance to break things down & rebuild our production / consumption system in a whole new way. Sure, efficiency and renewables are part of the solution, but looking at how to be fundamentally less wasteful will open up so many other

opportunities to innovate, re-imagine & recreate the way we make stuff, use stuff & dispose of it when we're done.



Off the Shelf - things you can do

Switch to renewable energy

Call Good Energy on 0845 456 1640
or Ecotricity on 08000 326 100.

Switch over to 100 renewable electricity and help increase the amount of renewable energy being produced in the UK. Take five minutes to do this, and you can feel smug all week long and be renewably warm all winter.

Be a sneaky energy-saver

Carry low-energy light bulbs with you wherever you go, either compact fluorescents or, for bonus points, use mercury-free LED light bulbs.

When the right moment strikes - whether in a public building, an office space, your uni's cafeteria or your mate's flat - www.beunpacked.com reach up, unscrew the light bulb, and pop the new one in. Then walk away. No one saw anything.

More things you can do....

Think back along the supply chain:

There are a million things to do in your house that'll guarantee energy savings down the line. Here are our favourites:

The magpie's dream
Instead of buying new stuff, reuse or repair what you've got. Darn those holey socks, patch that leaky bike tyre and repair that somewhat-broken-but-still-okay CD player. This may require a visit to an electrical repair shop.

The minimalist's approach

Declare your independence from packaging.

- Buy your food at the farmer's market and take it home in your own bags
- Ask for take-away lunches in reusable containers

- Bring your own mug to the coffee shop
- Wean yourself off the plastic bag habit. And then keep thinking about other ways to rid your life of unwanted crap packaging.

The muddy-kneed tactic
Get down and dirty by growing your own food in the back garden.

And yet even more.

Cover the basics - get
staudottish about standby

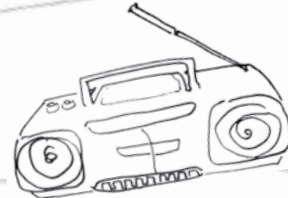
Switch off appliances when not in use
instead of powering something that's not
even on. 85 percent of the energy used
by a typical DVD player goes into keeping
that little red standby light on.²³

Go unplugged. You know how a mobile
charger stays warm in the socket even
when your phone's fully charged? That'll
be the electricity that it carries on using
to do, well, nothing.

Find your carbon footprint

Measure your CO₂ emissions on the
Act on CO₂ website
www.direct.gov.uk/ActOnCO2

Or use one of the Carbon
Calculators at [www.coinet.org.uk/
solutions/carboncalculations](http://www.coinet.org.uk/solutions/carboncalculations)



ESCALATE

How to feed a BIG idea

Get toasty with a solar hot water heater.

Got a patch of roof that faces, well, any direction except north?

These little gadgets can supply about a third of the hot water that a household uses (or much more in houses that take staggered showers and do the laundry with cold water!). They're also really low-maintenance.²⁴

Although solar hot water heaters can be pretty pricey to get installed, they're likely to save you at least £800 over their lifetime. Individuals can also apply for a grant from the Low Carbon Buildings Programme to get one installed in your home (the government hearts microgeneration) Find more info at www.lowcarbonbuildings.org.uk.

Or, for the very brave, learn how to build yourself a simple solar collector at www.DIYdata.com.²⁵



ESCALATE

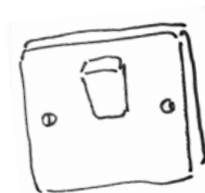
How to feed a BIG idea

Read these books

- *Heat*, by George Monboit. (2006, London: Penguin)
- Go M.A.D- Go Make a Difference, 365 Daily ways to Save the Planet (2001, London: The Ecologist)
- *Six Degrees*, by Mark Lynas (2007, Fourth Estate: HarperCollins)
- *The Low Carbon Diet*, by Polly Ghazi and Rachel Lewis (2007, Short Books)
- *The Party's Over*, by Richard Heinberg (2005, New Society Publishers)
- *Save Cash and Save the Planet* (20xx, Friends of the Earth)
- *How We Can Save the Planet*, by Mayer Hillman (2004, Penguin)

Peruse these websites

- Friends of the Earth: www.foe.co.uk
- Climate Outreach and Information Network: www.coinet.org.uk
- Energy Saving Trust: www.energysavingtrust.org.uk
- What you can do: www.whatyoucando.co.uk
- 4EcoTips: www.4ecotips.com



And then do something!

Create a Community Action Group to help support your neighbours and friends to lower carbon emissions in your area. Or go one step further and try and work towards your town/area becoming a Transition Town.

Take a straw-bale building workshop and learn how to build energy-efficient spaces: www.strawbale-building.co.uk

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2 - For more on this, read *The Last Hours of Ancient Sunlight* (Thom Hartmann, 1999, Harmony Books) or *It's the Crude, Dude: War, Big Oil and the Fight for the Planet* (Linda McQuaig, 2004, Random House).

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Over for more about the future prospects for renewables (see the 'Escalate' section for more details on these books).

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12 - The Ecologist, June 2006. Nuclear Power Dossier: Building a Nuclear Power Station. http://www.theecologist.org/archive_detail.asp?content_id=627

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21 - BedZED website, from the Peabody Trust: <http://www.peabody.org.uk/pages/GetPage.aspx?id=179>

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24 - And again, the Energy Saving Trust. Here's where the details on solar hot water heating are: http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/generate_your_own_energy/types_of_renewables/solar_water_heating

25 - DIY Data. How to make a simple solar hot water heater: http://www.diydata.com/projects/solarpanel/solar_collector.php



FOOD

OTESHA PROJECT UK HANDBOOK

THE BASICS



Our narrator,
enjoying a
delicious lunch

Okay, I admit I'm a little obsessed with food. I think I've always been this way - from my grandma's famous lemon butter to the eye-watering hot sauce that my dad used to pour on everything - so many of my strongest and more primal memories are deeply connected to my taste buds. And it's not just me - food cravings are universal. We all love to eat things that fill our stomachs and our souls. Lately, though, I've noticed a worrying pattern in my life. As I'm running from one place to another, it often feels like it's just easier & cheaper to grab a quick bite than to make a meal from scratch. More often than I'd like to admit, I end up chowing down on a quick burrito or take-away curry because it's hot, tasty and available with zero time or effort from me.

But what am I losing when I turn my back on the tradition of growing things from the earth and turning them into fresh, nourishing meals? Some would say a lot. After all, I am, literally, what I eat. And right now, that isn't a good thing.

Because of our eating habits, my generation will be the first whose life expectancy is actually shorter than our parents.¹ When it comes to our daily bread, there's so much to think about beyond the burger wrapping. From our health to forests, waterways and local economies, it seems like there's little that it doesn't touch. So how is it that we hardly ever talk about how our food gets from the ground to our mouths?

Why size matters: a guide to small vs. big in farming

Small-Scale Organic Farms ²

- Are often smaller than 200 acres
- Use only natural pest reducers (insects, human weeding) and natural fertilizers (compost, manure, nutrient giving crops)
- Use polyculture (many kinds of plants on each field) & crop rotation for healthy soil
- Don't use Genetically Modified Organisms
- Use mainly human labour



Large-scale Industrial Farms

- Are often larger than 6,000 acres
- Rely on the use of pesticides and fertilizers which strips soils of its fertility
- Mostly use monoculture (only one kind of plant on each field)
- Use lots of machines and fossil fuels
- May use Genetically Modified Organisms

Monoculture makes crops
susceptible to diseases &
reduces habitats for insects

The down-low on GMOs

Genetically Modified Organisms (aka GMOs) are plants that have had their genetic material altered, often by putting in genes from another species (ex. fish into tomatoes). This is usually to make them bigger, more flavourful, more colourful, or theoretically more drought/pest resistant. The long-term impacts of genetic modification are unknown, and are subject to much debate and controversy.



*FYI - meat & pesticides

- Pesticides can harm the environment. Many are toxic to aquatic life and can devastate rivers, lakes and groundwater. Scientists have shown that the declining number of farmland birds over the last 50 years is linked to intensive farming. ³
- Pesticides can contaminate drinking water supplies. The cost of cleanup adds up to millions and has to come out of customers' pockets. ³
- Proportion of the world's total grain harvest that is fed to livestock: 1/3. ⁴ (Counting the land used to grow these grains, and the land for grazing, meat production is the world's largest user of land!).
- Meat consumption per year of the average person in 2002 ⁵ :
 - Britain: 80 kg
 - China 52 kg
 - Mexico 59 kg
- Maximum red meat consumption per year recommended by the World Cancer Research Fund: 26 kg. ⁶
- Percentage of antibiotics in America that are fed to animals instead of used in human medicine: 84%. This is because animals kept in industrial farming conditions have weakened immune systems and often fall ill. ⁷

*FYI

- Every time a single North American becomes vegetarian, 1 acre of trees and 4.4 million litres of water are saved per year, and the amount of water indirectly polluted by that individual is cut in half. ⁸
- Organic arable production uses one-third less fossil fuel than conventional agriculture and organic dairy farms use three quarters less. ⁹

Between 1983 and 2005:

- Land for growing vegetables in the UK has declined by 30,000 hectares. ¹⁰
- The amount of food we've flown in from other countries has increased by 50%. ¹¹
- And the amount of food we've driven in from Europe has increased by 90%. ¹²



TRUE OR FALSE?

Things we're trying to wrap our heads around


If I want to eat healthier, is buying more fresh fruit & veg the obvious option?

True! After all, hasn't the government been banging on about getting our 5-a-day for years now? It's common knowledge that fresh food has way more nutrients than frozen, highly processed or canned fruit and veg.

Then again, maybe not. Food transport within the UK now accounts for a third of all our road freight. Internationally, food now accounts for 10% of all goods transported by air ¹³. There are lots of problems with this - to start with, most vegetables lose over 50% of their vitamins within a week of being picked ¹⁴. And the further food has to travel, the greater the lag between being picked, stored, trucked, flown, trucked, stored, shelved, bought, refrigerated, cooked and eaten. With each day that goes by, it loses a bit more of its quality, flavour and nutrients.

The verdict: Although fresh food is definitely the healthiest option, it sounds like a lot of the food on supermarket shelves isn't actually so fresh - sneaky! For maximum health benefits, it's best to favour locally-grown food over the tired, jet-lagged alternative.

Liz's take on air miles:



Last week, I went to the shop to buy a meal for myself and my three housemates. I'd been thinking a lot about food miles recently so, on a whim, I decided to take a look and see how far my food had traveled to get to our plates. I added up the miles and our meal for four, including salad from America, mushrooms from Zambia and wine from New Zealand, had clocked up over 80,000 km of travel – the equivalent of circling the whole world. Twice.

Are big, technologically advanced farms the best way to feed people and stop world hunger?

Of course! Since the Green Revolution in the 1970s, global food production has increased exponentially. Although around 2 billion people still struggle to feed themselves properly, experts reckon that nowadays it's more a food distribution problem than a food production problem. In large part thanks to big industrial farms, we now produce enough food to feed the world.

But wait - smaller farms might be even better. In theory this all sounds good, but in practice the increase of industrial-scale farming hasn't actually managed to help families in developing countries feed themselves any better than before the development of fertilizers, pesticides and automated farm equipment. It could even be said that our modern food system actually causes hunger, by using land in economically developing countries to grow 'cash crops' like coffee, sugar, chocolate and cotton. Instead of feeding growers and their families, these crops are mainly

sold to people in developed countries. While the plots of land owned by agribusiness companies to grow cash crops keep getting bigger, the plots owned by small farmers are shrinking— leaving little to no space for local people in developing countries to farm food for themselves ¹⁵




And small organic farms might be even better still: Here's where we start getting into the nuts and bolts of it all. Many studies have shown that well-managed, small farms using sustainable farming methods produce more food per acre of land than the large, industrial farms. One reason is that organic farmers fill their fields with several different crops and either weed them by hand or enlist the services of natural predators to help them out by using an approach called integrated pest management.

Most big farms don't like paying people to weed their industrial gardens, so they use pesticides instead. The problem is that these pesticides often work only for one particular crop, and so industrial farms can

only have one crop in a field, and lots of space is wasted in between the rows. On top of this, the style of industrial agriculture destroys the soil over time, so less is produced in the long term. Organic farming, on the other hand, can actually enrich the soil, allowing food to be grown on that land for much longer ¹⁶

The verdict: Small farms have actually been proven to be more productive than large, monoculture operations. Smaller-scale farming can also lead to greater food security, since family-owned farms enable more people to grow their own food to feed themselves and their families instead of having to earn income to purchase their food from the shop.



***Integrated Pest Management (IPM)** is a creative approach to pest and disease control that uses chemicals only as last resort. So for example you plant marigolds next to tomatoes to draw pests away from the tomatoes, or encourage dragonflies to eat mosquitoes and other flying insects.



Is there a point to becoming vegetarian if animal rights aren't your thing?

It's all about the animals: Many people choose to eat less meat, eat free-range or organic meat, or become vegetarian or vegan because they want to prevent cruelty to animals. So if you're a meat-lovin' kind of person who thinks that people should keep the omnivorous diet that humans have had for millennia, what's the point of going veggie?

But wait - there are other good reasons too. Increasingly, it's the environmental impact of meat production that's turning people vegetarian. As it turns out, meat production uses more resources and produces more waste than the production of plant foods.

Check out this example: to produce 1 kilogram of beef:

- 22,000 litres of water are used
- 10 kilograms of grain are fed to the cow
- 40 kilograms of manure are produced¹⁹.

On top of this, others are starting to go vegetarian because of health reasons. Eating less meat and dairy is a good way to avoid saturated fats plus the nasty hormones and antibiotics found in lots of factory-farmed animal products.

One more thing: Animal manure is a big contributor to waterway pollution & greenhouse gases. Gross!



So what's better for the health, meat or veggie?

Meat! A meal isn't a meal unless it's got some meat and two veg, right? Protein is important, and meat has lots of it. Even though it's true that animal products are high in saturated fats, eating small amounts of meat can't be that bad for the health, especially if our cut of steak comes from a happy free-ranging, organically-fed cow.

Veggie! In all likelihood, loads of us were told growing up that a normal dinner isn't complete without meat or fish to go alongside our veg and potatoes. Somehow, this idea has leaked into the realm of 'common sense'. But actually, believe it or not, the majority of people around the world live on a plant-based diet. The meat and cheese-heavy diet of the typical European is actually more of a crazy nutritional experiment than vegetarianism ever was. Research is showing that it's the vegetarians who are living longer lives (often 5-15 years longer than the meat eaters ²⁰, with a 24% reduction in mortality from heart disease)! ²¹ Every

essential vitamin and nutrient we need can be found in vegetarian foods, particularly in vegetables, nuts, beans, fortified soy milk, nutritional yeast, tofu and seeds.

The verdict: Although avoiding animal products altogether is definitely healthier than eating them regularly, there's a lot of middle ground here. Almost half of the people in the UK identify themselves as 'meat-reducing', which means they eat meat only occasionally. Not a bad step for people who aren't ready to give up their eggs and bacon completely.



Do most farm animals live pretty comfortable lives?

In the UK, most farm animals are raised in large-scale, industrial farms (commonly called '**factory farms**'). Here cows, pigs, chickens, rabbits, and turkeys are confined in small cages or stalls. In addition to saving space for the farmer, the small stalls stops the animals from exercising, keeping their meat tender. To keep up with demand for dairy products, dairy cows are artificially impregnated every year to keep them in constant milk production. Their baby calves then either live to become dairy cows (the girl calves) or get taken away immediately after birth to become veal (the unlucky gents) ¹⁷. Because animals stuck in such confined spaces tend to start fighting amongst themselves, measures must be taken to reduce the damage done to their meat (in other words, to protect the 'product' they've got around their bones). Chickens have the tips of their beaks cut off and piglets have their tails 'clipped', all without painkillers. Many farm animals spend their lives standing on one patch of concrete inside a huge steel building ¹⁸.

Factory Farm Alternatives

'Free Range' meat: the animal was not caged, and was permitted to roam about either outdoors (free range) or inside a barn (free run—in the case of chickens/turkeys).

Certified Organic meat: the animal was raised according to organic standards (fed no pesticide-treated or GM grains, nor animal feed of any kind (pasture fed), was given no hormones or antibiotics) and was verified by an independent inspector.

Vegetarian: a diet that does not include any meat (including fish).

Vegan: a diet that does not include any meat, milk products, eggs, or animal by-product.

Does it really make a difference whether I toss my apple core in the rubbish or the compost bin?

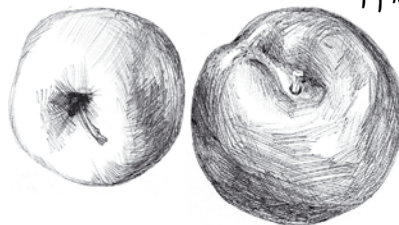
Yeah, it does actually. It might seem like composting is just a waste of time, but food packaging and waste, from fast food outlets and supermarkets especially, is stacking up in our landfills. About 20% of all waste created in the UK comes from packaging (about 4.5 million tonnes) while on average every person in England throws away seven times their body weight in rubbish every year ²².

In addition to costing lots of money, taking up land space, creating air pollution, and contaminating water supplies, our ever-growing landfills are a problem because as rubbish decomposes in an anaerobic (oxygen free) environment, it produces methane. Methane is 21 times more

destructive as a greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide, and in 2006, 928,000 tonnes of methane were released from landfills in the UK ²³. Composting that apple core instead of binning it means that those nasty landfill effects are avoided, and the soil that's produced contains valuable nutrients for our gardens. So just by switching this one thing - chucking something in a compost bin instead of a normal bin, methane emissions are reduced, and nutrients are added back into the soil.

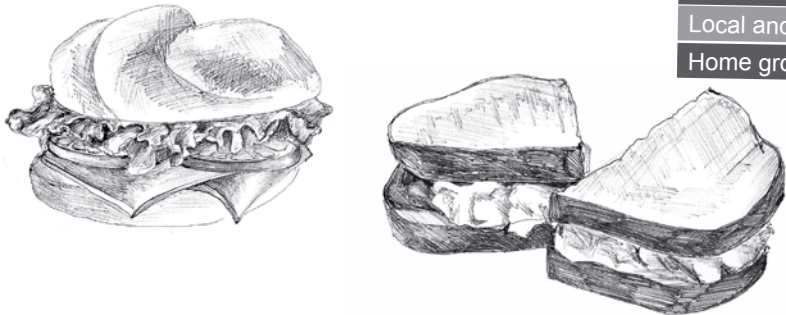


*Note to self:
compost those
apples!*



One last thing we’re glad we know now

‘**Ecological Footprint**’ refers to how much land (in this chart, how many square metres) is used to produce each one of those items. It includes the land required to grow the food and to absorb the waste associated with its production. It’s useful to compare different lunches and to see the different size footprints each one leaves on the earth.



Eco-Footprint of a lunch ²⁴

Burgers (one 250 g burger per week)	
Grain fed beef burger	3,598 m ²
Pasture fed beef burger	2,829 m ²
Chicken burger	716 m ²
Tofu burger	177 m ²
Vegetables (1/2 kg per week)	
From the Supermarket	152 m ²
Local	128 m ²
Local and organic (mechanized)	104 m ²
Home grown	64 m ²

HOW SARA GOT INTO FOOD



I was aware of so many of the 'ills' of our society's food that it sometimes made me sick. But I was a student. Even though I wanted to, I wasn't in the position to be able to afford all organic food. It frustrated me - in order to be able to pay for the way I wanted to live, I would have to forsake my volunteer hours for more paid hours, in a job I didn't enjoy, that wasn't helping anyone except a big profit-making manager in his office far away. Which was discarding another part of my 'way I wanted to live'.

So I carried on as I could and told myself I would make my food choices when I was in the position to do so - once I was earning more money, once I'd graduated...

Until I stayed with one of my friends for a little while. He didn't agree with my 'I'll do it when...' attitude. He was a student, but, unlike me, was completely supporting the food choices he believed in...without having to be a 'slave' to a job he hated.

I went on a 'grocery shopping run' with him one day. If you could call it that...

A few hours out helping at the farm by the University and we left with all the bendy and twisty carrots we could carry, a heap of 'oddly shapen' potatoes (can't believe they were unsellable - there was even one in the shape of a heart!), a bag of greens... A quick nip to a shop where one of our friends worked and again, we left with the goods

that couldn't be sold: a bag of brown rice, torn at the corner, some cheese with the sell-by date of that day, a few loaves of bread that would've gone stale (had we not frozen them as soon as we got home...) This stuff would've been thrown away! Madness. But double bonus for us - less waste and free, good food. Our 'food shopping' finished by heading home, where I picked some spinach from his little garden box.

Food Liberty! I had discovered the possibilities, in a big way.



THINGS THAT WORK

What other people did



Johnny Appleseed project

All new tree planting and the majority of landscaping at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada is going to be fruit-bearing. In a few years time, students will be able to hop out of their lectures and grab an apple from the nearest tree before heading to the library! These will be for anyone in the community who lives near UBC or comes to the campus.

We love these food fauatics!
Their amazing projects are
redesigning the way we eat, cook
& shop.

Edinburgh Fairtrade Café

Every Friday, a group gets together at Edinburgh University and uses Fairtrade, local and organic products to cook up a storm! Step through the doors and you're be overwhelmed by delicious smells. There's always a soup of some crazy flavour bubbling away on the stove, as well as quiche, bread, cookies, brownies – whatever people feel like making. And fairly traded coffee and tea, of course. It's a great gathering place, doubling up as an Amnesty letter-writing session and meeting spot for many Uni groups. The sale of the goods covers the cost of food, and any money left over at the end of the year is donated to a charity. Fairtrade cafés don't just spring up in Scotland though – you can find them all over the UK.



Foodworks UK

Every single day, in every community in the United Kingdom, supermarkets and green grocers throw out edible food. The reason? Some things have reached their sell by date (but not their use by date), or some of the apples and bananas are bruised and harder to sell to customers. When Kelvin Cheung learned this, he was shocked to think that some of these apples and bananas came all the way across the world, only to be thrown in the bin. So, in the autumn of 2008, he founded FoodWorks.

Driven by a group of committed young volunteers, FoodWorks has found a way to gather up surplus food, prepare it in an empty kitchen, and then serve it to people in the community affected by food poverty.

So far, meals have been served at youth homeless shelters and senior care homes. All of the food is super healthy and yummy - low in refined sugars & starches, and all made fresh. Popular menu items include roasted vegetable soup and apple crumble. The volunteers put a lot of effort into the food, going by the motto 'Would you serve this to your grandma?' The result - people eat healthier, food waste is reduced, and volunteers get the satisfaction that they've helped improve their local community. Even better, Foodworks collects surplus food and delivers the cooked meals exclusively by bike. Go pedal power!

www.foodworksuk.org



Sustainable Maleny

Shivani's story

A friend of mine came up to me last year and told me about a cool thing he'd heard about called an energy descent action plan. He said that a bunch of permaculture students in Kinsale, Ireland had done a study of their local area.

They'd come up with a plan of where they'd like to be in a few years so that their town can be really sustainable as we move into an uncertain future of climate change and less access to fossil fuels. They thought about energy, housing, transport, food, water and other important factors, and then mapped out the energy descent action plan, complete with year-by-year goals in order to get them to their end goal on schedule. I was inspired!

And then he said that he wanted to start up something in the town where we live – Maleny, in Queensland, Australia. One other guy was interested too. We had a meeting. A few people came. At the next meeting, we talked about a

community garden. At first, even though the meetings went on, nothing was happening. It felt like we were making no progress at all and I didn't want to be involved.

Then we started meeting in people's houses. Suddenly it changed, as we became human beings instead of numbers at a table. We learnt about our loves and fears. We started to bring food along. (Food always helps!) And before we knew it, we were laughing and having fun at meetings.

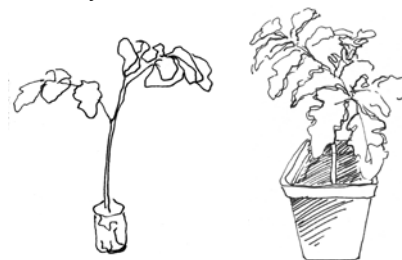
Sustainable Maleny has been going for 18 months now – we're still a baby. But we now have a community solar hot water project behind us, with some 60 houses getting a group discount just by pooling together. What a difference that will make to Maleny's energy consumption! And I'm in love with our community garden. I love it because it has evolved naturally, with friends who needed workers on their land meeting other friends who needed land to work on.



tiny tater plants...
soon to be chips!

We kick off the meetings on the veranda in the sun, birds in trees all around us. We plan our next moves, and we're like a whole lot of big kids hanging out together. It's working because there's no pressure, there's sensitivity to people's feelings and concerns, and there is love. That's what I feel when I go down to Bridgecreek Gardens. I love being with the group, I love the work we are doing together, and I love what it will bring to the community of Maleny as we grow our food and herbs and start to have some available for the local market as well as harvesting for our own use.

Okay, now I definitely feel inspired to plant that veg garden this year. Reading these stories has also reminded me why, when I open the refrigerator door and reach for a quick snack, it actually matters what item I grab. If I really want to do something about climate change, factory farms, healthy eating and all that, then I can start with what I put on my plate. An organic local apple it is, or maybe some Somerset cider!



Off the Shelf - things you can do

Be a guerilla gardener

Buy a packet of organic seeds or a small plant, and plant it anywhere! Be sure to water it and check on it regularly.

No available soil near you? No worries - try some creative holders like an old tyre or ice cream tub.

Seeds we've used: wildflowers, radish, wild garlic, clover, wheat, rocket. The best seeds are those that are local to the area, grow well with minimal maintenance, and attract bees.

Or make seed bombs using the recipe below and toss them over your shoulder into vacant lots. No planting necessary!

Recipe for seed bombs:

- 1 part seeds find ones local to your area!
- 2 parts compost
- 4 parts dry powdered clay

Mix the seeds and compost, and then add in the clay. Mist with water until the mixture gets damp enough to stick together, and then roll into small balls. Let them dry for 1-2 days and presto - you've got some sneaky gardening ammunition.

Off the Shelf - things you can do

Order a weekly veg box

Those of us who want to eat more fresh, local food but don't have space or time to grow our own can always support someone else's farm instead! Get fresh, organic food delivered to your door by signing up to a veg box scheme.

You can find the scheme nearest to you here: www.vegboxscheme.co.uk

Write a letter

What are your views on food issues like animal cruelty, pesticides, protecting farmland, and the availability of organic local food options? Make your voice heard and write your local politician to tell them what you think

Check out www.theyworkforyou.com to get in touch with your MP and take a look at our letter-writing guide in the Trade chapter.

More things you can do

Supermarket aisle masterpiece theatre

You'll need:

- 2-3 friends or one brave soul
- 1 supermarket

Here's one way it could go down:

Head over to the apples from South Africa & comment to your friend that it seems a really long way for them to travel, especially since there are so many apple orchards in the UK. Wonder out loud how many CO₂ emissions were emitted in transportation and what kind of conditions the apples were picked in.

Then walk over to the local, organic apples and sing their praises: they weren't bathed in chemicals, they weren't trucked all around the world, and they're not even genetically modified! Tell your friend how glad you are to have a choice that's good for your health, eco-friendly, and tastes much better.

Tip: A positive attitude is important here, so that people will be interested in listening and not scared away. Think of it as very small scale, incredibly subtle, public service broadcasting.

And another thing you can do...

Operation food rescue

What you need:

- Some form of transportation that can carry lots of food, i.e. bike cart, many friends on bikes, wagon, etc.

How it works:

1 Go to the local bakery/supermarket and ask to speak to the manager.

2 Introduce yourself and explain that you'd like to redirect unwanted food from the landfill to people who need it.

3 Ask them what they currently do with their day-old or unsellable food. If it's landfill-bound, then volunteer to pick it up at closing. Whenever they choose and bring it to a soup kitchen, food bank, or homeless shelter.

4 Contact the nearest shelter to make drop-off arrangements for the food.

ESCALATE

How to feed a BIG idea

Start your own community garden

Feel inspired after reading Shivani's story about her garden in Maleny? Here's her advice for getting started:

"If you're at all interested in doing something like this for your community, go for it! Don't be afraid that you don't have the skill or can't manage it – there'll be some way of doing everything that is needed – that's the wonder of working in a team. If there isn't someone who knows how to do it, there'll be someone who knows someone who can help, and on it goes. We're consulting all the time, learning all the time, and having so much

fun! Look at me – it's 11pm on a Friday night, and I'm sitting here typing this up, because I'm so much in love with it!

So, if you're into good food, healthy living, having lots of fun with your friends and learning all sorts of invaluable skills from establishing a garden through to managing information and working co-operatively with team members, - I suggest ... establishing a community garden! I haven't had so much fun in years and already our little parsley and basil plants are popping their heads up, ready for a replanting...."



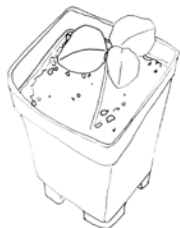
Take an (extended) field trip

Go to www.wooof.org and look for an organic farm near you where you can go and volunteer and learn about farming techniques. Or, to take it up a notch, you can find an organic farm in another part of the world and go volunteer there for a few months or even longer. It's a great, cheap way to see the world!

Watch these videos

The Meatrix (www.themeatrix.com)

Jennifer Abbott (2001). A Cow at My Table. Flying Eye Productions, Galiano Island.



Read these books

- Frances Moore Lappe et al (1998). World Hunger: Twelve Myths. New York: Grove Press
- Eric Schlosser (2002). Fast Food Nation. , Penguin, London 2002.
- John Robbins (2001). Food Revolution: how your diet can help you save your life and the world. Berkeley: Conari.
- Barbara Kingsolver (2007). Animal, Vegetable, Mineral
- Brenda Davis et al (2001). Becoming Vegan: The Complete Guide to
- Adopting a Healthy Vegetarian Diet. Baltimore: The Book Publishing Company
- The 100-Mile Diet (2007)
- Matthew Scully (2002). Dominion: The Power of Man.

And then go bake a cake!

Okay, so maybe this isn't exactly a BIG idea, but it's certainly a delicious one. And a good way to wrap up this chapter, since all this reading about food has made me hungry!

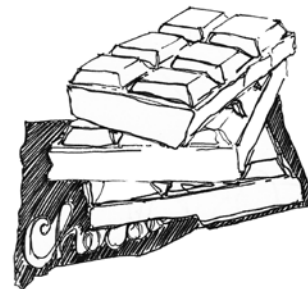
Vegan chocolate cake

This cake is a beautiful thing—every bit as tasty as any non-vegan chocolate cake could be. It is also extremely easy to make.

Ingredients

- 2 cups sugar*
- 1 3/4 c. flour*
- 3/4 c. cocoa powder*
- 1 1/2 tsp. baking powder
- 1 1/2 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. Salt
- Equivalent of 2 eggs **
- 1 c. soy milk *

- 1/2 c. vegetable oil *
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 c. boiling water



Steps

- 1 Heat oven to 180 degrees. Grease and flour two 9-inch round baking pans or one 9 x 13 square baking pan.
- 2 Combine all dry ingredients in a large bowl.
- 3 Add egg substitute, soy milk, oil and vanilla. Whisk until well combined.
- 4 Stir in boiling water (batter will be thin).
- 5 Pour into pans and bake for 30-35 minutes (round pans) and 35 to 40 minutes for a square pan.

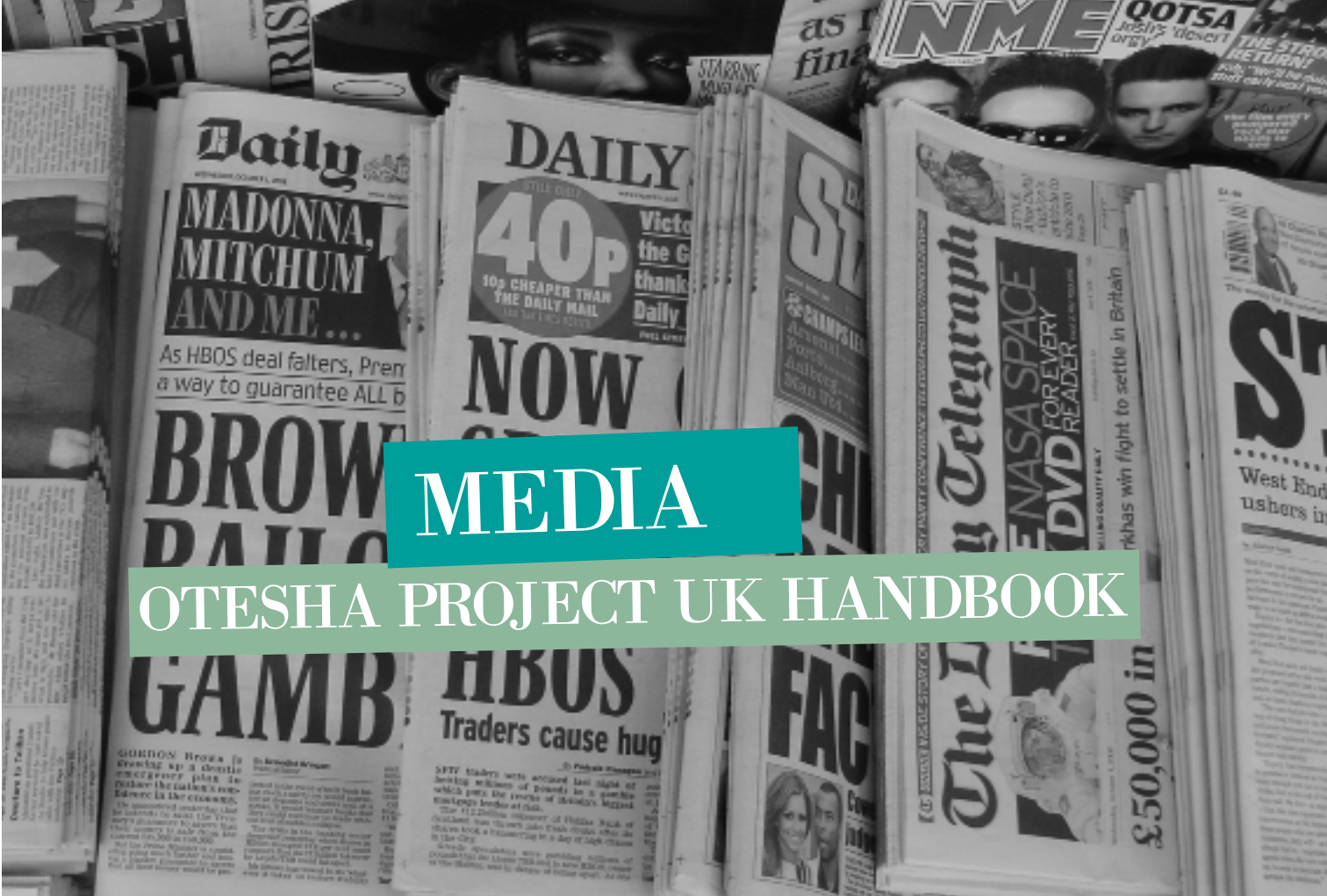
* Organic and fair trade options available at almost all health food shops, and some supermarkets

** 2 eggs = 1 mashed banana OR 1/2 cup applesauce OR 1 tbsp ground flax seeds mixed with 3 tbsp water

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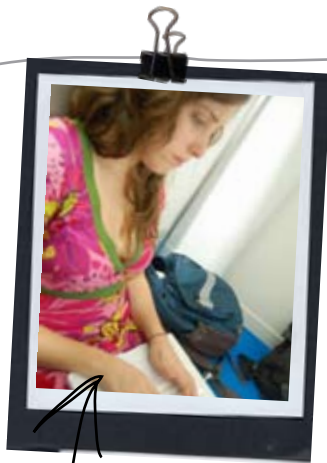
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MEDIA

OTESHA PROJECT UK HANDBOOK

THE BASICS



Liz, attached to her laptop as usual

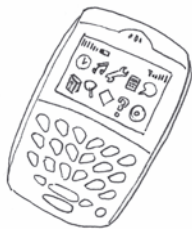


I've always been a fan of media (dahling!) whether it be the News at Ten or something a little more, shall we say, lowbrow. I spent years devotedly following TV series from Friends to Sex and the City, and devouring American fashion magazines for tips on spring's hot trends. But I didn't see media as something that I could actually create myself until I got involved with the youth climate movement.

I fell in love with mass communication last year, when I went to Bali for the UN Climate Change Conference. When Canada was blocking negotiations, our blogging mobilized thousands of people back in Canada to call the government and demand action, shutting down the phone lines to the Prime Minister's office. This action –

along with our articles, press interviews, and YouTube video clips – played a part in getting Canada to agree on stronger climate change targets.

But there's a fine line between using digital media and letting it take over. Sometimes it feels like I've got hundreds of friends that I talk to every day but don't see. Text messages, emails, the internet, blogs, iPods - sometimes it seems like I spend more of my time organising, documenting and writing about my life than actually living it. So, what do I do? Switch it off? Pretend it doesn't exist? Or embrace every possibility for living digitally...? This strange beast that we like to call media is part of my life. But what does it want? How does it work? And, most importantly, can I make friends with it?



* FYI - internet

- Four out of five 5 – 15 year olds have access to the internet at home.
- Facebook has over 100 million active users.²
- Almost half of children (49 percent) aged between 8 and 11, and eight out of ten aged 12 to 15 have their own mobile phone.
- The closer a teenager lives to an Instant Messaging partner, the more frequently they will communicate with them over Instant Messaging. How weird is that?³
- Two in five (40%) of 8-11s and over two-thirds (71%) of 12-15s say they mostly use the internet on their own at home.¹

TRUE OR FALSE?

Things we're trying to wrap our heads around

Does watching the ad breaks turn me into a mind-controlled zombie?

Yes, you are being thoroughly brainwashed – watch out! Guess how much was spent on advertising in the UK in 2007? Go on, take a guess.... it was 19.4 BILLION POUNDS. So, what do the advertisers get for their money?

Well, by the age of 12, the average girl will have been exposed to 77,000 adverts - many of which feature unobtainable, idealised images of female 'perfection'.⁴ So, those 77,000 adverts, what do they do for a girl's self-esteem? A recent survey of 2,000 girls in the UK and the US aged between 10 and 14 showed that more than three-quarters reported feeling fat, ugly and depressed when faced with pictures of beautiful models and celebrities.⁵ So what do they do about it? The average British woman

spends £3,000 a year on beauty products and treatments!⁶ And... at the end of June 2008, personal debt in the UK totalled 1,444 billion pounds. The result of watching all those adverts is spending all your money, thinking you're fat and feeling depressed – arrgghh! TURN OFF THE TV, QUICK!

Stop panicking – you can think for yourself, y'know.

Okay, so we know that adverts are wiley and all-too-pervasive, but there's no way that we believe everything that adverts feed us. A recent survey on the beauty industry (the same industry that makes us think we're fat, remember?) showed that 31% of women believed that either none or very few beauty companies were trustworthy.⁷ Hooray - we aren't being brainwashed!

What's more, people all over the world are busy being proactive and 'subvertising' – making spoof ads to make a statement about corporate or political adverts. Street artists like Banksy (not that we, *ahem*, condone his behaviour) are also pretty good at the old social commentary – looking at the girl tending to her TV aerial, it kind of reminds you to take back the reins and get out of the house!

The verdict: Adverts definitely have an effect on us, no question. It would be pretty weird if they didn't, considering that companies spend billions and billions of pounds on them. But there are also lots of ways that people are making their own messages out of ads, thinking critically, or just ignoring adverts altogether... nope, no zombies around here.

This Banksy graffiti & MacBaby spoof ad are both an example of what Adbusters calls culture jamming

Take action:

Pick up a copy of the magazine Adbusters or take a look at their website to see many creative ways that people are resisting and subverting advertising messages. If you come up with a good idea, send it to them and you just might get in print!





FYI - television

- Number of television commercials viewed by the average British child per year: over 18,000 (just under 50 per day!)⁸
- One in four teenagers fall asleep while watching television late at night in their bedrooms.⁹
- Less than 1 in 4 stories about young people in the national media are positive.¹⁰
- In a study of 1,428 characters appearing on US prime-time TV, the female characters were overwhelmingly white. Viewers were more likely to see an other-worldly female (ghost, angel) than they were a girl or woman portrayed as a Hispanic or Native American character.¹¹

Now that's a big habit!

Each year, young people spend an estimated £660 million on clothing, £620 million on music, £400 million on footwear, £250 million on magazines and £38 million on toiletries.¹²

↑
No wonder so many
adverts are
targeted at us!



Isn't the media more celebrity gossip than worthwhile news?

OMG, obviously! Did you hear that Brangelina just adopted their 52nd child?! As a nation, we're a teensy bit celebrity obsessed. Millions of copies of celebrity magazines are sold in the UK each week - Heat magazine alone sells about half a million copies.¹³ Gossip blogs are getting more and more hits too - popular blog Perez Hilton gets around 3 million unique visitors a day.



Our newspapers aren't immune either. In one month in 2008, The Sun mentioned Amy Winehouse 62 times and David Cameron, the leader of the Conservative party, just 60 times.¹⁴ So if you know more about your favourite celebrity's toilet habits than what's going on in politics, don't worry, you're in good company.

Reporters without Borders isn't just another name for the paparazzi. Ever wondered why we see so many paparazzi pictures of celebrities splashed all over our media? The things that the paparazzi do to get 'that picture' seem ridiculous and their methods are definitely questionable, but believe it or not, this bad behaviour is actually a sign that we live in a free and democratic country. In the UK we have 'freedom of the press' which is a guarantee by the government of free public press for its citizens and journalists, and their published reporting.

This means that on the one hand our media is free to report on who is dating who in the celebrity world (along with SHOCKING EXCLUSIVE pictures) but on the other

hand, they're also able to criticize our governments and institutions without censorship. What's more, the internet has opened up opportunities for people around the world to blog and email about their experiences. Even when the military junta imposed an almost total internet ban during the anti-government protests in Burma in 2007, techno-savvy Burmese citizens still managed to ensure that videos, photos and reports streamed out of the country, even going so far as to break down a long report into tiny messages and send it in "e-greeting" cards.¹⁵

The verdict: If you'd like to know what Britney Spears had for breakfast then that's cool, and probably quite easy to find out if you walk into your local newsagent or click on your favourite gossip blog. If you want to learn more about national and international current affairs, that's easy too – just read the paper, watch the news or read a political blog. What's more, we're learning more and more from people around the world who, before the internet, didn't

have much opportunity to get their voices heard. As long as these citizen journalists have their rights protected and the freedom of the press is valued, the media can inform, educate and entertain – now that's an invaluable service.

Citizens in other countries aren't always so lucky

Reporters Without Borders, an organization that fights against censorship and laws that undermine press freedom, claims that more than a third of the world's people live in countries where there is no press freedom. Overwhelmingly, these people live in countries where there is no system of democracy or where there are serious deficiencies in the democratic process. Not only that, but there are many cases of journalists being arrested or even killed for reporting on sensitive political issues in their countries.

Do we know who's behind the content of our media?

Who knows? Picture this – you get up on a Sunday morning and lazily leaf through The Sunday Times over breakfast. Your brother buys The Sun so you offer to recycle his growing pile of them, then you go upload some photos onto your MySpace page. You flick through The News of the World to catch up on their latest celebrity exclusive before meeting your friend to see a film from 20th Century Fox. When you get home you channel hop between Sky and ITV to see what's on before going to bed, reading a few chapters from your novel published by HarperCollins and crashing out.

It doesn't sound so out of the ordinary – just another Sunday right? But every media source just mentioned is owned by the same company. That's right, Rupert

Murdoch's News Corp owns a massive amount of media available in this country, and even more in the US and Australia. So are we really getting the variety of perspectives we think we're getting from our media, especially when the same company is behind so much of it?

It's clear as day. Our media isn't all monopolised - we have the BBC, which is a public service broadcaster and 'constitutionally established by a Royal Charter'. How posh!




Does he really know what he's reading?

"Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference, and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers".
- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

And according to the charter, the BBC is supposed to be “free from both political and commercial influence and answers only to its viewers and listeners”. There are also independent publications like The Guardian, owned by the Guardian Media Group, which seeks profit to sustain journalism that’s free from commercial or political interference and to promote liberal values (instead of seeking profit for the financial benefit of an owner or shareholders).

We’ve also got access to facts from a completely transparent source – Wikipedia. In this online encyclopedia, anyone can contribute – even you! What’s more, a lot of people argue Wikipedia is just as accurate as the Encyclopedia Britannica and generally more up-to-date.

The verdict: Much of the media that we read and watch every day has ownership concentrated in the hands of only a few big companies. These same companies are paid billions of pounds every year to advertise and promote products or services in their publications, which makes you wonder if they really have our best interests at heart when they report on, say, the new season’s fashion trends. But there are also many opportunities to access independently-owned media, like the BBC, the Guardian, online news sites or blogs. Just keep in mind that, transparent and independent ownership or not, most media isn’t telling a neutral story – creators are usually trying to get across a message. It’s up to us to decipher it and decide for ourselves if we want to take it on board.



Public service broadcasters, like the BBC, generally transmit programming that aims to improve society by informing viewers. In contrast, the aim of commercial outlets is to provide popular shows that attract a large audience, allowing higher revenue from advertisements.

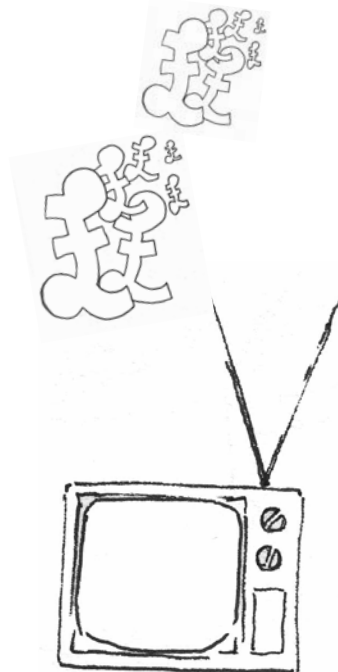


I can spot an advert when I see it.

Aha! I see you! Let's face it – it doesn't take a genius to recognize when we're being sold to. I mean, corporate sponsorship is what keeps magazines, newspapers and, of course, TV programmes, in business. Adverts are everywhere – on the bus, the street, the internet, in schools and even now on our mobile phones. And since we can spot these adverts, we can decide to ignore them when we get sick of 'em. Almost three-quarters of web users have left their favourite websites because of annoying ads and 59% of users have stopped visiting websites altogether because of intrusive or irrelevant adverts.¹⁶

Where's that pesky advert gone? It was here a moment ago...

Sometimes adverts are obvious, but sometimes they're really subtle. Hanna has this story to tell as an example: One of my friends was recently interviewed for a fashion feature about what young professionals wear to work (in a magazine that shall remain nameless). I'd overheard what she'd said on the phone to the journalist 'yeah some jeans, a jacket, maybe some dangly earrings if I want to look smart etc etc". So when the issue came out I skipped down to my local newsagents to read all about her wardrobe choices. Except they weren't her wardrobe choices! They had completely rewritten everything she had said – suddenly she couldn't leave the



house without a pair of purple Marc by Marc Jacobs flats. Designer labels were littered around the page and she hadn't mentioned any of them! Turns out fashion houses keep tabs on how many mentions their brands get in all the different magazines. If the editorial in one magazine doesn't plug enough Prada or Gucci or Chanel, you know the ad team will be getting a call – and the fashion team will be getting a hefty nudge to up the number of appearances for those designer skinny jeans and million dollar handbags.

You know what the cleverest thing about that article was? They were making my friend into a peer-to-peer advertiser, whether she wanted to be or not. Turns out we listen a lot more to our peers than big companies and they've caught on to that fact. Cue lots of people getting paid to tell their friends how great a certain product is. Your friend's recent shampoo recommendation doesn't have quite the same appeal now does it? Duh duh DUH!



Product Placement (aka Stealthy Undercover Adverts)

- All the leading characters on 24 drive Fords. In *Desperate Housewives*, 3 characters drive Nissans.
- The Bond film *Casino Royale* features loads of Sony product placements throughout: A BD-R disc, VAIO laptops, Sony Ericsson cell phones, GPSs, BRAVIA televisions, and Cyber-shots. Who knew Bond was so loyal?
- And it's not just in the movies - in 2005 celebrity chef Jamie Oliver admitted accepting £15,000 from Heinz to include an up-market version of baked beans on toast on the menu at his restaurant.

The verdict: Adverts are easy to spot when they're (metaphorically) slapping you in the face, flashing away on a billboard or keeping to their requisite pages in a magazine. But sometimes we're being advertised to and don't even know it. You've got to give credit where credit's due - those advertisers are sneaky.

HOW HANNA GOT INTO MEDIA

As the clock struck midnight on the 31st December 2007, I made two New Year's resolutions – to become a vegetarian and to stop reading celebrity gossip. I was meat-free for 4 and a half months, and celebrity gossip-free for... 2 days. Yup. My name is Hanna Thomas and I am a Media addict.

I was a big fan of Media from an early age. At the age of 3 I counted Big Bird and Snuffleupagus among my best friends and I could recite word for word the entire script of that Mozart film, Amadeus (random choice of film for a 3 year old, I know, but I still recommend it highly).

As a grown-up, film and TV are not my only areas of expertise - I am also a Facebook

expert, run my own website and blog, read the papers, read the online versions of the same papers and listen to the radio. You can often find me at home trying to do all of these things at the same time. And then there are the magazines. Oh, the magazines.

My flatmate has a subscription to Vogue. All the Vogues sit on a shelf above the TV. I buy Glamour magazine every month. They go in a pile by the Vogues. I also buy Grazia sometimes. They are relegated to a pile by the toilet for trashy bathroom reading. Any supplements from the weekend papers go in a pile on top of the fridge for breakfast perusing.



↑
Hanna's Magnum
face.. or is it Blue
Steel?

So at this point you are probably asking – what's the big deal? More to the point – why does Hanna have such dodgy taste in reading material? It looks like she got into Media at birth so what is she waffling on about? Well, to some extent that is true, I have been a consumer of Media all my life. But a few years ago, my relationship with Media changed, and I realised that I didn't have to be such a passive consumer of all these millions of words and thousands of images that passed through my mind every day.

Flicking through a copy of Glamour back in 2005 I stopped dead when I came across an advert for a watch that was, at the very least, sexist and demeaning to women. I

was fuming. Of course, this was not the first time that I had been fuming over women's portrayal in the Media (Page 3, anyone?), but it was the first time I decided to do something about it. I wrote an extremely outraged email to Glamour and got a very positive response from their publisher, Conde Nast, who advised me to get in touch with the Advertising Standards Agency (ASA) if I wanted to take my complaint further. I had never heard of the ASA, but I barrelled ahead, copied and pasted my extremely outraged email and sent it off to the ASA. The ASA took my complaint to the watch company, who sent back some very flustered correspondence saying that one complaint out of a circulation of 700,000 could not be deemed as causing





widespread or serious offence. Turns out they were wrong. A few weeks later the ASA contacted me to say that they had upheld my complaint and that not only would the advert never be featured in Glamour again, they were never allowed to show it anywhere again! I was exhilarated! I felt revolutionary! I had never, ever thought that just one email sent by little ol' me could get a degrading and offensive advert banned. But that's exactly what happened.

Since then, I have realised what power I have as a consumer and creator of media. I still flick through my celebrity magazines (the first step to overcoming an addiction is admitting you have a problem) but I do it knowing that I am part of a dialogue and that I don't have to accept anything and everything that is thrown at me in print, on TV or on the internet.

Better than that, I can change it.

Why not play the 'How Advertisers See the World' game?

It's easy - just set aside one hour and look through as many magazines and tv channels as you can, taking care only to look at the adverts. Build up a picture of AdWorld by answering these questions - then send what you find to us!

- What products are being advertised by men and what by women, and is there a difference?
- Can you imagine seeing the ad with the genders reversed?
- What age are the people shown?
- Does the person's race impact on the way they're shown?
- Are there any representations of non-traditional families or relationships?

THINGS THAT WORK

What other people did

Ctrl.Alt.Shift magazine: a consumer-generated creation

"We are a global community of outspoken agitators seeking change. We stand in solidarity with the abused, violated and the ignored. We don't stop until the suffering ends. Take control of your world, alter the way it works, and shift the way the future looks. Be part of the equation."

Ctrl.Alt.Shift is a free quarterly ethical lifestyle magazine run by young people for young people who want to change the way things are run. Fancy contributing? Then go to the Ctrl.Alt.Shift website where

you can comment and interact with articles and upload images or video to start further interaction and debate.

Katrin Owusu, Head of Youth Marketing and Innovations at Christian Aid, said: "The key mission of Ctrl.Alt.Shift is to bring about the democratisation of Charity, by being the first 'consumer generated' charity brand. Using concepts of co-creation, the project will act as a vehicle for people to connect and take action by creating content and campaigns, sharing ideas and inspiring each other".



*Who knew it
was so easy to
get published?*

Hitotoki

This little family of websites is building a literary map of different cities around the world by inviting people to contribute their stories of singular moments that are tied to a particular location. The stories are then laid onto a map, so that visitors to the site can explore hitotokis by area. This collaborative project was founded in Tokyo in 2007 and now also exists in London, New York, Shanghai, Paris and Sofia. Hitotoki is a Japanese word meaning 'a moment', which is exactly what the project's editors are seeking to capture. To contribute to the London hitotoki or start one up in your city, just get in touch with the editors – they welcome contributions from anyone who's got a good story to share.

www.hitotoki.org

It's Getting Hot in Here: dispatches from, the global youth climate movement

The global blog ItsGettingHotInHere.org was created by youth leaders at the 2005 UN Climate Change Conference in Montreal. They were frustrated at the slowness of the official negotiations, especially in the face of the urgent need to act on climate change. Their response? To wage online war and get the word out to as many people as possible. Within 24 hours of its creation, It's Getting Hot in Here had been viewed by hundreds of thousands of people. Today the blog has around 100 young editors from countries like America, Canada, India and Australia who contribute stories about clean energy, environmental justice, climate policy and campus movements.



www.itsgettinghotinhere.org

Wikipedia - get smart the open-source way

Jimmy Wales, Wikipedia's founder, is on a mission to "distribute a free encyclopedia to every single person on the planet in their own language," and he's doing pretty well! The site currently exists in more than two hundred languages and has hundreds of thousands of contributors around the world. Wales is at the forefront of a revolution in knowledge gathering: he's marshalled an army of volunteers who believe that, by working collaboratively, they can produce an encyclopedia that's as good as any written by experts, and with an unprecedented range. On top of that, it carries no advertising! In 2003, Wikipedia became a nonprofit organization. These days it meets most of its \$750,000 budget with donations.

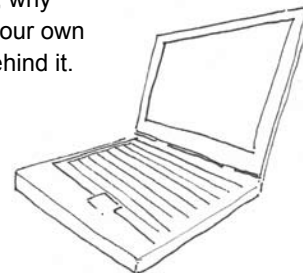
www.wikipedia.org

Anyone with Internet access can create a Wikipedia entry or edit an existing one. A twenty-four-year-old University of Toronto graduate is the site's premier contributor. Since composing his first piece on the Panama Canal, contributed in 2001, he's written or edited more than seventy-two thousand articles.¹⁷

So if you've got knowledge to share, why not contribute to Wikipedia or start your own blog - then you really know who's behind it.

Where to find alternative news

www.indymedia.org.uk
www.irrepressible.info
www.medialens.org
www.positivenews.org.uk
www.theonion.com
www.undercurrents.org



Postsecret: bringing back the art of postcards

PostSecret is an ongoing community art project where people mail in their secrets anonymously on one side of a postcard. Ever wanted to reveal a secret anonymously? The Postsecret rules are simple – you can share anything you want, as long as it's true and it's the first time you've ever told it to anyone.

www.postsecret.blogspot.com

To mail in a secret:

Step 1: Make a 4x6 postcard out of any material that can be sent through the post

Step 2: Write your secret, making sure the image and writing are on one side of the card only

Step 3: Post it in (the address is on their website).
And voila – liberation!



Off the Shelf - things you can do

Practice good media etiquette

We asked our friends what media behaviour gets under their bonnet. This is what they said:

- Do not hit 'Reply All' on emails just to say 'yes'.

USING ALL CAPITAL LETTERS IN YOUR EMAILS IS LIKE SHOUTING.

- Don't forward chain mail with the threat of impending death
- Don't flag something up as urgent unless it's actually, well, urgent.

- Before you leave a message on someone's Facebook, Bebo or MySpace wall, do the 'will they mind if this is public?' check.

- Don't put embarrassing pictures of your friends or anyone for that matter online. Not cool.

- Don't torture people with one-sided calls if you are in a train, bus, lift or similar. Text, people.

- Don't subject people to your news unless they really want to receive it - when you sign them up to mailing lists, make sure they've got an option to unsubscribe.

More things you can do

Make a DIY t-shirt

Why wear someone else's brand when you can design your own?

Step 1: Draw or scan a graphic, or make a design using Photoshop, Word, or another software program.

Step 2: Iron-on transfer paper is available at office supply shops. Print your graphic following the instructions in the package. You will probably have to flip your image.

Step 3: Place the printed graphic on your shirt, and iron it on, following the instructions from the package. Some products have to cool before you peel off the backing paper.

Step 4: Look for instructions for how to wash your shirts. You may be asked to wash it in cold water the first time so that colours don't bleed.

Step 5: Wear with pride!!



Another thing you can do...

Walk a mile in someone else's shoes

Usually a Guardian reader scorning the Sun? Think the Times is a tired read but can't get enough London papers for your money?

Once in a while, pick up some reading material you usually wouldn't touch with a barge pole. You might not agree with any of it, but it's good to know what the other side's thinking too.

Or swap favourite books, films, or TV shows with a mate who's got totally different tastes to you.

You might find some common ground you didn't know you had, you might both expand your interests and your minds, or you might just become addicted to *The Wire*.

ESCALATE

How to feed a BIG idea!

Make your own media

Got something you want to say? Then create your own blog, zine or film and get it off your chest! Here's what you need:

1. Start with a big or small idea – what is it that you want people to think about or learn?
2. Collect your tools – a free blogging tool like blogspot or wordpress, a photocopier or a video camera (depending on what you're making)
3. Then unleash your creative genius! Okay, not necessarily genius, but put your creative hat on and make some content
4. Now you can distribute. Hand out your zine, publish your blog or upload your video to YouTube
5. Pat yourself on the back – you are a bona fide media mogul



Georgie's been known to write a blog entry or two. In fact, she's on the Otesha website! (In the Otesha's adventures section - check her out)

Take a break from it all - do the Otesha 10-step media detox

Ever find yourself chatting to your friends while checking your email in front of the TV? Want to get away from it all but can't seem to break free? Try our 10-step Media Detox!

Here's how it works:

Step 1: Try keeping a book full of the addresses of your nearest and dearest. Next time you're about to whizz off an email or text, write a postcard to them instead. Ah, the personal touch.

Step 2: Buy a weekly or monthly magazine? If you gave up the habit for a year, you'd have an extra 100 quid to play with! That's 10,000 penny sweets, people. Where are your priorities?

Step 3: Take part in TV turnoff week each April. Heck, take part in TV turnoff week every week if you feel like it.

Step 4: If you're inundated by work emails, try adding a signature that says you will only be checking twice a day. You'll be less of a slave to screen time.

Step 5: Get on your bike and skip seeing those adverts on the bus or train every morning.

Step 6: Subvertise! We enjoy drawing moustaches on pictures of beautiful models. It may not create global change, but it sure makes us feel better. (Disclaimer: If you do this



on a public advert with permanent marker, it's called defacing, and is apparently illegal. Stick to washable chalk instead.)

Step 7: Try a little mobile phone independence. Leave your phone at home for a day and meet up with a friend the old-school way – make a plan of where and when to meet and actually stick to it.

Step 8: When you go to the cinema, enjoy your films without all the adverts. Instead, spend the first 20 minutes in the cinema lobby with your friends focusing on the important things in life, like eating popcorn and sweeties.

Step 9: Instead of unwinding in front the TV every night, replace your sitcom habit with a new hobby. Your brain can't actually relax when it's being bombarded by images on the telly, so why not learn something new instead like hula hooping, DIY home repairs or Vietnamese cooking?

Step 10: Get away from it all for six weeks. Come on an Otesha cycle tour!



Sometimes we skip the adverts of beautiful models and put the moustaches on ourselves instead....

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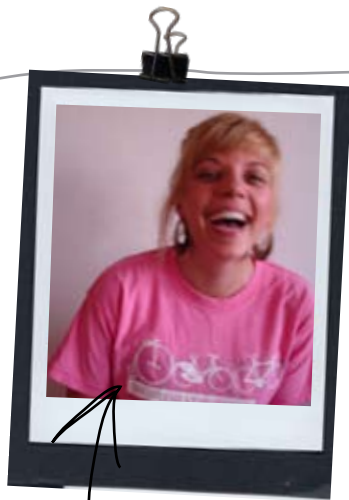
p26. Cressida with bicycle copyright Sarah Weir



WATER

OTESHA PROJECT UK HANDBOOK

THE BASICS



*Holly won this shirt
because she grew a
mango*

This morning I woke up a little late. I put the kettle on to make myself a cup of coffee then I jumped in a long, hot shower to wake myself up. I found time to do the washing up, put a load of washing in and quickly watered the plants in the house. As I walked to the bus stop, I got soaked – it was raining and I had no umbrella (I won't even tell you how frizzy my hair went!). I sat on the bus, a fed-up wet dripping mess..

Then I started thinking – my morning had been full of luxury so far. I had access to clean, hot, running water that I could drink, wash in and use to clean my clothes. I then walked outside and even more water was falling from the sky! And the more I thought about it, the more I realized that my water use goes far beyond the obvious too – the

clothes, food, energy, and transport I use all employ copious amounts of water in production.

Not everyone is in this luxurious position though. Approximately 1.1 billion people in the world don't have access to clean water – that's about 17% of the entire human race! And with around a third of the water that people in the UK (like me) use on a daily basis going to waste, there is a drastic need for us to change our habits. Fast. Don't feel overwhelmed by the task ahead – read on for some great ways to change your actions. Today. I won't be in the wasteful third anymore – short showers, less toilet flushing and more efficient use of water is the world that awaits me!

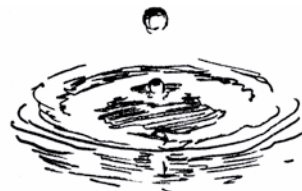
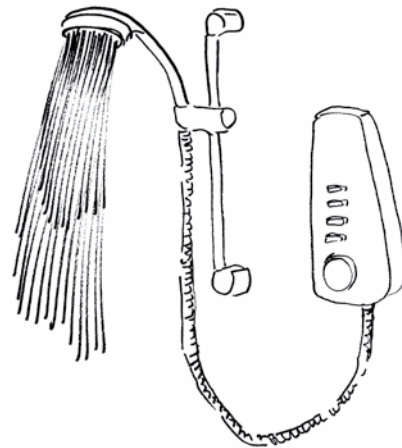


FYI - water use

- To survive, a human being needs 15 litres of water per day ¹
- The average person in the UK uses 150 litres of water a day for cooking, cleaning, washing and flushing.²

Where our water goes:

- A running tap uses 6 litres of water a minute.
- A shower uses between 9 and 45 litres a minute.
- A sprinkler uses up to 1000 litres per hour – more than a family of 4 uses in a whole day
- Toilet flushing accounts for 30% of our daily water use, with old toilets using up to 14 litres per flush.
- The average person in the UK washes away 1000 litres of water a week.



TRUE OR FALSE?

Things we're trying to wrap our heads around

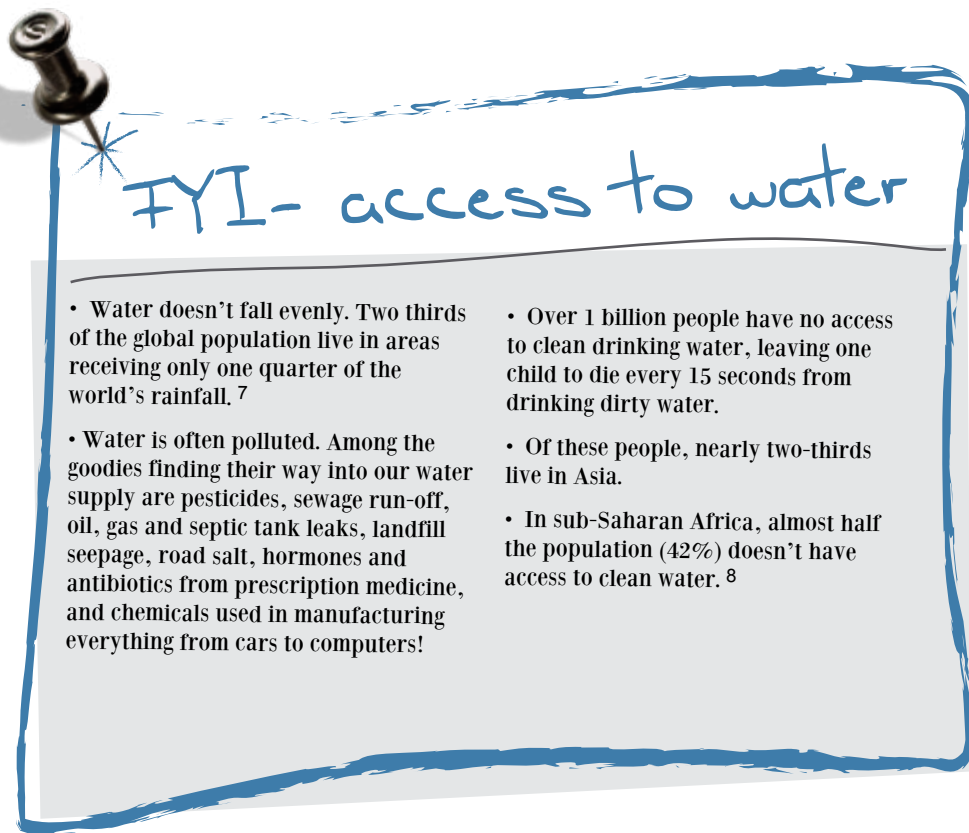
Is there enough water to go around?

Yes, most definitely. Here in the UK, we see it all around us. Don't we get flooded in one region or another almost every year? Besides, the earth is two-thirds water after all – we aren't called 'the blue planet' for nothing. Sure, some countries have pretty serious water shortages, but aside from the occasional hosepipe ban we're doing just fine. Besides, it's not like we can exactly pack up the water we save and send it to drought-stricken countries in other parts of the world.

No way, hose. In the UK we have actually less water per person than most other European countries. As crazy as it sounds, the South East of England has less water per person available than the Sudan and Syria.³ Manchester

gets less rain than Sydney⁴ and two thirds of the annual rainfall in England and Wales evaporates or is 'consumed' by plants, crops and trees. Population growth means that our water resources are being stretched to the limit and there have been 11 drought orders issued in England and Wales since 1990, with the most recent years being the worst on record.⁵ A changing climate can only make these shortages worse, as extreme weather events (like floods and droughts) are expected to increase as average global temperatures rise.⁶

The verdict: Although the UK is better off than other parts of the world, we're not exactly in a position to sit back and feel smug. In fact, if we want to reduce future drought orders, we may want to start thinking about how to conserve the water we've got.



Water injustice around the globe

UK – London is drier than Istanbul; The Thames Valley has less water available than in Afghanistan, Iran, Lebanon, Sudan and Egypt.⁹

U.S - The computer industry here uses over 4 billion litres of fresh water every day, enough for 1.7 billion people to drink.

Mexico - 3,000 'maquiladoras' (foreign-owned factories) create toxic wastelands, with waterways so polluted that 88% of residents have to use polluted water for cooking, bathing and irrigating crops, exposing themselves to dangerous diseases and bacteria.

South Africa - Every day, women collectively walk 16x the distance of a round trip to the moon to get water for their families. 600,000 wealthy farmers (mostly white) consume 60% of the country's water, while 15 million poor people (mostly black) have no direct access.

Zambia – High prices force low-income families to spend half their household income on clean water.

India – Since the 1960s, dams have forced 60-80 million people out of their now-flooded homes. 40% of those people are indigenous people – even though these 'low-caste' groups represent just 6% of the total population.

Indonesia – In a 1994 drought, Jakarta residents' wells went dry. Yet golf courses (for wealthy tourists) received 1 million litres each – enough to quench over 400,000 people's daily thirst.

Can consumer choices affect water issues?

Not a chance. It's easy to see how individual choices at home can cut our personal water use down from 150L per day, but our ability to make an impact doesn't really extend beyond this, does it? Sure, manufacturing industries probably use a lot of water, but there's no way that individuals can affect this process. In the end, it's the government's job to regulate things like industrial water use.

Absolutely. By paying attention to something called embedded or 'virtual' water, it's possible to have a huge influence just by thinking carefully about what we buy, eat and use. Here in the UK, virtual water is consumed when water-intensive goods are imported from abroad (like jumpers from China or tomatoes from Spain). This means that, in many countries, water that could be used by local people and farmers for survival is instead used to create export goods such as computers, clothing and petrol for wealthy consumers in developed countries. The food we buy also has major effects on water pollution. When animal



Embedded water

- When embedded water is taken into consideration, each person's daily water use in the UK jumps from 150L to about 4,645L. ¹¹
- It takes 400,000 litres of water to produce a single car, and another 500 litres per fill-up to produce the petrol! ¹²

waste (yep – cow poo) and pesticides run off into rivers and streams, water becomes contaminated. Even a small amount of pesticides is enough to make billions of litres of water unsafe. ¹⁰

The verdict. Although government probably does have a role to play in regulating water-intensive industries, it looks like our consumer choices, like buying something as unwatery as a non-organic apple, really do have an impact.

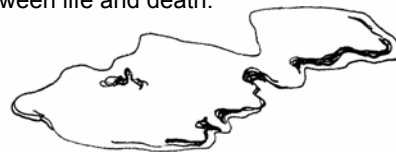
Is water a renewable resource?

True. Water is renewable, recyclable and sustainable. Since the water cycle means that water just circulates over and over (from our taps to lakes and rivers, then up to the clouds and back down to our taps again), we can use as much as we want. And since water treatment means that even wastewater gets cleaned enough to return to eventually rivers and lakes, we really won't run out anytime soon.

False. Global water consumption is doubling every 20 years – more than twice the rate of human population growth. Although it might seem like fresh water just circulates around and around, actually much of our drinking water is stored below ground in aquifers, which are being drained faster than they can replenish themselves. On top of this, freshwater being pumped out of lakes and rivers is causing streams to run dry.¹³ The effects of this are already showing – remember the 11 drought orders issued since 1990? The Weirwood Reservoir in Sussex recorded a drought that

lasted from December 2004 to December 2006, which reduced the reservoir to 50% of its original capacity.¹⁴ This is happening all over the world. In addition, because water must be heated, treated and circulated through our system, it's actually very energy intensive to use. It isn't just water that gets wasted as it goes down the drain. On top of the fossil fuels often burned to power this system, chemicals like chlorine, fluorine and caustic soda are used. So conserving water also means reducing energy and chemical use, and, in turn, addressing climate change.

The verdict. Although renewable if managed properly, our current rate of consumption means that it's more accurate to compare water with oil, except with no alternative if it runs out. Sure it'll regenerate eventually, but in the time it takes aquifers to recharge, millions or even billions of people won't have access to water. And access to water is the difference between life and death.



Is bottled water better?

No doubt about it. There are cases when bottled water is definitely better for your health. First off, if tap water originates from a surface-water source, it could be contaminated with commercial fertilizers since heavy rains mean that runoff from fields often ends up in the water system. And then there's worries about fluoride. Although 97% of Western European countries have chosen fluoride-free water¹⁵, it's still added to water in some countries, including parts of the UK.¹⁶ The tooth decay-preventing properties of fluoride are controversial and long-term health effects are unknown. Lastly, many countries don't have the same infrastructure and resources to ensure clean, safe tap water that we often take for granted. So when travelling abroad, bottled water may be the safest way forward.

Bottled water & money¹⁷

- Bottled water is 240 to 10,000 times more expensive than tap water
- 40% of all bottled water is just filtered tap water
- The industry is worth well over (US)\$213 billion
- (US)\$200 billion could build wells, purification systems and water infrastructure in places where people are dying every day because they don't have clean water.

Bottled water & oil¹⁸

- The bottled water industry guzzles 2.5% of global oil consumption
- The total energy required for every bottle's production, transport and disposal is equivalent, on average, to filling that bottle a quarter of the way with oil.

↑
So what exactly are we paying
two quid a bottle for anyway?



Not so fast! Although often marketed as pure and natural (think waterfalls, pristine springs and serenity), bottled water is often not as unadulterated as you might expect. The water is treated with a range of methods, from filtering and distillation to ultraviolet light and ozonation, and minerals are often added in afterwards.¹⁹ The EU has imposed rigorous guidelines for tap water and bottled water quality, which are roughly the same.²⁰ However, this isn't the case in the USA, where guidelines for tap water are stricter than for bottled water!²¹ Healthwise, tap water may even be better than bottled. And then there's the commercial angle - bottled water represents the commodification and privatisation of a precious resource that many argue is a basic human right. With every bottle

you buy, you're spending £1.00 or more on something that could be free, giving money to companies that don't need to be concerned with water access or affordability. And if that's not enough, then there's the waste. Bottled water leaves behind 1.5 million tonnes of plastic EVERY YEAR and emits thousands of tonnes of carbon dioxide getting the water from factories onto store shelves.

The verdict. In Europe, tap water is definitely safe to drink. Avoiding bottled water helps to save resources (from the packaging, transportation and water itself), reduce carbon emissions and save consumers money. Except when visiting countries where the tap water's not safe to drink, this one's a no-brainer.



HOW ELUNED GOT INTO WATER

Confessions of a (reforming) shower addict

To be honest, I never really gave much thought to water – until there was suddenly far less of it. As a dance student, I'd often have a quick 15-minute shower to wake myself up in the morning, and then indulge in a longer shower in the evening to de-sweat myself after a long day of classes. I never really kept track of how long I spent showering a day; all I knew was that there was nothing quite like a hot soapy shower to wake me up in the morning and unwind before bed. And besides, it seemed like there were so many other important issues to be concerned with, like waste, climate change and the impact of where my food came from. Occasionally as I turned off the shower I'd think about how much water I must be using, but showering just seemed so... necessary. I'll admit it – I was a full-blown shower addict.

However, when I went on an Otesha cycle tour this summer, I was suddenly confronted with cold turkey on the shower front. Many of the places we stayed during our 6-week tour were pretty basic, with perhaps one tap and a toilet to share between 18 of us. Instead of showering twice a day, it soon became normal to shower once or twice a week. I will never forget the feeling of the first shower I had on tour in a leisure centre. As I felt the joy of hot water on my skin for the first time in years (ok, so a few days but it felt – and smelled - like years!), I came to appreciate how badly I had been taking water for granted. In one place we visited, the shower consisted of a pulley and bucket contraption with a showerhead attached. Although it used only a couple of litres of solar-heated water per shower, not only did it feel like plenty, but it was also one of the best showers I've ever had!

As we moved on in the tour, the importance of water became more and more evident. We stayed in a number of places with compost toilets, where a handful of ash or sawdust was thrown into the toilet instead of the 10-litre flush that the average UK toilet uses. In one of the most remote and beautiful locations, we had to collect all our water from a spring. This water tasted purer and fresher than any of the chemical-filled tap water I've always been used to. In order not to disturb sediment at the base of the well, only a few jugs could be collected at a time, and with these we would provide for the cooking, drinking and washing needs of 18 hungry, thirsty and dirty people! To me, this experience really brought home the idea that water is not only fundamental, it is sacred.

Since being back home I have been far more conscious of the amount of water I use – and waste – every day. Although it has been difficult to wean myself off showering, I now have far fewer showers and have started putting a timer on for 4 minutes when I hop in. I've also started carrying my water in a reusable bottle, trying to use waste water on plants and in the garden of course and adhering to the all-important “if it's yellow, let it mellow” ethic*. Since researching for this chapter I have also begun to realise that water used in the home is just the start, and have begun to seriously consider how I can cut down on water waste embedded in the clothes I wear, transport I use, and food I eat. Now that my eyes are open to how precious water really is, there is no going back.



Eluded on tour with her
trusty steed

*not flushing after you pee
the rest of the saving goes
'it's brown, flush it down'...)

HOW JOCELYN GOT INTO WATER

A global perspective

My respect for water grew slowly, during a field term in Kenya in 2001. One day, our coordinator rounded up the students to tell us that we were draining all the water out of the village. My tent-mate Sabrina and I stopped flushing the toilet when we peed, and I started having very short showers. I patted myself on the back and told myself that surely I was doing my part to be a sustainable water consumer. But when I did my laundry I still used two buckets half-filled with water when one alone surely would be enough. I still left the tap on for more than one second when I brushed my teeth. I still showered every day. I was oblivious in my bubble.

A month later I arrived on my own in Uganda. All of a sudden there were no taps, no purified water. I was lost. What was I supposed to do? I asked the mucusu (hut 'hotel') owner where I could get water. She gave me a funny look, and told me that all the other mzungus (white people) she'd met brought their own bottled water, that the nearest pump was ten miles down the road, and that I might not have permission to use it. My face fell – I knew that I couldn't walk 20 miles in 40° heat for water that I might not even get. I'd already been eight hours without water. I felt like I was going to cry. The mucusu owner's daughter tugged on her arm. Her mother then nodded at me, told me they'd been collecting rainwater and that I could have some if I truly needed



Jocelyn, inspired by her travels to create the very first Otsha cycle tour

it. I was relieved, ecstatic, and overwhelmed. Should I pay them for the water? How much should I take? Should I clean it? I tried to calculate in my head what I would need, settled on 2 L, and brought my water bottles over to the precious bucket. They were all standing around watching as I poured the water into the bottle. I was nervous and somehow I dropped my bottle and lost almost 300 mL. All the women made this 'tsk' sound with their tongues, and shook their heads. I tried to apologize but felt my face turning red. How could I have been so careless? I was so embarrassed. I felt ignorant and wasteful. As the weeks went by I felt myself adjusting. I didn't spill when I poured from the town pump, I didn't carry my water bottle in public, I didn't bathe but I scrubbed myself clean out of respect, I washed my laundry in the lake but I didn't use soap, I was down to 2L/day max, cooking included - finally I respected and appreciated every ml.

Then I arrived in London and the flush toilet boggled my mind. I went to the sink and found it hard to believe it was there, that there were taps, with water, and it was clean! I pressed down the button to wash my hands, but then I couldn't turn it off – water continued to flow out down the drain. I was appalled. The girl next to me explained that it was automatic to 'save water'. I put my bottle under it and pressed down once again – one push filled the entire bottle – one full litre of water! So this was the minimum amount the engineer figured would be necessary to wash one's hands. I felt sick to my stomach.

Since being home, one of the main objections received about my sustainable consumption ideas is that water is not in short supply, that no harm is done if it comes out of our lake, down our drain, back into the water table – we can't send it to Africa even if we want to. But it's a matter of respect. Why is it so hard to respect a resource so valuable?

THINGS THAT WORK

What other people did

Ryan's Well

When Ryan Hreljac was 6 years old, his teacher Mrs. Prest told the class there are many people in Africa who do not have access to clean drinking water, and who are constantly sick and even dying. Ryan could not understand how some people on the planet could be without any water, while for him it was simply a matter of turning on the tap. He also heard, however, that a well could be built in one of these places where it was so desperately needed for only \$70 (£32.75).

When Ryan got home that day, he went straight to his parents and said, 'mum, dad, can I have 70 dollars?' They said no, but

did agree to help him find ways to raise the money by doing extra chores around the house for his parents and his neighbours. When he'd raised the money, he took it to WaterCan (www.watercan.com), a charity that provides clean water to developing countries. The people at WaterCan were incredibly inspired by Ryan's hope and enthusiasm, but had to tell him that it actually cost \$2000 to build a well. 'No problem,' Ryan thought, 'I'll just do more chores then!'

Six months later, in January 1999, 'Ryan's Well' was drilled beside Angolo Primary School in northern Uganda. When Ryan was given the opportunity to see his well, he realized that he could do even more - so



he did! His parents decided to join him in his cause and formally establish The Ryan's Well Foundation. To date, Ryan and his organization has helped raise over one million dollars (£467,000) for 461 wells in 16 countries - Uganda, Malawi, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Nigeria, Zambia, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Lesotho, Guyana, Guatemala and India.

www.ryanswell.ca



The Hippo Effect

Briony Greenhill and Cyndi Rhoades could see that lots of people wanted to see and be a part of positive change but didn't really know what to do, or never got around to it. So they teamed up to test out their thinking. Summer 2006 saw one of the worst droughts this century. Briony and Cyndi calculated that a lot of people installing water saving devices in their toilets was one of the easiest and most effective ways to save a lot of water. So they created the Hippo Effect website, with the idea of making it super easy, and even fun, to order a free water saving device. It was so effective they decided to apply the same mechanism to a bunch of other issues - and TheNag.net was born. Their first action? The water nag, where people were reminded to order a free hippo or Save-a-Flush. So far, Nag members have ordered 17,917 water-saving devices, collectively saving over 53 million litres of water per year.

www.thenag.net

The TAP Campaign

Taking on the world's bottled water industry? A preposterous attempt, some might think. But Michael Norton and Joshua Blackburn beg to differ. Inspired by a Dutch campaign called Neau Water, they came together in 2007 to create a new product to highlight the huge flaws of bottled water and bring tap water back into fashion in the UK. Tap, the end result of their collaboration, is an ambitious campaign, ethical enterprise, and fundraising initiative all rolled into one eye-catching package.

By selling empty bottles and asking people to fill them up with tap water, the Tap campaign hopes to expose the flagrant social and environmental costs of bottled water and provide more sustainable alternatives. Their products are made with recycled materials and are designed to bring tap water back into fashion. And just when you thought things couldn't get better, 70% of their profits go to water projects in developing countries, including The Ryan's Well Foundation.

www.wewanttap.com



The global water revolution

Canada – The Cirque

du Lake Water

Cycle Circus has

inspired awareness,

enthusiasm, and constructive

change by cycling their watery

theatre performances around the

Great Lakes.²²

USA – Conservation and education efforts

by city officials in Austin, Texas have

caused water consumption to drop by

approximately 440,160L each month.²³

Bolivia – When Cochabamba's

water supply was privatised by a

US corporation, Oscar Olivera helped

mobilize tens of thousands of local

people to protest against the high rate

families paid for their water, successfully

cancelling the sale of the city's water.²⁴

Netherlands – The Young Water Action Team, has established

a global movement of young people who initiate or participate in

local projects, providing a great forum for youth around the world

to share ideas on water. Check it out at www.ywat.org

India – 'Drip irrigation

systems' have decreased

the amount of water used

by individual farmers by

40-70%, and increased

yields by 20-100%.²⁵

Cameroon –

Over 50% of

the 8,000 people

living in Sasse do

not have access to

safe drinking water, so three young people – Ajebe, Wouvala and

Ndifoh – established a foundation to promote Integrated Water Resources

Management, which has helped to reduce poverty, improve health, and raise the

quality of life for local people – all while protecting the local ecosystems!²⁶

Off the Shelf - things you can do

DIY Toilet Dam

Whether you already let the yellow mellow and use grey water to flush, or you're just starting out with this water-saving game, you can try this makeshift, water-displacing toilet dam. It'll help you save 1 litre of water with every flush. You need:

- 1 empty 1-L plastic jar with lid
- 1 big rock or anything heavy that won't degrade - pennies, a paperweight, a brick, etc - but not small rocks, since they degrade too fast

What to do:

1. Drop the heavy item into the jar, fill it with water & re-seal tightly
2. Lift the lid off the back of your toilet.
3. Flush the toilet. Once the water's emptied out, place the jar inside the tank. Make sure it's not touching any of the moving parts or impeding their movement!
4. Replace the lid on the back of the toilet. Back slowly away and sneak inconspicuously out of the room.



Off the Shelf - things you can do

DIY Grey Water Recycling

Ever thought about why we use fully treated drinking water to flush our toilets and water our gardens, lawns and plants? To avoid this, create your own grey water recycling system in your house..

You'll need:

- 1 big bucket per shower
- 1 smaller bucket per sink

Collecting the water:

Whenever you're taking a shower or using the sink, keep the bucket under the tap and collect as much as you can of the water that would have gone down the drain. For the shower, this works especially well when you're first waiting for the water to warm up.

Off the Shelf - things you can do

Grey Water recycling can't

Using the water:

- Next time you flush the toilet:
- a Lift up the cover of the back of the toilet tank.
- b Wait for the black 'stopper' to plug the tank.
- c Use any water that doesn't have food particles in it to fill up the back of your toilet tank.

Repeat at next opportunity! Use any other leftover water on your lawn, houseplants or garden - except for salad vegetables.

If you want to get ambitious, you can also put a rain barrel under your gutters to collect rainwater too, or buy a water butt.

Off the Shelf - things you can do

Revolutionize your showers

Two quick actions can help save buckets of water when you shower. And, no, neither of them involves avoiding bathing!

1. Take a staggered shower. After you get wet, turn the water off. Soap yourself up, shampoo your hair, then turn the water back on to rinse.
2. Set a timer while you're in the shower to remind you when time's up. Eluned sets hers for 4 minutes.

Brush with care

This one's an oldie but a goodie. Simply by turning off the tap while you're brushing your teeth, you can save several litres of water each and every day.

Say no to bottled water

By carrying a reusable bottle, you'll save resources, save money and take a stance against the commodification of water. For bonus points, donate the money you would have spent on bottled water to water projects around the world.

ESCALATE

How to feed a BIG idea!

Taking the water saving revolution to the streets, or toilets, of the world

If you want to go further, why not be a guerilla toilet-dammer? Once you've perfected the DIY Toilet Dam (see the Off the Shelf section), you can perform this action in your local schools, public libraries, theatres, community centres and other public venues. We suggest placing a note inside – that way if someone finds the jar they know why you put it there.



The note could look like this:

Hi! I am a toilet dam..

I have been placed here by... to save 1 L of water with every flush. (That could be more than 2,000L per year!)

Join the water revolution by putting something similar in the back of your toilet tanks.

Here's a flush to a future where everyone respects H₂O - starting, of course, with you.



Still thirsty for more solutions?

Reading - try these books:

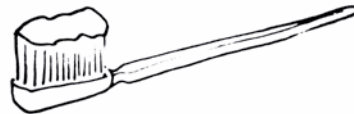
- Elizabeth Kolbert (2007). Field Notes from a Catastrophe. Bloomsbury.
- Fred Pearce (2007) When the Rivers Run Dry: What Happens When Our Water Runs Out? Eden Books
- Maude Barlow & Tony Clarke (2005). Blue Gold: The Battle against Corporate Theft of the World's Water. The New Press.

Take a field trip: Visit your local water treatment plant and find out what really goes down.

Calculate your daily water use: Visit www.waterfootprint.org. This tool also takes embedded water use into consideration.

Water footprint of a breakfast²⁷

1 cup of coffee	140 litres
1 slice of bread	40 litres
2 eggs	270 litres
Slice of cheese (50g)	250 litres
TOTAL	700 litres
1 bowl of porridge	160 litres
1 cup of milk	200 litres
1 glass of apple juice	190 litres
TOTAL	550 litres



REFERENCES

What we read

1- We read a World Health Organization (WHO) report from 2005 called *Minimum Water Quantity Needed for use in Domestic Emergencies*. You can find it here: http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/tsunami_qa/en/

2- Most of our facts from this bit come from the Waterwise website at www.waterwise.org.uk. This organisation is all about promoting water efficiency in the UK, so they really know their stuff.

3 - Waterwise again. Even DEFRA references them!

4 - World Climate. Check out this site: <http://www.worldclimate.com>. It gives up to date weather data hundreds of cities all around the world.

5 - Sustainable Stuff. See <http://www.sustainablestuff.co.uk/SavingWater.html>

6 - IPCC fourth assessment report

7 - And Waterwise again. This fact comes from page 9 of their 2007 report

8 - These facts comes from a World Health Organisation report written back in 2002. You can find the report online at http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/publications/facts2004/en/index.html

9 - All the stories on the Water Injustice Around the Globe page come from Maude Barlow and Tony Clarke's 2005 book, *Blue Gold*. This book is also listed in the 'Escalate' section, since it's a great resource and a really good read.



REFERENCES

What we read

10 - Our main source for this section is a Guardian article called 'UK Adds to Drain on Global Water Sources', which was written on Aug 20, 2008 and which you can find at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2008/aug/20/water.food>. We also referenced a WWF Linking Future Programme report called Virtual Water, which is available online here: http://www.panda.org/about_wwf/where_we_work/africa/where/mozambique/wwf_mozambique__our_solutions/projects/index.cfm?uProjectID=8W0020

11 - You can find this fact several places, including on the Water Footprint Network website - www.waterfootprint.org - and the Waterwise website, in 'The Facts' section

12 - This source is also Barlow and Clarke, *Blue Gold*

13 - Again from *Blue Gold*. If we were bring literary about it, we might even say *ibid*.

14 - The official drought order can be found online here: <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2005/20052141.htm>

15 - Flouride Alert - www.fluoridealert.org

16 - Dental Watch, both here <http://www.dentalwatch.org/fl/bfs.html> and here <http://www.dentalhealthwestmidlands.nhs.uk>

17 - *Water Wars*, a Guardian article written by Elizabeth Royte and available online at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2008/aug/23/bottled.water.tap> and Tap website in the Bottle Water is Rubbish section here: <http://www.wewanttap.com/21/bad-water/a-bitter-taste.html>

18 - Again, *Water Wars* Guardian Article

19 - And again (or *ibid.*, if you will)

A photograph of a person wearing a black and grey striped glove holding a green pole. In the background, a woman with glasses and a patterned jacket is visible. The image is used as a background for a title page.

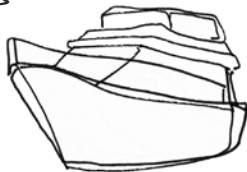
TRANSPORT

OTESHA PROJECT UK HANDBOOK

THE BASICS



*Narrated by a very
buoyant Charlie*



I'm sitting in an internet cafe in Thailand, having just flown 8,542 miles in a plane, which should automatically disqualify me from narrating this chapter.... but wait, wait... don't run off.

Knowing that I've come somewhere devastatingly beautiful – and, by whizzing through the sky in a kerosene-spewing rocket, have done my bit to devastate that beauty on the way here – has made me acutely aware of the shortcomings of some of our daily transport choices.

Last week, I was sitting on a beach on an island watching people arrive in speedboats ploughing through crowds of swimmers leaking gasoline, heat, black smoke and noise. They seemed completely oblivious

to the fact that their mode of transport to the paradise island was actually screwing up the paradise island (not at some distant point in the future, but right there and then, as they were doing it). Then, a week later, I found myself taking the same speedboat to get home. It turns out the big slow boat is even more polluting, costs about the same, takes an hour longer and you have to take a van-taxi across the island to get to it - what was I to do?

All in all, this has led me to think about the suitability of different modes of transport from two different angles: (1) what are they like when you're in them and using them. (2) what are they like when you're not in them and not using them?

It turns out quite a few that seem just great when you're in them are a bit rubbish when you're not in them.

The thing is, watching a speedboat tear up the beach or the van-taxi spewing black fumes out into the hilltop rainforest, it's all too obvious when something is a bad idea. But when I'm home in my big concrete city that gave up a long time ago on feeling like a beautiful natural paradise where I'd like to lounge around, breathing fresh air, watching the sky and listening to birds... then it's a bit less obvious what works and what doesn't.

When I get home, I'll know everytime I step onto a bus or hop in a taxi that dammit, this is just making this city uglier and dirtier - why can't we come up with transport that

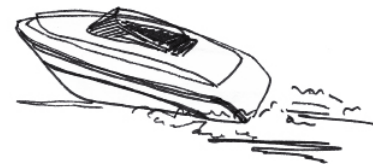
works for the people who happen to be using it AND the people who aren't using it? And i'll just get cross and frustrated and shout at taxi drivers and moan in the pub.

So instead of moaning, I'm going to think about what I can do when I get home so that the ways I choose to get around day-to-day improve the place I live, instead of messing it up. So that I can dream of London one day turning into a beautiful green island - knowing that the little things I've done every day have helped it get there.

ps. when I'm done, maybe I'll invent some kind of trans-continental solar-powered plane so I can see the world without feeling guilty too.



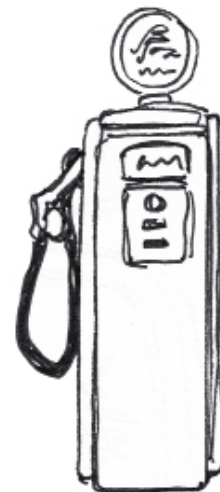
*Boat pollution's
more obvious than
taxis, but is it really
any worse?*





FYI - the dirt on driving

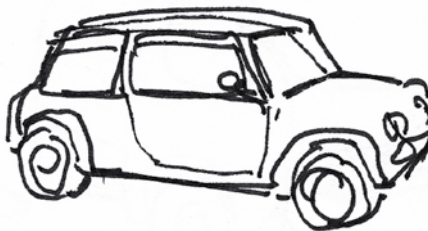
- Globally, 1.2 million people die on the roads every year – the same number as killed by malaria and tuberculosis.¹
- In the UK, each car trip to school or work carries, on average, 1.2 people. So this means something like 3.8 empty seats on each trip.²
- Traffic delays are estimated to cost the country £20 billion a year and rising on top of the environmental and social costs.³
- Congestion charging in London has reduced car traffic by 18%. That's like taking 1 in 5 cars off the road permanently.⁴



If you're into counting COs emissions...
Here's the (carbon) budget for a few trips
around the UK ⁵

	Car	Rail	Bus
London-Edinburgh	129 kg CO ₂	73	59
London-Manchester	63	36	29
Southampton-Aberdeen	178	101	83
Birmingham-Edinburgh	93	53	43
Cardiff- Newcastle	99	56	46

↖ On a carbon diet? Here's
how much - in carbon dioxide
emissions - each trip is gonna
cost you



TRUE OR FALSE?

Things we're trying to wrap our heads around



What's the most efficient route from A to B?

Is driving faster? Let's say a 10-minute drive takes 20 minutes to cycle. Driving clearly wins. In a hurry, it makes sense to hop in the car instead of cycling, bussing or taking the train – except in a big city in the middle of rush hour. Then driving isn't always faster, as anyone who's ever been stuck in the middle of London at 6:30pm on a Friday night knows. And that's before you factor in little things like finding your keys...or a parking space.

Or are you better off bombing about on a bike or on the back of a bus? When someone's driving, what are they doing? Just driving. Do anything else – check a map, make a phone call, a bit of light ironing – and you risk a big fine or an even bigger accident. Other modes of transport are far

more multi-task-friendly. On a bus? Do some reading, finish off a bit of homework, catch up on neighbourhood gossip and peer into people's upstairs windows – all while getting chauffeured around town. Cycling? Walking? You're getting fit and getting somewhere, all at the same time. (Regular cyclists typically have a level of fitness equivalent to being 10 years younger than the rest of the population.⁶) It's like multi-tasking, but without the colour-coded diary. Not to mention that in a lot of big cities, it's faster to get on your bike than it is to sit behind a steering wheel in traffic.

The verdict: In the end, every type of transport except driving can end up as a better use of time since they're all multi-task friendly - and don't involve looking and hoping and praying for that elusive parking spot.

Is it safe to cycle?

Definitely dangerous: Cyclists can be kamikazes! Seeing people on bikes weaving through traffic and dodging cars that barely acknowledge their presence is a bit nerve-racking. Especially when you think how much bigger cars are than bikes. Or about the fact that cars are responsible for more than 90% of all cycling fatalities.⁷

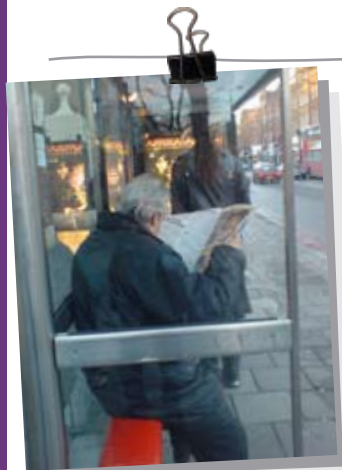
Significantly safer than you might think: Hurling along at speeds no human could accomplish without a machine, car passengers are at a far greater risk in a car than cyclists who have only their wits and helmets to protect them. Statistically, we're 10 times more likely to die in a motor vehicle than on a bike.⁸

The verdict: The simple fact is that cars kill. In the UK, traffic is the leading cause of death for children aged one to 14.⁹ In America, cars have killed more Americans than have died in all the wars fought in the last 100 years.¹⁰ Besides, if most cycling deaths are caused by drivers, isn't that just another good reason to ditch the car?

*When I see an adult
on a bicycle, I do not
despair for the future
of the human race.*

- H.G. Wells





What's the cheapest way to travel?

Driving's a decent deal: Bikes get nicked every other month, taxis cost an arm and a leg, and monthly travel passes don't come cheap.

Public transport is preferable: Season tickets, bus passes and travel cards may set you back a small fortune, but that's only a fraction of the large fortune you'd need to buy the most challenging scrap-heap of a car. It costs, on average, £2650 - £6800 a year to run a car, and that's just for maintenance, petrol and repairs. The amount paid to actually buy the thing (and the interest on car loans) is extra. In fact, a full 30% of drivers have no idea how much their cars actually cost to run.¹¹

Better on a bike: Bicycles cost a fraction of the price of a car, never stall in the winter and need minimal repairs (most of which are pretty easy to DIY), not to mention all that leg room. Plus, cyclists are always guaranteed a prime parking spot, get door-to-door delivery and never have to stop at the petrol station for a fill-up. A good insurance policy (and a decent lock) can minimize the risk of getting a bike nicked, and make sure that it's replaceable even if it does get stolen.

The verdict: Buying a car is the most expensive way to make yourself mobile. And the purchase price is just tip of the invoice – once insurance, petrol, repairs, congestion charges, road tolls, parking permits and those pesky parking/speeding/

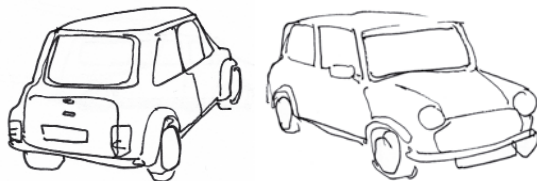


Think of car sharing
as playing nicely
with our toys and
letting others use
em when we're not.

going in the bus-lane tickets are all added up, the costs start to mount pretty fast. Meanwhile, the value of a car declines 30% the minute it's driven off the forecourt. When all the costs are added up, walking is dead cheap, cycling comes next (depending on what kind of bike you buy, of course), public transit comes in third, and driving's a distant fourth.

www.streetcar.co.uk

www.citycarclub.co.uk



Car-sharing clubs

If you live in a city and need a car, you *have* to try out Streetcar or City Car Club (or one of the other car-sharing clubs round the country). For a small monthly fee you get access to a car around the corner, you only pay for the miles you drive and there's no annual insurance, car tax or any other penalties. Once you've signed up, they post you a credit card. You book the car online, then just to walk up to it and wave the card at the windscreen. As if by magic, it opens up, the petrol tank's full and the keys are in the glove compartment. Try it!

In the UK, two-thirds of former car owners who joined a car club saw their mileage fall by an average of 25%.¹²

Why don't we just make cars more fuel-efficient and solve all our worries?

True, less petrol = more sustainable.

Problem solved. Let's get this straight - cars are incredibly useful inventions. They can carry around heavy loads, give freedom to less mobile people and travel long distances at quick speeds.

At Otesha, we find 'em handy too – some past cycle tours in Canada took along a hybrid car for support, which came in pretty useful when cyclists got sick or a bike broke down miles away from the nearest repair shop. Going hybrid (or even better – electric) lets us keep using cars while reducing our dependency on petrol, lessening climate change, air pollution and all the other downsides of burning oil. It's win-win.

False –we need to reduce our dependence on all types of cars, not just the oil guzzling varieties.

Sure, we *just* need to make cars more fuel-efficient, and then all our problems will be solved. Then we *just* need to work out how to manufacture 'em using less than 70 barrels of oil a pop,¹³ not to mention the water, metals and toxic chemicals that go into the manufacture of each and every car, hybrid or Chelsea tractor. Next, we *just* need to find somewhere other than landfills to dump old cars and just cook up a scheme to sort out the little problem of road deaths and magic a way to prevent gridlock at rush hour. Our local planning departments will have no problem planning streets and cities that are safe, efficient and user-friendly for



The Otesha hybrid car
definitely helped to carry
all the camping gear!

pedestrians, cyclists, buses and cars alike ('cos they've done so well with it so far). Oh, and we'll also have to find a way to stay active while getting around mainly by car. Hmm...

The verdict: Okay, so, fuel-efficiency is a good thing, and so are electric cars. But only when compared to other cars. If the question is 'how to make a better car' – yeah, fine. But if you're trying to think of ways of getting around that suit you better – financially, time-wise and health-wise – and that help make your neighbourhood an ever nicer place to live, then walking, cycling, trams, trains and exciting, as-yet-to-be-invented-transport-contraptions look like better options.



* Ideas for getting around Part 1 – on foot

Want to ramble around London, Birmingham, Edinburgh or Newcastle without getting lost? Get customized walking maps online from Walkit. (www.walkit.com), a clever little site which helps pedestrians get around town on foot.

How to do it:

1. Type in your starting point and destination
2. Choose a scenic route or the quickest journey
3. Pick a walking speed (fast, medium or slow)

And presto, the site makes you a map, including handy info on how long the walk will take and how many calories you'll burn getting there (if you're into knowing that sort of thing).

Alright then. But I live in the city and don't own a car. I take the bus to work and I walk to the shops. I am a transport saint. Can't I just feel smug and skip this whole chapter?

Yes, yes, very well done. Take a moment to pat yourself on the back. Your own personal contribution means there's one less car on the road, improving air quality for people around you, slowing climate change, boosting your health, making the roads safer for others and saving you a wad of cash.

Er, not so fast footloose. Indeed, the way we get ourselves around from day to day is pretty important, but let's not forget about how all our other stuff gets around. Most of what we buy, wear, eat and use travels thousands of miles to get to us – so even

if you're a transport saint, chances are that your stuff isn't. Unless, of course, you buy most of your food, clothing and other items from local manufacturers or second-hand shops. In that case, you really can feel smug.

The verdict: It's good to think about how we get around on a regular day, but transportation goes so much further than that. It includes all the things and people that are shipped from one side of the world to the other on a daily basis. Transportation over long distances matters, including where we go on holiday and how we get there.



How many food miles has this market stand clocked up?

* Ideas for getting around Part 2 - by car

If you're gonna drive, why not cozy up with a few others and share a lift? You'll save petrol, spend far less money than driving on your own and, as a bonus, you'll get someone new to talk to whilst stuck in traffic instead of listening to the same boring radio chat show over and over. Try these websites (or look into car sharing clubs):

www.carbudi.com

www.liftshare.org

Another idea: commit to better fuel-efficiency by staying below 70 miles per hour on highways. Get a sticker at www.70max.com

Want more ideas? Visit: www.eta.co.uk/green_driving

What does Charlie think of this all?

So... notes to self: walk more, cycle more, and keep an eye on how many miles the food in the fridge traveled to get there. Cyclists are as healthy as people 10 years younger than them – and car passengers are ten times more likely to die than cyclists.

And don't believe anyone who says it's just a matter of making more cars and making them better. In the last couple of weeks, I've traveled in a tuk-tuk, a longtail boat powered by a car engine, a sidecar strapped onto a moped, speedboats, ferries, open-backed-vans-converted-into-taxis. It seems like everyone here in Krabi Town, Thailand, is busy inventing new ways of getting around. So, there's definitely some potential for more interesting approaches to traveling at home than the normal car-bus-train trilogy...



HOW ROSIE GOT INTO CYCLING

Living in a city like London, I never considered owning a car. It wasn't so much the environmental impact of them that put me off the idea; the costs of owning and parking a private vehicle alone were enough to put me off. And I wasn't the only one: I didn't know many people in London who owned a car. Why would you? Too expensive, nowhere to park – and a decent public transport system in place anyway.

I'd get a bus from where I was living in Greenwich to my college in central London every morning and back in the evening, and it was fine. Sure, we'd get stuck in traffic now and then, but it was an inexpensive and convenient way of getting around.

When people talk about London, they frequently mention how polluted it is. And so I began to see a problem. While cars make up the greatest percentage of CO₂ emissions in London, they're not the whole story. And even though lorries and delivery vans do their bit in chucking out those thick clouds of smog that make me feel like I need a gas mask, I knew I couldn't pin all of the blame on those. It was impossible to deny that those buses I was relying on to transport me the six miles between college and home every day were a part of the problem.

I started noticing London's cyclists as they overtook my bus. From the business men and women in suits on their brightly

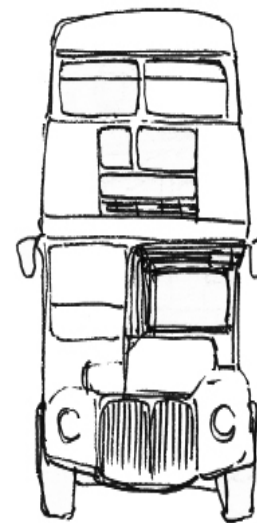


coloured Bromptons to the uber-cool couriers on fixed wheel speed machines- they looked so free. So I decided I didn't want to be stuck on a bus in a line of buses belching out black smoke into the environment anymore. I wanted to be on a bike, flying past traffic, through parks, and spending some time outdoors everyday.

I got a second-hand Raleigh Pioneer off London Freecycle from a lady in Camden who'd just bought a new bike, and I rode it home that very evening. And it was wonderful. That was three years ago and I've never looked back. I even went the extra mile and started working for London Cycling Campaign, the largest urban cycling organisation in the world. Now I campaign

on behalf of cyclists in the city – pushing for better conditions for cycling in London, increased provision of cycle parking, and more cycle training in schools and communities. Riding in London is incredible these days. At junctions during rush hour, you can find yourself waiting at the lights with a dozen other people on bikes.

Transport for London is now taking steps to improve the efficiency of London buses which will cut their emissions, but there's no arguing with it – I'm better off by bike.





* Ideas for getting around Part 3 - by bike

Figure out where you're going and how to get there.

- If you live outside London or are making a longer journey (like, say, a cycle tour), you'll probably need to know how to find and follow the national cycle routes. Get maps from Sustrans at www.cycle-routes.org
- If you live in or around London, Transport for London gives away free detailed cycle route maps of the area, divided up into almost 20 different zones. The beautiful part? You can request online to get 'em sent to your home: www.tfl.gov.uk

THINGS THAT WORK

What other people did

Jason Loughlin: an inspiration to narrow-minded carmakers everywhere (or how to open your mind messing around and rebuilding bikes and milk floats)

How I Invented the EcoACTIVE Educational Milk Float:

So, a organisation called EcoACTIVE found itself in a situation where it was having some trouble paying the rent on its premises and needed to find a way to teach without a classroom. After various discussions with staff and volunteers, they came up with the idea to revamp an old milk float, since it was electric and would minimize the impact on the environment. It was my job to see if I could cram all of their existing education displays and activities onto the back of this

vehicle. In the process, I ended up learning a huge amount about environmental issues, design methods, and working with an incredible group of people who were all passionate about their local community and the environment.

The milk float is still in use today. It turns up to schools and opens out into an impressive display area, educating people about solar and wind power and holding pedal-powered aluminum-recycling races. The whole float also shows that it's possible to make an entire vehicle from recycled, reduced and re-used materials.



The EcoACTIVE milk float in all its glory

www.ecoactive.org.uk



How it all happened (Jason's story):

A few years ago, on the way home after a party I thought that it'd be a good idea to drive the mile home. I thought I was sober enough to drive, but thankfully the police stopped me immediately going the wrong way down a one way street and threw the book at me. I lost my licence for a year, prompting me to cycle everywhere in London, and as a result of my stupidity I was given a year's community service. Luckily for me, I was offered the chance to do my community service working for EcoACTIVE, a not-for-profit environmental education organisation. I was already interested in design and recycling through my design degree, so this was a perfect fit. And Shirley, the EcoACTIVE milk float was born.

How I Invented the Eco-veg Delivery Bike

Then a group of local people in Stoke Newington, East London asked if I could design a trailer for an existing 'Broc' bike. The Broc is a four-wheeled recumbent bicycle with space for at least two adults. The bike was in need of a revamp so that it could continue to be used to deliver locally-grown organic fruit and veg around East London.

The final product? A container on the back of the bike which could open out at weekends to display fruit and veg and transport the food to local drop-off points without being squashed. The design was entirely made from locally sourced, recyclable materials. The container can be dismantled at the end of its life and all the parts can be reused. The Broc bike is still bringing muddy, misshapen vegetables to people all over East London today.

Car-Free Day in Bogota, Columbia

Enrique Penalosa, the former mayor of Bogota, Columbia, revolutionized transportation in his city of 6.4 million people – at least for one day a year. In 2000, he shut down private vehicle use in the city from 6:30 am to 7:30 pm on International Car Free Day. On that day, taxis and buses still ran, but over 832,000 cars were left in the driveway. It was also the first day in three years that no traffic related deaths were reported. What's more, 88% of citizens supported the move and said they'd like to hold another car-free day.¹⁴

Bogota's Car Free Day led to even more far-reaching changes. Mayor Penalosa knew that the majority of people in his city didn't have cars, and he knew that in

the past the city had poured thousands of dollars into building more highways. So to create a more egalitarian and integrated city where the people driving £10,000 cars and the ones riding £10 bicycles were valued equally, Mayor Penalosa diverted funds earmarked for public highways into the public transit system and hundreds of kilometres of bike highways. His strategy was so popular that Bogota's citizens voted to outlaw private cars during daytime rush hours, starting in 2015.¹⁵

Cyclists, pedestrians and bus riders—the majority of Bogota's citizens—are finally having their voices heard and their needs met. Democracy in motion... it's a beautiful thing, innit?





Dave, in front of
Bikeworks' new
home in east
London.

Bike recycling with Bikeworks

I'd been thinking for a while that I'd like to start up my own project - own it, grow it, do it all etc. - and see if there really was an entrepreneur somewhere inside of me. I'd also been thinking it would be good to avoid spending all my time stuck in an office. So after pondering this for a while it came to me that cycling might be the answer somehow.

Cycling can achieve so many different things – tackle carbon emissions, obesity, get people into work, have fun. What's more, with London's roads jammed to the hilt with cars, cycling has been on the rise for some time and only looks set to continue. So I worked on some plans for a community business starting with the idea of bike recycling – refurbishing old bikes for re-use to make cycling more sustainable and

to try and create an alternative to the stolen bike trade for second-hand bikes.

Then I met my partner Jim, who had more brilliant bike business ideas, and we got going. Realising there was a need for cycle training in order to get more people on the road, we started to get contracts with local authorities and charities to deliver this. Even though our first year was tough at times (we were broke, stressed and struggling to get people to take us seriously), we quickly realised we were onto something. Now a year later Bikeworks has a proper home, a great team and funding in place. We're really excited about the future, when we hope to use cycling to tackle social and environmental problems on a local level but with a wider impact.

www.bikeworks.org.uk

Revolutionizing student transport with the U-Pass

At the turn of the millennium, the University of British Columbia (UBC) campus was a car-choked nightmare. Streets on and around campus were chronically jammed full of car-loads of people trying to make their morning classes. Garish parking lots were springing up everywhere. Even the beloved Hub, home of UBC's Bike Co-op, was under threat—ironically, slated to be torn down and paved to make space for more cars. Now, five years later, the campus is almost unrecognizable: the new parking lots are all but empty; busses zip onto campus from all around the city; and the streets are full of students walking and biking to and from their classes. How did this happen?

In 1997, UBC launched 'TREK', a program to explore better transportation options for students. Over the past decade, over 6,000 parking stalls have been eliminated and cycling on campus has more than doubled thanks to TREK's initiatives. The most successful? A deal negotiated in 2003

with the city bus system to give every UBC student a highly subsidized bus pass. Since everyone gets the pass with his or her student card, it makes little sense not to use it.

The deal has been so successful that in its first year it increased bus ridership by 53%—from 29,700 to 45,300 passengers every day! All this can be credited to the TREK program, an open-minded university, and the thousands of students and faculty who pushed, worked and voted to make it happen. Similar ideas are springing up in a number of cities around Canada and in other countries too. This recipe can be put into action anywhere—all you need to do is get fed up with traffic and start dreaming big.

What you can do: Get started on your campus with TREK's U-pass toolkit:
www.cutaactu.ca/pdf/U-PassToolkit.pdf



FYI - Some last thoughts

- In Freiberg, Germany, 29% of shopping trips are made by foot, 26% by public transport, 24% by bicycle and only 14% by car.¹⁶

- A person on a bicycle can go three or four times faster than the pedestrian, but uses *five times less energy* in the process. (He or she carries one gram of his/her weight over a kilometre of flat road at an expense of only 0.15 calories.) Equipped with this tool, [a person...] outstrips the efficiency of not only all machines but all other animals as well.

– Ivan Illich, contemporary philosopher

17

Beyond environmental and pollution reasons, a unique social integration takes place when people of all socio-economic classes sit next to each other in a bus, or stand together at a traffic light on a bicycle.
– Enrique Penalosa, Economist and former mayor of Bogata, Columbia

Off the Shelf - things you can do

Bicycle Ride-In Movie Night

Imagine a field full of picnic blankets. On these blankets sit happy cyclists. Their bikes lie at their sides. Their helmets are cradled in their laps. Their eyes are focused on a screen, and stars cover their heads. Many of us are too young to remember drive-ins, but we're all old enough to organize one. Here's a recipe for a night you won't soon forget.

First things first - how to prepare

1. Find a field or backyard
2. Gather your projection equipment. You'll need a VCR/DVD player or a laptop, a screen or white wall, an LCD projector, a power bar & extension cords.
4. Pick a film. Note: if the film is copyrighted, legally you need to get permission from the distributor. Films licensed under Creative Commons don't have this problem.
5. Bring some refreshments.
6. Wait for a clear night

Bicycle movie night can't

How to do it:

- Find a space, preferably away from noisy traffic. You might need a permit, or let the park authorities know what you're up to.
- Get out your equipment. You'll also need a source of power, so stock up on extension cords or find out if someone you know has a bicycle-powered generator!
- Advertise! Let people know by inviting them personally or sending out emails. Put up posters on bike routes and at bike

shops. Give out handbills promoting the event, or attach invitations to bicycles parked on bike racks.

- Get everything set up ahead of time so things are ready when the viewers arrive. Make sure you schedule the movie to start after dark so it is visible and glare isn't a problem.

Last of all, kick back, enjoy the show and wait for the kudos to roll in.

Off the Shelf - things to do at school

Get your school to do a travel plan

1. Download a guide from www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/schooltravel
2. Pass it on to your parents, teachers or school governors to read. The guide explains step by step what they need to do to get cars off the road & make streets safer for you to walk or cycle to school. Then ask 'em what they think.
3. Get all your mates to do the same.

The guide was put together by the Department of Transport to help reduce car dependency, particularly for short journeys, and give young people the freedom back to make our own way to school.

Check out Walk to School week
It's May 19 - 23:
www.walktoschool.org.uk

Off the shelf at work

Get your work on board with green travel plans for employees and clients

How to do it:

1. Download the Department for Transport's 'Travel plan resource pack for employers' from www.eta.co.uk/env_info/green_travel_plans

2. Give it to work authorities to read.

The guide tells your employers all they need to know about preparing a plan and getting it up and running.

ESCALATE

How to feed a BIG idea!

Read these websites

Get yourself ready for the road. Check out these sites for safety info, winter-biking know-how, kit lists, and deco ideas for your bicycle:

- Getting started: <http://www.lcc.org.uk/index.asp?PageID=565>
- Avoiding cars: <http://www.lcc.org.uk/index.asp?PageID=61>
- Mastering city riding: www.urbanbicyclist.org/cityriderguide.pdf

Then do something

Flex your letter-writing muscles. Do some research on how accessible your local transport system is. How much do tickets cost? Are they affordable? Are the buses accessible to people with disabilities? If services could be better, write letters to your local transit authorities and government and make your voice heard.

Run a Sustainability Joy Ride in your community. Check out the Otesha Canada website for a plan of action: www.otesha.ca

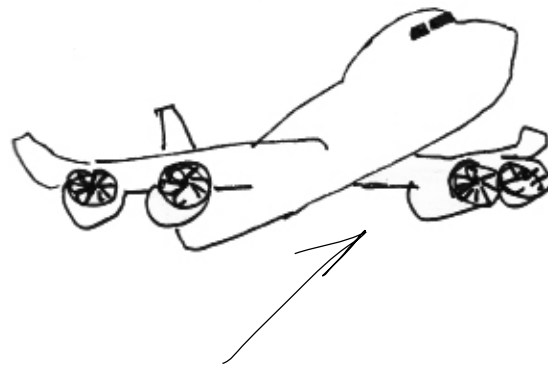
Join a Critical Mass in your community. Rides usually happen on the last Friday of each month: <http://criticalmassrides.info>



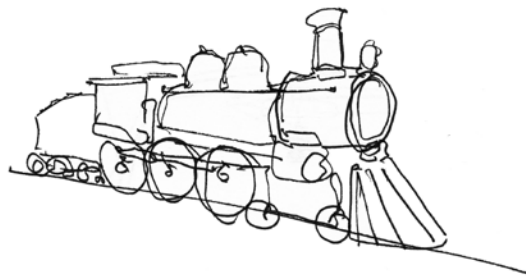
Then (and here's the big one), take everything in the rest of this chapter and apply it to your holidays.

For example, see how far you can get without hopping on a plane. Or how far you can get using only people-power - no engines allowed! When you extend the idea of transport beyond how we get around day-to-day, there are so many more possibilities to make interesting choices. But here's a warning: slow travel can be addictive, so don't try this out unless you're prepared to revolutionize your travels.

If you're thinking about taking a holiday to or from the UK by train, the incredibly useful site Man in Seat 61 (www.maninseat61.com) should be your first stop. Then take a look at the sites and suggestions on the following pages. And if you're planning to fly, be sure to read the pages at the end on carbon offsetting (and start collecting your empty cereal boxes and spare string now).



Who needs to fly when you can get around on a train, a bus, a boat or a camel? (Okay, so maybe not a camel but the other options are valid!)



What's the most memorable thing that's happened to you on a train?

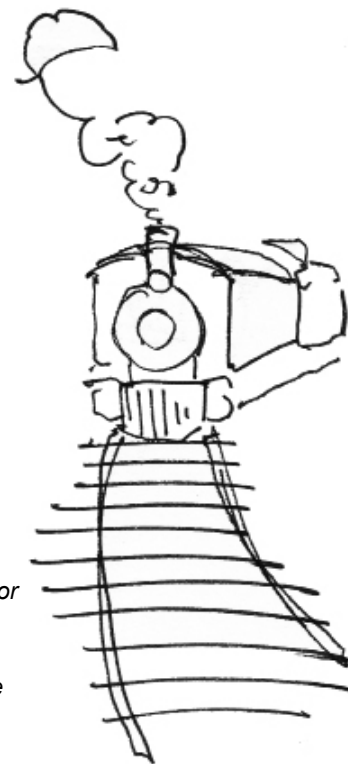
Lately, we've been thinking a lot about the quality of slow vs. fast travel. Are our experiences different? Is one travel style better than the other? So as an experiment, we asked some people we knew: what's the most memorable, interesting or just plain strange thing that's ever happened to you on a train? Here's what they said...

...I left London in the rain and woke up in Biarritz with sun streaming through the windows and palm trees outside...

...I met a group of circus performers that gave me free tickets to the circus and told me all about the life of a circus performer... it made me want to join...

...I found out about illicit affairs between passengers and ticket inspectors...

...I had an argument with a train conductor about taking my bike on & we ended up crying and hugging. The next day he phoned me to offer me his access to free tickets...



Keep reading for more →

And more train stories...

...I met my wife...

...I had a nice three-hour discussion with a cousin I used to hate...

...I got drunk at Oktoberfest, slept it off on a train to Italy, and enjoyed it so much I turned round and went back again...

...I took the train from London to Istanbul. It took 5 days, but now I know I don't really need to fly ever again...

...I was on a train in India and was sitting in the doorway with my legs hanging out of the train. They oddly kept getting wet. I had no idea why until I realized I was sitting next to the toilet...

...I met someone who's now my climbing partner on a train to Suffolk, one of the flattest parts of the country...

...I pretended to be Australian to the conductor and talked for the whole journey on where we should visit whilst on holiday. She forgot to charge us...

...Whilst traveling down the coast of Italy, watching little white sailboats go by, I finally understood what I'm missing out on when I fly...

...I got drunk with the judge from the very highbrow Channel 4 show "Sex in Court"...

...I met my first long-term girlfriend!



Escape London (or how to turn a holiday into a full-on project)

In August 2007, Hanna Thomas and Barney Gough were having a hard time deciding whether to go camping in the Gower Peninsula in Wales for their summer holiday, or to go for a package deal in Greece. Hanna was strapped for cash, so they opted for the former.

Looking out over the incredibly beautiful, National Trust-protected Rhossili Beach from their tipi, they were very happy with their decision! They realised how nonsensical it was that people were flying across the globe and contributing to climate change, only to end up on some polluted beach in the Mediterranean with a whole load of other English people. With this new-found paradise on their doorstep, they felt it was only right to spread the word. Both

Londoners, and both prone to going a bit stir-crazy when they have been in the city too long, they thought that there should be a central resource where people could find information on fun, local holidays. Then a (energy-saving) lightbulb went on, and Escape London was born.

After winning the Fix World, Feel Good Award which got them started (thanks Anti-Apathy!), escapelondon.co.uk is launching in May 2008. It's a fun, friendly and informative website for Londoners, full of suggestions for trips out of the capital that are affordable and accessible by public transport, in order to encourage low-carbon travel. In the same way as we're being encouraged to shop locally, we need to holiday locally too!

www.escapelondon.co.uk





* Ideas for getting around. Part 4 - by train (travel tips from Hannah)

- To start out, scope out all your options with Transport Direct – it's like Journey Planner for the whole country! Traveline can direct you to the relevant local transport planning tools in all parts of the UK – and you can call them for advice on 0871 200 22 33.
- We all know that journeys can be disrupted. Rather than finding out too late, or having to check while you've got one foot already out the door, you can plan well ahead by seeing station closures and track closures on the tube for the next six months. Another recent innovation is National Rail's widgets (for mac) and gadgets (for Windows Vista), which essentially give you your own personal departure board on your computer desktop.
- If you need information on the accessibility of transport services for people with disabilities, the best place to start is accessibility information pages for London and the rest of the country.
- If you travel more than a few times a year by train, it's worth looking into whether you are eligible to buy a rail discount card – they exist for individuals under 26, over 60, and for families and people with disabilities. And there is also a Network Railcard which will save money for anyone who's planning a lot of travel in the South East.

Here's how to *really* offset your carbon

Flying somewhere? There are ways to take action and compensate for the carbon dioxide produced during your flight that work much better than paying a dodgy company money for vague 'offsetting' projects.

To make it happen, you'll need:

- Internet access • Money
- An old cereal box • String

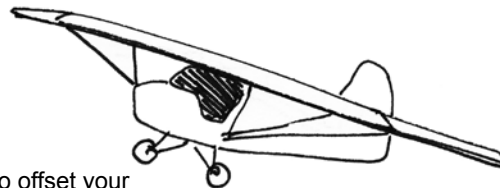
Directions:

1. First things first: Do some research on the Internet to calculate the amount of carbon dioxide that your flight, and you as a traveler on that flight, will produce. There are lots of websites that can help you (such as www.carbonneutral.com/cn/calculators/flightcalculator.asp). They should tell you

what actions you can take to offset your emissions by reducing carbon dioxide (CO₂).

- For example, you can plant a certain number of trees (or pay to buy the trees for someone else to plant around the world), which absorb CO₂ and convert it to oxygen.

- Or you can replace regular light bulbs around your house with energy-efficient light-bulbs (either CFLs or for bonus points, mercury-free LEDs). Saving electricity every time you turn on the light means less electricity needs to be made, which means fewer fossil fuels burned and less CO₂ in the air to begin with.

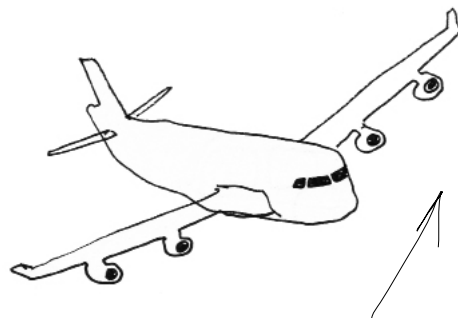


The Internet travel calculator should give you an exact number of trees to plant or bulbs to replace in order to offset the emissions from your particular flight.

2. Do the prep work: Walk or cycle to your local hardware store to buy the light bulbs (if you drive there, you're just making it harder on yourself...).

Or find your nearest nursery or environmental organization - or get in touch with the local council to see if they'll give you a tree (sometimes they will). Planting trees that are native to your area is the best option, as they're likely to be better suited to the environmental conditions. Make sure you continue to water the tree for some time, at least until it has developed a decent root system and can provide for itself.

3. To let others know about your motivation to take action, make up a GIANT travel tag (from an old cereal box and



*Not just for guilty consciences!
Everyone can start to reduce the
impact of hopping on planes...*

some string) to attach to your luggage. On your tag, write something like this: WHEN I GET HOME I'M GOING TO PLANT SIX TREES SO I DON'T FEEL GUILTY ABOUT THIS FLIGHT (I have tree seeds in my hand luggage if you want some).

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16 - Encycleopedia, *For the Love of Bikes. City Bikes*. Retrieved December 11th, 2004, from www.encycleopedia.com/index.cfm?pid=21&catID=3

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The background of the entire image is a close-up, slightly blurred view of numerous one-pound coins. The coins are arranged in a grid-like pattern, with their intricate designs and the words 'ONE POUND' visible. The lighting creates a warm, golden-brown glow across the scene.

MONEY

OTESHA PROJECT UK HANDBOOK

THE BASICS



She needs a piggy
bank

Ah, money. Sadly the world isn't a safe enough place to keep it all stashed away under our mattresses, so most of us have to resort to using banks. But how much do we really think about the actual implications of where we put our money? What happens to our money once we pay it in to the bank? When we don't have the money we need, where does the 'credit' come from? I certainly don't spend all my evenings pondering these questions. And until a few years ago, money and credit were merely accepted in my life: mundane but essential.

I, Sara, your narrator for this chapter, studied economics at university. I was taught about investments and accountancy. I learned how to make money turn into more

money and how to keep it once it's there. But none of my lecturers ever talked about where, exactly, this money comes from, or why it grows. We talked about stocks and bonds, but I didn't really ever think about the businesses behind the stock market symbols, or the real life behind the numbers and figures. My teachers taught me about money in our economy and how economists control it. But no one mentioned whether the workings of the economy were actually healthy, or discussed if our economic aims actually made a difference in the world.

And I didn't question these things either, until one day a friend asked me what I thought about socially responsible investing. He was opening a new bank account and

wanted my advice about where to go. I have to admit, this was the first time really thought about ethical investments. Sure, the concept sounded good - I mean, who can argue with the words 'socially responsible' But then I got thinking... why was there a need for ethical investing? Did this mean that most investments were unethical? And if investments could be unethical, what else in the money world could be questioned?

Sara investigates further...

FYI

- Number of high street banks in the UK that have a written ethical policy about where they'll invest your money: 1¹.
- Number of UK banks which hold third world debt: 3 (HSBC, Barclay's & Lloyd's)¹.
- Number of UK banks which do business in countries with oppressive regimes and human rights violations: 3 (HSBC, Barclay's & Lloyd's)¹.

TRUE OR FALSE

Things we thought we knew but...

now we realize that it's not like that all

Does it matter where we stash our monthly paycheques?

Not really, unless you're Richard Branson. The simple answer? We just don't have enough money. Unless we're bank rolling millions, our monthly pay is pretty miniscule compared to the entire amount of money in the banking system. What's more, most of it comes right back out again to pay rent, food, student loans, or a weekend trip. So how in the world can a tiny amount of money held in an account for a few short weeks make an impact?

It matters more than you think. Money that gets deposited into a bank account is like a loan to banks. While our money's sitting there, the banks use some of it to make other loans to individuals, companies and the government, or to invest in financial markets. Interest that we gain from

depositing our cash comes from the interest that the bank charges lenders. The big deal? Most banks invest wherever they can earn the highest return with the lowest financial risk, without questioning what the social impact of that transaction might be.

The verdict: Even though our bank deposits are only a small part of a big system, they're being combined together to create amounts large enough to finance big projects. So if our banks make loans to support corrupt governments, arms deals, illegal logging, massive oil exploration, sweatshop labour, or other dodgy ventures, then our personal accounts help make it possible.

Can one person change a bank's policies?

Obviously not - corporations rule the agenda. Banks are big! And powerful! They respond to big stakeholders, like massive businesses who want to take out huge loans. Creating incentives to keep their biggest customers happy - the corporations which hold all the power - plus following government regulations must take up all bank employees' time. There's no way they listen to individual members too.

People power, baby! Believe it or not, individuals actually have a lot of power to influence bank's investment decisions. In the past, popular pressure has convinced banks to stop making unethical investments in different industries from the slave trade, way back in the 1700s, to South African

companies during apartheid in the 1980s². As recently as the 1990s, UK citizens have stood up and pressured banks in this country to stop taking on third-world debt, since it often cripples the social and economic development of the world's poorest countries. This pressure led to the transfer of most debts to official agencies such as the IMF & the World Bank. By now, only a few banks hold this type of debt - Barclay's, HSBC & Lloyd's in the UK¹.

The verdict: Who says you can't make money and be ethical about it? Today, Socially Responsible Investment campaigns focus on a broad range of issues, from government corruption to the environment.

Shady deals

According to the EIRIS Guide to Responsible Banking, many banks do business in countries with governments that oppress their own people¹. This goes directly against the UN's Universal Declaration on Human Rights, since banks aren't supposed to finance leaders who don't respect the human rights of their citizens.



Is there such a thing as 'good debt' and 'bad debt'?

Bring it on - debt can be good. Very few of us will go through our whole lives without taking on any debt. Access to loans can create heaps of new opportunities, helping people to get an education, start up a business or buy a home. Without access to loans, these things would only be available to people with money, since it's pretty tough to get a mortgage by cashing in the pennies saved up from a Saturday job. As long as borrowers are fully aware of a loan's repayment terms, credit can act as an equaliser across social classes and income levels, giving all people access to the same opportunities.

Step away from the credit card - debt is always bad.

At the moment, personal debt in the UK totals more than £1,355 billion³. How, exactly, is all this debt going to be paid back? When we sign our names on the dotted line for a loan or swipe that credit card at the shop, we're living beyond our means, spending money we don't have. What's more,

we're agreeing to pay back more than we borrowed, since (except in special situations) loans come with a certain percentage 'charge' per year in interest. This is normally called the 'APR' or 'annual percentage rate'. When a bank or a storecard lends us money, banks benefit whether or not we pay it back. If we can't pay it all back on time, that's when they start collecting interest.



Why do banks seem so eager to give us credit?

When banks make their profits from purchases that can't be paid back in time, is it any surprise that they sometimes give a different impression? Companies issuing credit cards and storecards make money when you spend, spend, spend and the longer it takes you to pay back, the more they benefit. Check out the MyBnk website (www.mybnk.org) for more on this.

Say for example with an APR of 20%, I make the decision to borrow £500, perhaps for a holiday and big shopping spree which I'm sure I'll be able to pay back once a new job starts. At the end of the year, the amount owed will be £600. Hmm. If the job doesn't add up to leave me with as much spare cash as expected, holding the payment until the year after will end up in £720 being owed. The year after, £864, then £1036.80, then £1244.16... until a relatively small debt becomes unmanageable.

And when an example like this is multiplied (with loads of different cards, loans, student debt), it's easy to see how money situations can get out of hand. With the onset of top-up fees, first year students

entering university in 2007 can expect to leave with an average dept of £17,500 ⁴. Such amounts may take a long while to repay and in the worst cases could lead to bankruptcy*.

The verdict: For some, high amounts of personal debt can feel destabilizing, suffocating and depressing. Money from bank loans, credit cards and storecards isn't meant to be used free of charge and free of consequences. But debt can also give access to opportunities like education or home ownership. In the end, it looks like decisions about borrowing need to be made on a case-by-case basis. Not all debt is created equal.

***Declaring bankruptcy:**

Loss of all an individuals' assets and a bad credit rating for 6 years after filing bankruptcy. In these 6 years it can be difficult and expensive to borrow money. There are ways however, to get a bankruptcy annulled. If people that are owed money come to an agreement with lender about repayment then application can be made to annul the bankruptcy.

FYI credit cards

- Annual percentage rate (APR) of interest charged on credit cards: between 15-20%
- Average APRs on store cards 30%
- Number of people in the UK with storecards: 15 million
- Number of people in the UK declared bankrupt: 210,440 (out of a possible 47, 240,785 individuals who are 18 and over; 0.45% of adults)

How to use your credit card for good

If you do decide to take out a credit card, there are different ethical options. For instance, an affinity card which partners a financial institution with a charity (like Oxfam). This way, whenever money is spent on the credit card, the charity will get a small donation from your bank or credit union.



If there's so much debt out there, does that mean it's easy to get a loan?

It's easy peasy! Especially before the credit crunch hit, banks were giving away mortgage loans to almost anyone who applied, even without an up-front down payment, which is usually a requirement for buying a house. And since credit card companies make a bigger profit when their borrowers can't make payments on time, they've got an incentive to give out credit cards to people who take a little longer to pay back their loans.

Actually, not so much. In the UK, there's actually a stark contrast between the over-availability of credit cards and storecards and the severe problem of lack of credit for those who are most in need. So why doesn't everyone have access to a loan when they need one? Since many UK banks don't have any policies which prevent social exclusion, people with lower incomes often have a really hard time getting access to money. This creates an opportunity for loan sharks to jump in and offer quick

cash to anyone who wants it. The catch? Interest rates for this type of loan can be as high as 35% - what's called predatory lending.

The situation in developing countries is similar, if not worse. Instead of a handout of cash, many people would prefer a small loan to start up a home-based business or make improvements to their farms. But loans are really difficult to come by for the very poor, since they don't have property or other possessions that they can use as collateral when



they go to the bank. It's especially difficult for women to get access to funding in countries where they're not allowed to own property.

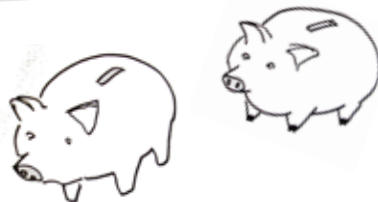
The verdict: It sounds like a case of not enough good credit available to people who need it most, combined with too much bad credit coming from high-interest credit cards, store cards and loan sharks. So what can be done? Luckily, alternatives to this unfair situation are starting to pop up. Microcredit programs were created to get small loans into the hands of people who really need them and who'd otherwise have a really hard time getting access to credit.

Like microcredit? Here's how to give it a boost:

- Support microcredit programmes at www.goodgifts.org.
- Hold a fundraising drive to support people in the developing world want to use micro loans to start small businesses (Oxfam and UNICEF have more info on this).

Micro credit in action

- Accion International in America gives loans specifically to low-income women
- Fair Finance, which is based in London, gives microcredit loans to people who really need them at fair interest rates.
- The Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, founded over 30 years ago, pioneered small scale lending schemes to poor families, championing access to credit as a human right. The bank's founder, Muhammad Yunus, won a Nobel Prize in 2006 for his work.



All banks seem pretty much the same. Does it really matter which one I choose?

No way - a bank is a bank is a bank.

They're all big, faceless institutions, aren't they? And they all have the same main purpose - to make money by managing other people's money, making investments & financing big deals.

Actually yeah, since there are big differences between 'em.

There are many different types of banks and banking options. With a credit union or banking co-operative, ownership and control are held by members. The Co-operative Bank, based in the UK, has clear, written ethical policies. For example, they refuse to invest in any company taking part in extraction or production of fossil fuels⁶. Some

banks have more sustainable internal practices than others. For example, one bank might give us the option to do paperless banking, while others will insist on sending a paper statement in the mail each month. Some banks or credit unions also work hard to reduce their energy use and waste within the organization. Still, others have strong policies on employment equity and diversity.

The verdict: It turns out that making better decisions about money can be as easy as opening a new bank account. Not so complicated after all!

The Bank of England →

Credit Unions 101

In 2005, there were credit unions in 92 countries around the world, with over 157 million members. In Ireland, most people bank with a credit union. In North America and Australia, around 30% of people do. How does somebody become a member of a credit union? They open a bank account with one - everyone with an account automatically becomes a member⁵.





*Ethical banking options

Want to open an ethical savings or investment account? Here are some options:

- Charity Bank (www.charitybank.org), where all deposits go into a pool which allows the bank to give affordable loans to charities doing really great work.
- Triodos Bank (www.triodos.co.uk), one of Europe's first ethical banks. It originated in the Netherlands but now operates throughout Europe
- The Ecology Building Society (www.ecologybuildingsociety.co.uk) pools all deposits to give mortgages to people & small businesses who follow sustainable building practices
- The Catholic Building Society (www.catholicbs.co.uk) gives mortgages to financially excluded groups, such as low-income people, single women and claimants of state benefits

At the end of the day, is money a necessary evil?

Of course - money makes the world go 'round. It's pretty hard to get by without a certain amount of cold, hard cash. Unless you grow all your own food, make your own clothes, and can beg, borrow or steal everything else you need to survive, it's not possible to live a good life without some money in the bank. This gets even more true when you think about the millions of people in the UK (and billions 'round the world) who live in cities, where subsistence living is practically impossible.

No way - we can definitely do without it. As crazy as it might sound, money isn't always necessary to get something new, or to go about our day-to-day activities. There are lots of groups of people who

are creating their own barter systems in their towns or communities. Some groups have gone a step further and started up local currencies, which are called Local Exchange Trading Systems (LETS). In the UK alone, there are about 300 LETS with a total of over 30,000 members.⁸ But they're not the only way to give and get stuff without using money - there are also time banks, Freecycle, and commercial barter systems.

The verdict: Obviously, alternatives to money aren't going to completely overtake a cash-based economy anytime soon. But with a combination of local currencies, bartering, DIY-ing, food-growing and reusing old stuff, it's actually amazing how little cash is needed to get by.



Ithaca Hours

The first modern local currency started in 1991 in Ithaca, New York and has been going strong ever since. Business owners decide how many hours, or what portion of an hour, their products are worth, and then trade with each other accordingly. It's common for local businesses to accept a maximum portion of Ithaca hours to keep some cash flow around, but residents can still pay for half a train ticket or haircut with Ithaca Hours and give the rest in cash⁷.

HOW ERICA GOT INTO MONEY



After I graduated from university in England I moved to Osaka, Japan to teach English and Foreign Affairs at a senior high school. For the first time in my life, I had my own salary and I was able to put some money away and build a nest egg for when I would later return to the UK. My job was well paid for a graduate job and I felt that I was 'responsibly' saving some money whilst enjoying life in a new part of the world.

As a new and enthusiastic teacher I wanted to teach my students about issues that were important to me. I planned for my Foreign Affairs classes, lessons on climate change and energy usage, on human rights issues, sustainable living and global poverty and inequality. I told my students about the

human rights campaigns and community-based charities I had been involved with and they shared with me their thoughts on environmental issues and the war in Iraq. We talked a lot about how our actions and the decisions we made impacted on other peoples' lives. But during all this time, I never once thought about where my salary was being invested by my bank. To be honest, I was just happy to have a bank that was convenient and wouldn't charge me if I became over-drawn!

Then, one day, a Japanese friend who banked with the Citizen's Bank of Japan asked me who I banked with. He told me that he banked with the Citizen's Bank because of their ethical stance. This spurred

me on to do some research into the bank I had been with for years in the UK. I realised that, while I prided myself on my “ethical living” and social conscience, my savings for all these years had been acting in precisely the opposite way. It turned out that my bank was one of only a few banks left in the UK that persisted in holding third-world debt. In other words, I was contributing to the struggles of some of the world’s poorest countries. I became frustrated. Why weren’t more people talking and thinking about this?

I realised that I didn’t have a clue about where my savings were being invested. It was all very well refusing to support certain companies because of their lack of environmental policy or social responsibility but how ridiculous was it if my savings were being used to support them!

I decided that I would start banking with a bank that would invest in projects benefiting society and the environment.

I talked to my friends who agreed in principle with what I was saying, but warned me of the hassles of changing bank accounts and the problems of banking with a bank that had only limited branches. Would I even be able to get a credit card? What I realised is that it really isn’t much hassle - just a bit of form filling. Hundreds and thousands of individuals and businesses worldwide have switched to banks with more ethical policies. I could still have a credit card and my savings would still earn me interest. I realised that I could choose a bank that would invest in community groups and charities just like the ones I was involved with.

Although the idea of ethical banking isn’t perfect, for me it has been important to realise that my bank is more than just a name and a hole in the wall. I feel now as if I have made a choice about where my money is going – and that I have put my money where my mouth is.

THINGS THAT WORK

What other people did

Banking with a conscience: the Co-operative Bank

A few years ago, when I first learned about all the issues around money and banking, I decided to only invest my savings in an ethical place. So I went to my credit union and told them that I didn't want my money supporting oil companies anymore. But they told me that it just wasn't possible - man, was I upset! Luckily, 5 years later, a lot has changed. Enough people have demanded ethical investing that banks are starting to listen. They no longer laugh - instead, they're busy building funds that balance financial return with social and environmental impacts. Last year, I went to the bank again and asked to put my money in ethical funds. They told me that they have several options, and that none invest in oil companies. Even though they

earn a bit less money than unethical investments, this is fine by me - I'd rather earn a bit less every year & feel good knowing that my money is supporting the things that I support.

In the UK, the pioneer in ethical banking is the Co-operative Bank, which made the bold move of adopting an ethical stance back in 1992. From then on, instead of making the most money possible no matter what the cost, the Co-operative Bank uses clear ethical policies to guide all their investment decisions. Believe it or not, they're still the only UK Clearing Bank with a published stance about who it will and won't do business with. In fact, the bank hasn't supported any business that's involved in the mining or production of fossil fuels for almost a decade - now that's some serious foresight ⁹.

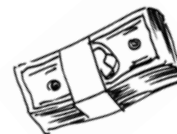
Edinburgh University People & Planet Ethical Investment Campaign

The University of Edinburgh holds £160 million worth of shares yet until very recently, its investment portfolio was completely confidential. In 2002, in response to student pressure, the University allowed this information into the public eye. This move revealed the University's financial support of corporations like BAE systems, one of the largest arms dealers, as well as a host of other companies with questionable environmental and human rights records.

And so began an Ethical Investment campaign by People and Planet group. The goal was to bring about real change by pressuring the university to make investments in ethical companies and avoid

unethical ones. Over the next few years, the campaign continued, receiving support from Westminster and the Scottish Parliament, until...success!

In the summer of 2003, the University created procedures whereby student representatives could participate in and influence its investment practices, accepting the need to adhere to 'social, environmental and humanitarian values'. Students are now fully involved in all investment decisions, as well as how shares owned are used in votes at company general meetings. This hugely successful campaign is currently being replicated at St Andrews University, as well as a number of other universities throughout the country.



MyBnk: youth-led banking

In July 2006, a 26 year-old named Lily Lapenna set out to create a slightly unusual bank. Run by young people for young people, its aim was to increase financial and entrepreneurial know-how amongst other young people. Its motto was simply: "MyBnk, my money, our future".

Lily's first step was to make friends with the striped suits at the Financial Services Authority, so that the bank would have official recognition. Next, Lily and her enthusiastic team began working with participants, mostly young people in schools and young formerly homeless people in foyers. As they came into contact with schools, they realised that they weren't the first to get there. High Street banks, looking for a new market, were enticing young people to open up accounts with them. Some banks were even opening small branches within schools, offering freebies and other

inducements to get young people interested. So Lily and her team decided that instead of the banks shopping for young people, young people should be shopping for their banks.

As a result, MyBnk started encouraging its participants to take a first step into saving and shop around for a bank that suited their needs. Ethical policies, corporate social responsibility, Internet banking facilities and interest rates are some of the things participants are now looking into before they open an account. MyBnk savers are also taking out small interest-free loans to set up world-changing, money-making activities. Because of Lily's vision, young people in London are becoming better-informed ethical consumers and inspirational agents for social change.

www.mybnk.org

Social lending – where people lend and borrow from each other, instead of going through banks.

Maybe the most interesting development in banking though, is the rise of ‘social lending’ websites. If we can share music amongst ourselves (instead of always going via a record shop), if we can share videos with millions of people instead of going to Blockbuster...then what about money? If there are millions of people with little bits of money they don’t need and millions of people who need little bits of money – why does that automatically have to involve a great big bank with branches on every high street? In the UK, the most successful experiment in ‘social lending’ has been Zopa. If you want to borrow some money to start a business or buy a car (or whatever), you can go on their website, explain why you need the money, say how much interest

you’d be willing to pay and then anyone who wants to lend you the money can then lend it to you directly... Zopa’s just one site that’s exploring new ways of doing banking and using money (and they’ve just expanded to the US and Italy). The exciting thing is that they’re really only scratching the surface of what’s possible when you point all the possibilities of the internet at all the limitations of existing our banks. It’s only going to get more interesting.

www.zopa.com



Freecycle: barter alive & well in the UK

One great example of trading without money is the idea of Freecycle. This global network of community-based trading has the mission to “change the world one gift at a time”. The idea began in 2003 in Tucson Arizona, when Deron Beal, an employee with a small recycling organization, realized that many local charities could probably use the perfectly good items that he was recycling every day. This led to the first email to a group of 30-40 friends announcing a Freecycle Network. Today, more than 4,080 communities are taking part worldwide - all you have to do is find your local group, sign up to their mailing list, and you're set. How does it work? Well, instead of throwing stuff into landfills, people post items they don't want anymore on Freecycle. Then whoever wants the item can come and pick it up, no charge, and give it a new home. Like they say - one man's rubbish is another man's treasure¹⁰.

www.uk.freecycle.org

And some final words from Sara...



Okay, so it really does look like we have a chance to vote with all our pounds when making decisions about banking, spending and saving. On my end, after learning about socially responsible investment from my friend, I went to my bank and asked them to put my money into ethical funds. And I opened an account with a credit union which has great ethical policies. I've also started swapping with my friends - in exchange for a delicious home-cooked meal, I might get a massage or a haircut. It's fantastic, plus I get to hang out with the people I really want to spend my time with (no offense to my old hairdresser, but my friends are much more fun).

Off the Shelf - things you can do

- Ask your bank for their ethics & environmental policies. If they don't have them, ask why not
- Ask to receive electronic bank statements instead of paper
- If you're looking for a good, ethical place to stash your hard-earned money, then look into Socially Responsible Investment (SRI)
- Choose to bank with a credit union, co-operative or charity bank instead of a traditional bank. If you ask your current bank to switch your account over to somewhere more ethical, they're legally obligated to say yes
- If you're going to get a credit card, choose one that gives some of its profits to good organizations, like Oxfam

ESCALATE

How to feed a big idea!

Fancy some bartering?

• Set up a bartering system as an alternative to spending money. Brainstorm what skills or goods you can offer (like baby-sitting, cooking, back massages, hand made clothes, or singing lessons) and trade your friends and neighbours for skills or goods that you need.

Some great books to read:

- Koenig, P. (2003). 30 Lies About Money. iUniverse
- Lietaer, B. (2002). The Future of Money. Century
- Buchan, J. (2001) Frozen Desire: Meaning of Money. Welcome Rain
- Brook, C. (1997) K Foundation: Burn A Million Quid. Ellipsis London

Check out this website:

www.reinventingmoney.com

Watch this video:

Money as Dept by Paul Grignam. An outline of the process by which banks create money.

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-9050474362583451279>



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- 3** - BBC. Retrieved December 18, 2007 from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/6992450.stm>
- 4** - The independent. Retrieved December 18, 2007 from http://news.independent.co.uk/education/education_news/article2861740.ece
- 5** - World Council of Credit Unions Inc. 'World Wide Credit Unions 2005 Statistical Report'. 2006. Retrieved December 18, 2007 from http://www.woccu.org/_assets/documents/publications/2005StatisticalReport_English.pdf

What we read

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- 7** - Wikipedia. Retrieved December 18, 2007 from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ithaca_Hours
- 8** - LETS Link UK. 2006 data. Retrieved December 18, 2007 from www.letslinkuk.net
- 9** - Co-operative Financial Services <http://www.cfs.co.uk>
- 10** - Freecycle. www.freecycle.org



The image features three ripe yellow bananas with some brown spots, arranged in a curve against a solid red background. Two text overlays are present: a dark brown rectangle with the word 'TRADE' in white serif font, and a wider, lighter brown rectangle below it containing the text 'OTESHA PROJECT UK HANDBOOK' in white serif font.

TRADE

OTESHA PROJECT UK HANDBOOK

THE BASICS

Ah, the coffee drinkers, lined up like school children waiting for their bus, unable to function or face the world until our lips are curled around a cup of sweet java. The smell is invigorating even if you don't drink the stuff. Coffee was my guilt-free daily pleasure, even if it did sometimes cost three quid a cup. I savoured it with friends after tasty meals and kept it with me for companionship and stamina as I worked into the wee hours of the morning on that last-minute essay.

That is, until recently, when I learned about the larger impact that a single cup of coffee has on the world. It turns out that my 'regular-skinny-latte-cappu-frappuccino' is particularly political with massive social and environmental impacts — from

deforestation, to pesticides, to unfair wages and the perpetuation of poverty, right down to the waste emitted at every stage of its production and consumption.

After learning this much, I started eyeing my whole shopping basket with suspicion.

The more I looked, the more I didn't want to know about. My bananas, tea, chocolate, flowers, sugar, clothing and even footballs - could they all be made in brutally exploitative conditions? Was nothing sacred? Would I really have to feel guilty about footballs too?

Luckily, I'm back to enjoying my daily guilt-free cup of steaming hot coffee. Hopefully this chapter explains how I stopped worrying and grew to love the bean again.



↑
Narrator - and
caffeine addict -
Katherine

Why care about coffee?

Since 1997, the prices paid to coffee farmers and producers in developing countries (mostly in Latin America and Africa) have dropped by 80%.

Plantations have been forced to fire workers. Small farmers go without food, take their children out of school, and even abandon their farms to live in cities in poverty.¹

To grow more coffee (making the prices go down even further), farmers are encouraged to use 'modern' practices that result in massive deforestation and soil erosion, the loss of biodiversity and habitat, and an increase in chemical pesticide use.





* FYI-all about coffee

- International Coffee Price per pound (US dollars), 1997: \$3.15
- International Coffee Price per pound (US dollars), July 2006: \$0.89
- Minimum required price to support coffee farmer on a living wage \$1.26 per pound or \$1.40 for organically grown (Fair Trade recommendation)²
- Price paid for one pound of coffee to small farmers in Chiapas, Mexico: 20-30 cents
- Production cost for one pound of coffee in Chiapas: 76 cents³
- 31 billion cups of coffee are drunk in the UK every year. That's an average of 500 cups per year, per person.
- Annual impact on the earth of one person's consumption of 3 cups of coffee a day: ⁴
 - 51 gallons of coffee processed
 - 18 coffee trees harvested
 - 16 pounds of fertilizer used
 - Several ounces of pesticides sprayed
 - 64 pounds of coffee pulp discarded into local rivers⁵

Introducing.....

THE DYNAMIC TRIO OF ETHICAL COFFEE

When I started to learn more about the conditions of the people behind the product, I considered giving up coffee. But my inner addict responded: 'No! For the love of everything fine and wonderful on this green Earth, no more coffee no es posible!' (My inner addict's Spanish is not so hot.)

Fortunately, I discovered something that allowed me to keep my caffeine fix and change the world in the same sip, and which explains why fair trade has spread through the rest of my shopping favourites.



Shade Grown

This mysterious master of the deep forest is a friend to all the plants and creatures necessary for a thriving ecosystem. Shade Grown dwells under the existing forest canopy in the traditional practice of growing coffee beans out of the reach of the sun, instead of cutting down rainforest and crops.

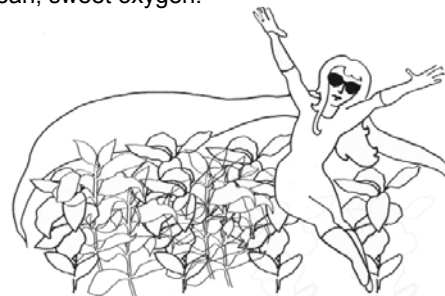
Nurturing: Provides habitat for hundreds of birds, mammals, and other species, restoring crucial biodiversity.⁸

Nourishing: Allows farmers to feed and care for his family with the food (fruit, vegetables, nuts), medicinal crops, and firewood taken from the forest. The farmer may also sell these at the market to supplement their coffee income.

Enriching: Provides added nutrients to the soil and prevents soil erosion, increasing the lifespan of plants and long-term sustainability of the land.⁹

Allied with Organic: Many of the trees provide natural pesticides, decreasing and almost eliminating the need for chemicals¹⁰ that harm the farmer and the consumer. Shade trees also provide natural mulch, and so reduce the need for 'orrid chemical fertilizers'.¹¹

Cool: Combats global warming as the trees remove massive amounts of carbon dioxide from the air, and replace it with clean, sweet oxygen!



Fair Trade



This mighty crusader wears a cape woven with equality, sustainability and justice. Fair Trade provides a guaranteed price to the farmer for his crop, recognizing the true cost of his materials and labour, and empowering him to break the cycle of poverty.

Pursues fairness and equality: Pays a minimum of \$1.26/lb instead of the \$0.30/lb most often paid to farmers.⁶ Insists on healthy working conditions and fair wages for plantation workers.

Approachable: Often buys coffee directly from the farmers themselves or democratic farmers' co-ops, instead of going through several intermediaries (known as 'coyotes') who rip off farmers.

Culturally sensitive: Respects and protects the cultural norms and needs of the producers.

Dependable: A long-term relationship is established (minimum 2 harvests) and farmers are paid 50% of the price before the beans are grown to help with initial inputs like seeds, tools & materials.

Protects the vulnerable: No forced or exploitative child labour—a fair price means farmers can afford to send their children to school instead of out to the fields!

Seeks justice for all: Other products with fair trade options include fruit, juices, cocoa, tea, flowers, rice and even footballs (all of which are often produced under shocking and exploitative conditions).

Stylish: Sports the recognizable Fairtrade mark (while at home in the UK – wears other logos in different countries) in a trendy black, blue and green combination, instantly recognizable to 57% of consumers in the UK.⁷

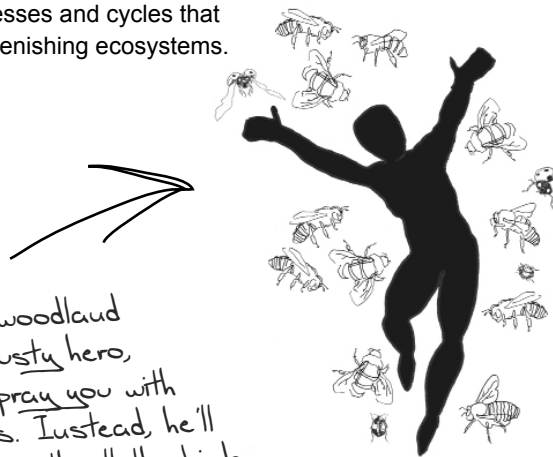
Organic

This wonder of nature is a bag of pure, healthy goodness. Organic farming uses traditional methods to solve insect, weed, and disease problems and evicts chemical pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, or fertilizers.

Promotes health: Prevents insects and disease from destroying crops without poisoning the food, the farmer, or our environment!

Reduces risks: Bans genetic modification, of which the long-term consequences on human health and the global ecosystem are uncertain and unnecessary.

Connected: Understands and restores the complex natural processes and cycles that promote rich, self-replenishing ecosystems.



Rejoice, oh woodland creatures! Our trusty hero, Organic, won't spray you with toxic chemicals. Instead, he'll dance and frolic with all the birds and the bees.

TRUE OR FALSE?

Things we're trying to wrap our heads around

How easy are fair trade products to find?

Okay, so there's not really a true or false to this question – it's pretty evident that fairly traded stuff is getting easier and easier to find. In fact, the Fairtrade Foundation's symbol now shows up on over 3,000 different products, from flowers to footballs. Want fairly traded wine? No problem – there are over 100 kinds to choose from. Cotton? Easy – you can find anything from knickers to cloth toys, especially since sales of Fairtrade cotton skyrocketed 660% in 2007.¹¹ Body scrub? Done. Chutney? Done. Smoothies? Done, done, and done.

In the largest move to Fairtrade so far, the British sugar manufacturing giant Tate & Lyle announced during the 2008 Fairtrade Fortnight celebrations that it's switching all its sugar over. This single decision means that 10 times more fairly traded sugar will be available in the UK in 2008 than in 2007, bringing at least £2 million extra income to cane farmers in Belize in its first year alone.¹²

Update: during the 2009 Fairtrade Fortnight, Cadbury's announced plans to move their entire chocolate range over to Fairtrade. Looks like this movement is really picking up steam!



In the world of caffeinated beverages, Marks and Spencer switched its entire coffee range to Fairtrade certified in 2006, The Co-op Supermarket switched all their hot beverages over, and Sainsbury's isn't far behind. All in all, more than 20% of the coffee sold in the UK is Fairtrade.¹³ Our tea isn't far behind either – by the end of this year, it's expected that 1 in 10 teabags sold will be fairly traded, helping millions of producers earn a better livelihood. If you don't see it in your local shop or cafe, ask for it – if we don't ask, we won't get.

Like bananas? At Waitrose and Sainsburys, you'll only find Fairtrade. This is a big deal, since bananas are the third most valuable product sold by supermarkets, after petrol and National Lottery Tickets.¹⁴ These days, 1 in 4 bananas sold in the UK is Fairtrade.

This is a growing movement that involves over 7 million producers in 58 countries, and that realizes half a billion pounds in sales a year – in the UK alone.¹⁵



Apples used to be the number one fruit, but bananas overtook 'em back in 1998



* FYI - unpeeling the banana trade¹⁶

- Plantation workers in Ecuador get \$1 a day. Attempts to organise into trade unions to protest are often violently suppressed.
- Other independent producers often get only 3p per pound. This doesn't even cover the costs of production, so farmers are losing money and gradually losing their livelihoods.
- Bananas are the most popular fruit in the UK, making up 28% of total fruit sales.
- In fact, you'll find bananas in 95% of UK homes
- In order to meet demand and survive on the very low prices imposed on them, farmers increasingly use agrochemicals to boost short-term production.
- This is an environmental hazard – agrochemical run-off leads to the unintentional killing of wildlife and marine ecosystems.
- It's also a health hazard – the average consumption of pesticides in Costa Rica per person is 8 times higher than the world average.


Is buying fair trade more expensive?

Does it cost the same? These days, the price difference isn't so big. Compare a cup of Fairtrade certified tea to a conventional cuppa bought at a specialty cafe, and they might have the same price tag.

Or will it take more pennies from our pockets? Fairtrade coffee often costs more than low-grade coffee. But then again, it's usually much better quality. And since the main principle of fair trade is paying a wage that's high enough for producers to survive, at least we can know that the higher price is going directly to the people who sew our pants and sow our sugarcane seeds.¹⁷


Since fair trade producers must promise to invest their additional profits in social and economic development, buyers can be sure that any premium paid is going right back into local communities, giving producers access to better services and the chance to send their kids to school.

The verdict: Yeah, it'll probably cost a bit more to pick up something with the Fairtrade label. But the little extra that'll come out of our pockets will likely mean a whole lot to the producer we're supporting, in a pay-for-my-kids'-school, put-food-on-the-table kind of way. Those extra pennies are the price we pay for fairness, accountability, ethics... things like that.



Many commodity prices have dropped dramatically in the past decade, yet we're not paying less for our food. So who's keeping the profits?

For example, coffee prices per pound dropped around 70% in 2001 alone,¹⁸ yet the cost of a latte at Starbucks or Café Nero didn't decrease one penny. So the companies are paying less for the coffee but they're charging us just the same. I think someone's doing nicely out of that price drop, and it's not me, you or the coffee farmers...



A case of disappearing profits?



A woman picking tea in India.
Think she supports fair trade?

What's the deal with big chains that sell some fair trade products, like Starbucks?

Hey, at least they're trying: Starbucks carries a line of Fairtrade coffee. So they're doing better than many coffee houses out there like Café Nero, who don't. Some other coffee chains though, like AMT and EAT, have switched over to 100% Fair Trade.¹⁹

Or maybe they're not doing enough?

Although these changes signal a huge shift in the way that big chains do business, there are still many more products they sell that could also be Fairtrade certified, like tea, chocolate bars, sugar packets and bananas.

What's more, some coffee shops are lagging far behind – Fairtrade coffee still

makes up a really small percentage of the coffee that Starbucks sells (only about 3.7%).²⁰

The verdict: To many shops, fair trade is seen as a niche market, reserved for those who care. Don't think we'd expect them to, would we? But that can easily change as more of their customers ask for it. Meanwhile, there are many smaller shops that sell all Fair Trade coffee, tea and chocolate, all the time.

What you can do: Starbucks has a policy of brewing Fairtrade coffee on demand. This means that if a customer asks for it, they've promised to make some up on the spot. Test this policy out! Go to your local Starbucks, ask for a cup of Fairtrade coffee and see what happens.

Do companies need to get Fairtrade certified to help out the communities where their products are made?

Nah, there are lots of other ways to support producers:

Some big companies don't believe in Fair Trade. Instead, they'd rather build health centres or schools in the communities where they work, or support other charities of their choosing.

Definitely – Fairtrade is the way to go: Some of the big producers pride themselves on 'giving back' to their growing or manufacturing communities in their own way – a little bit here, a little bit there. The trouble is that they're usually only giving back a very small percentage of the massive profit they made by paying so little to the producers to being with.

In May of 2002, the president of the Guatemalan coffee producers' association summed it up: *"We thank and appreciate the international community's food aid. We would appreciate it more if they paid us better for our products."*²¹

What he's saying comes across loud and clear: producers can decide for themselves how they'd like to spend the money they earn from selling their goods. Why should large companies get to determine what a community needs instead of the community itself?

The verdict: At the end of the day, fair trade is not the same as charity. Instead, it's about taking the system back to the way it should be - valuing the producers, the results of their labour, and the planet in an equitable way.





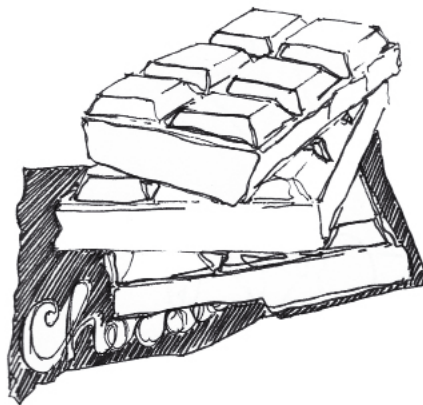
Unwrapping the cocoa trade

The commercial cocoa trade involves 20 million people.²²

The trading organizations and the chocolate industry receive about 70% of the profit from chocolate, whereas the cocoa farmers (who usually have no alternative source of income) receive barely 5%.²³

Add to this that a study of cocoa farming in West Africa which showed that up to 12,000 children (between the ages of 9 and 12) were working in hazardous conditions on the farms and got there as a result of child trafficking.

All in all, there should be enough reasons to buy Fairtrade chocolate (aside from the obvious 'chocolate is delicious' reason).





Give up tea? I'm
feeling panic
already....

Is buying fair trade more important than buying local or avoiding packaging?

Fairtrade is most important: Okay, so it's clearly important to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by buying things more locally (see the Energy chapter for more info here). But some things – like those delicious little cocoa beans or tea leaves– just don't grow in the UK.

Since some of us (okay, me) aren't prepared to give up chocolate or tea altogether, buying Fairtrade is a great way to support local farmers while satisfying our personal chocolately and caffeine-filled cravings.

And, yes, avoiding packaging is a good idea if we want to keep some trees around for our grandkids to enjoy (and slow climate change and keep our landfills from spilling

over and all that) but it can be pretty hard to get things from one side of the world to the other without wrapping 'em up a bit. So maybe, in the interests of the Fairtrade cocoa and tea farmers, we should relax a little in this particular case.

It's not just what's inside the cup that

counts: Even though we can't always control how things are packaged when they travel from, say, Kenya to Lancaster, we can control how they get from the shop to us. When we go to the shop, we can decide whether or not to bring a reusable mug, cloth bag or sandwich container.

Each year 6 billion polystyrene cups are used in the UK.²⁴ If, despite your usual

diligence, you do forget your usual reusable mug, you're most likely to be handed your café frappe machiatto in a cardboard cup, so the number of disposable cups we get through a year has got to be many many times over this 6 billion figure. Does it make sense to pat ourselves on the back for getting shade-grown coffee and Fairtrade hot chocolate just to put those drinks into throw-away cups?

The verdict: It's not hard to carry a reusable mug or thermos around, especially if they're slung inside a reusable shopping bag. Most places will even give you a discount for it (and if they don't, feel free to tell them that they should, since your waste-reduction tactics are saving them money). Bring on the re-usable revolution!



HOW JOCELYN GOT INTO FAIR TRADE

By Jocelyn Parr

On May 8, 2003, my partner Santiago left to join the Otesha Project and began the 8,000-kilometre journey across Canada, visiting as many schools, summer camps, community centres, libraries, etc., as they could along the way. On the same day, I left Canada for Guatemala. This trip was to be the hardest solo trip I have ever taken, primarily because the volunteer work I did there allowed me entry into a community of women whose lives have been forever changed by their lost love. The women I met on that trip had lost brothers, fathers, sons and lovers—men who were killed or tortured by the US-funded, military governments during Guatemala's 36-year civil war, which only ended in 1996.

Hardest hit were the indigenous people, the descendants of the Mayan people. But they have demonstrated incredible resilience. They continue to worship on mountaintops, speak one of Guatemala's twenty-one languages, wear the traditional huipils that mark their home region, and band together in cooperatives like the fair trade coffee cooperative I visited.

That fair trade cooperative, along with many others like it, is helping indigenous farmers re-build their lives after the years of terror. The cooperative and coffee plantation embodied all those things I read about on the wrappers of Fairtrade products: children were able to attend school, farmers were paid a fair wage and were governed by an



Co-operatives often
prioritize the rights of
women.

elected junta (or board of directors). In turn, the junta advocated for the farmers on all kinds of issues ranging from land claims to school locations. The farmers' organic coffee was wonderful, and they graciously offered me a steaming cup of it upon my arrival. When I left, I purchased as many pounds as I could carry and returned to Canada soon after.

Now, at this point in my story, perhaps you're anticipating that I would have committed to only drinking Fairtrade coffee for the rest of my life. And perhaps you are assuming that it was my first exposure to the idea of fair trade. I know I'd sound like a better person if both of those assumptions were true.

But I have to admit that I had learned about Fairtrade coffee several years before, and had made a mediocre effort to consume it. Sure, I could talk about the idea and recite the reasons why it was better. However, as many of us know, it takes a lot more than just knowledge to make individuals change. I am a stubborn creature.

And so, it took coming home to a newly 'Oteshafied' boyfriend who had just returned from the bike tour to make a lasting change. And even then it required some... persuasion. I enclose here for you a journal entry that speaks to the way I felt challenged, and even threatened, by the honest truth that my lifestyle was unsustainable.

July 8, 2003

Talking about environmental issues makes me feel paralyzed...I feel discouraged and like everything I am doing is wrong and could never be enough. It feels like I am failing before I begin: Why bother? It's impossible, it's too big! And I'm not like that anyway! I just want to forget about the bigger world and stay in the bubble with my friends.

Jocelyn's journal,
post-Guatemala trip



Locely on her
bike in snowy
Montreal.

Well, that embarrassing bout of grumpiness was an important first step in the process of changing (baby-step by baby-step) the way I was living. Looking back, I felt that making changes that seemed so enormous would threaten who I was. so the stubborn side of me went into high gear.

Now, a year later, I do consume only Fair Trade coffee, and never from a disposable container. And I didn't stop there as I realized how inter-connected all of my actions were: I have a lovely compost for my organic waste, and I diligently separate my papers and plastics. I also flush the toilet less and sneak the occasional rock-filled peanut jar into random toilets. Just recently I bid my car, Suzy, adieu, and I am happier and healthier for it.

I will say, however, that one of the interesting things about change is that at first, it seems so uncomfortable, like it will never fit. But, a year later I realize that these things have become habit. I automatically associate getting a coffee with two things: one, my travel mug and; two, my new and improved map of Montreal, the city I live in. You see, in my visual map of Montreal, the establishments that don't serve Fairtrade coffee just don't exist, so it's pretty easy to never end up at them!

There are so many different paths to change. Sometimes all it takes is a chance experience or encounter. Sometimes it takes the determined insistence (and encouragement) of those closest to us. I have been lucky enough to have both.

Like Jocelyn, when I'm standing in the supermarket aisle, I no longer just look at prices and ingredient listings. I want to know more: where is it from, who made it, was it produced ethically and were the producers fairly compensated? I want to be part of the change Jocelyn witnessed on her trip to that Guatemalan coffee co-operative. I want to know that when I spend my hard-earned cash, I'm voting for the kind of future that I want.



Katherine weighs in



THINGS THAT WORK

What other people did


Garstand, England becomes the world's first Fairtrade town

Though the little farming town of Garstang, population 5,000, is not on the normal tourist tour of the English countryside, they've got a very relevant claim to fame as the world's very first Fairtrade Town.

Back in 1992, three people from Garstang decided to do something about poverty and inequality, especially in developing nations. Their first step? To join powers with Oxfam and bring Fairtrade to Garstang. This became their call to arms, and mugs, and little dainty espresso cups.

There was only one problem – they could promote Fairtrade products all they liked but if no local shops or businesses sold 'em, no one could buy 'em. At the time, the only option for buying Fairtrade coffee in Garstang was out of a church-run shop, the Mustard Seed, and it was only open two days a week.

So the group got to work. They started talking up Fairtrade everywhere they could – at debates, in street stalls, with taste tests – and slowly but surely, things started to shift. The group was growing, shoppers were starting to demand Fairtrade products, and shops were starting to stock them.



Around the same time Oxfam, along with other charities in the UK, formed the Fairtrade Foundation and launched the Fairtrade Mark.

As the only independent guarantee of Fairtrade certification, the Fairtrade Mark brought Fairtrade into the mainstream.

Fairtrade towns today

These numbers grow too fast to stay up-to-date for long, but at last count, there are now:

- Over 320 Fairtrade Towns, boroughs, islands and counties across the UK
- 4,000 Fairtrade Churches
- 37 Fairtrade Synagogues
- 60 Fairtrade Universities
- A newly launched network of Fairtrade Schools,

Wales is also on board to become the world's first Fairtrade nation.²⁵

Next, they teamed up with the Garstang secondary school drama troupe, the local Youth Global Issues Club and the Youth Club, to continue their campaign.

The results? Today, the Town Council has agreed to support and use Fairtrade products, 90 of the 100 businesses in Garstang sell or use Fairtrade products, local schools and churches jumped on the bandwagon and in 2000, the people of Garstang voted virtually unanimously for Garstang to become the world's first Fairtrade Town.



www.garstangfairtrade.org.uk

with Mike

Social justice strikes back with Fairtrade footballs

In 1998, a Dispatches documentary revealed the awful conditions faced by child labourers in Sialcot, Pakistan who produced the world's footballs. It was a sensational exposé. The world's attention was caught by players paid millions a year, yet kicking balls made by children paid a pittance. To clear its name, FIFA declared that it would no longer use footballs made with child labour. Hurrah, we all cry, freedom and liberation for the children! But freedom at what price?

It turned out that the children's income from manufacturing footballs was essential to the livelihoods of families. To ensure that children were not working on the balls, manufacturing had moved out of small-scale village settings into big factories in the city of Sialcot. Because of this, women in the villages who had also previously worked on the balls found themselves without employment.

In 1997, Martin Kunes went to Pakistan and started a Fairtrade football label, taking production back to the villages and providing women with the income they so desperately needed to survive. A portion of the profits is ploughed back into the village for wells, education and a variety of other social projects, and the women get sick pay, holiday pay, and drastically better workplace lighting. In 2004, Jamie Lloyd brought Fairtrade footballs to England, the first non-food fair trade products to be sold in the country. His company, Fair Deal Trading, has expanded since then, selling ethically made trainers and sportswear.

However, the real question remains: will FIFA live out what it started and give everyone who produces footballs a really fair deal or will the global discrepancies in pay and conditions continue to be lived out on our nation's pitches?



www.fairdealttrading.com



Traidcraft - mainstreaming African crafts

Traidcraft has been knocking around since 1979, when they first started fighting poverty through trade. They promote trade justice by building lasting relationships with small-scale producers in developing countries. One pilot programme links Kenyan craft producers directly to UK wholesalers. The producers receive support to meet UK orders, and their crafts are sold in the UK. African crafts often have trouble reaching a European market and are undercut by competition from Asian, particularly Chinese, producers. So far only one Kenyan producer and its workers have benefited from this pilot but if it's successful, Traidcraft has plans to replicate this programme in more countries and with more craft producers.

www.traidcraft.co.uk

Clean Slate - cleaning up school uniforms

Clean Slate was founded in 2006 by Mark Rogers and Carry Somers, who were fed up with the state of their daughter's school uniform. Clean Slate sells Fairtrade school uniforms that are made from 100% certified organic cotton. They're produced by a non-profit organisation in India, which employs, supports and trains disabled and disadvantaged women who wouldn't be able to find work otherwise. Any surplus profits are channelled into social projects, such as schools for children with disabilities, orphanages, and nursing homes. What a way to go back to school!

www.cleanslateclothing.co.uk

Setting up young-at-heart fair trade enterprises

The Young Co-operatives project doesn't think that adults should be the only ones to profit from the fair trade movement. To help young people sell fairly traded products, they give practical training to 13-18 yr olds so that they can go on and set up fair trade enterprises in their schools.

The project teaches business skills, co-operative and democratic working and the importance of fair trade in improving the lives of producers, growers and their families in the developing world.



www.youngcooperatives.org.uk

These days, you can even find - and
sell - Fairtrade flowers. Not a
bad business idea, is it?

Off the Shelf - things you can do

Get Your Mates into Fairtrade

Sucker 'em in with Goodness

What you need

- A table
- Fair trade pamphlets from <http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/schools.htm>
- Fairtrade coffee, tea and chocolate

How to do it

1. Set up the table in a common area at lunch and distribute pamphlets on fair trade.
2. Let everyone see the coffee and chocolate.
3. Explain to them the difference between the Fairtrade products and the regular ones.
4. If you can, give out tasty free samples - in their reusable mugs of course. Or, if you have permission, sell them right there. They'll be back begging for more.

More things you can do

Make your school Fairtrade

The 'Talk to Admin' Method

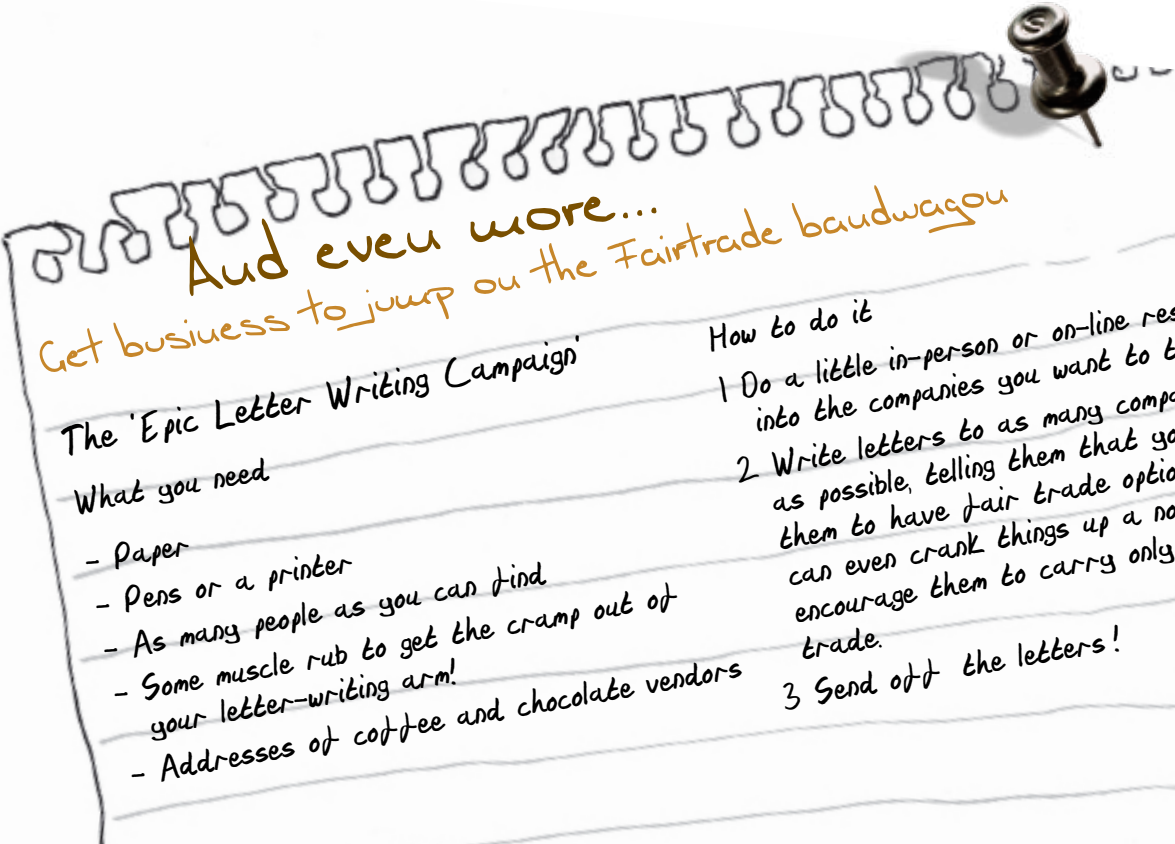
What you need

- Fair trade pamphlets
- A few mates

How to do it

1. Do some research to see what coffee is in the school staff room, what kind of chocolate is sold at fundraisers, and what products are in the canteen.
2. If the results don't meet your dreams, gather your mates and get everyone to sign a petition to make the school Fairtrade.

3. Set up a meeting with your headmaster or take the petition to a meeting of the school council.
4. Brew a pot of FT coffee and share it around at the meeting
5. Show them the petition and shout out about how fair trade affects families and young people around the world.
6. Propose what fair trade products you want to have available in the canteen, staff room and/or school fundraiser, and go from there.



And even more...

Get business to jump on the Fairtrade bandwagon

The 'Epic Letter Writing Campaign'

What you need

- Paper
- Pens or a printer
- As many people as you can find
- Some muscle rub to get the cramp out of your letter-writing arm!
- Addresses of coffee and chocolate vendors

How to do it

- 1 Do a little in-person or on-line research into the companies you want to target.
- 2 Write letters to as many companies as possible, telling them that you want them to have fair trade options. You can even crank things up a notch and encourage them to carry only fair trade.
- 3 Send off the letters!



* The letter-writing points system

The more letters that are written, the more that companies will take notice.

Corporations are often looking out for their bottom line: profit. If they read a bunch of letters telling them people won't buy their products unless they support fair trade, they'll soon realize that their bottom line depends on it. This of it as a way to vote with your dollar without spending any money!

When corporations receive mail, they don't treat every letter the same. Many have a points system where they tally

letters to determine where consumer viewpoints lie - different letters are given more importance and weight than others. For example, if a letter took a long time to write (hand written, sent by mail), it's worth, for example, 100 points whereas an online petition or email is only worth 10. It's best to write to them in the way that holds the most sway. The hierarchy of points often goes like this:

- Hand written letter/fax
- Typed letter/fax
- Email

Some companies also keep track of in-person requests.

ESCALATE

How to feed a BIG idea!

Read these books

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Oxfam's Fair Trade Workshop—Facilitators Guide. Available online from: www.oxfam.ca/campaigns/downloads/Coffeekit2.pdf

50 Reasons to buy Fairtrade, by Miles Litvinoff and John Madeley (2007). London: Pluto Press.

Fair Trade: A Beginner's guide, by Jacqueline DeCarlo (2007). Oxford: Oneworld Publications.

Peruse this website

Fairtrade Foundation: www.fairtrade.org.uk

And then do something

Look around in your community for places that sell Fair Trade items. Share them at the back of this book and pass 'em along to your friends.

If there are a number of places that sell FT items in your community, gather as many people together as possible and do a 'Fair Trade crawl' (instead of a pub crawl). For one wonderful evening, travel from coffee shop to flower shop to wine shop, learning about fair trade in your community!



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1989: The ICA ends. Countries stop cooperating to control the overall amount of coffee grown, and start competing with each other to grow more and more coffee. Basic economics says that when there is a lot more coffee, the price a farmer gets for their coffee goes way down.

1990s: Countries stop using 'marketing boards' to buy coffee from farmers and sell it collectively. Farmers are left on their own to sell their coffee to coffee companies. Five major companies (Proctor & Gamble, Phillip Morris, Sara Lee, Nestle, and Tchibo) buy up small companies and control 69% of the world's coffee market. Their profits continue to go way up, while coffee farmers and workers fall deeper into poverty.

2000s: Families abandon their farms, sell off their livestock and other farm assets, go without food, take their children out of school,

and often eventually migrate north through the treacherous desert with hope of a job in the United States or Canada.

Coffee timeline by Ponte, Stefano (2001). *The 'Latte Revolution'? Winners and Losers in the Restructuring of the Global Coffee Marketing Chain*. Copenhagen: Centre for Development Research. Retrieved December 2004, from [www.agribusinessaccountability.org/pdfs/287_The Latte Revolution.pdf](http://www.agribusinessaccountability.org/pdfs/287_The%20Latte%20Revolution.pdf)

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5 - *Stuff: The Secret Lives of Everyday Things (New Report No. 4)*, by Ryan, John and Allan Thien (1997). Northwest Environment.

6 - Some sources say prices are as low as \$0.15 (Global Exchange

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website: www.globalexchange.org) and others say they're \$0.30 (the Organic Consumers Association: Life of a Coffee Farmer in Chiapas, www.organicconsumers.org/starbucks/fairtrade2.htm)

7 - Fairtrade Foundation website: www.fairtrade.org.uk

8, 9 & 10 - Yep, these ones are all the same. From the Seattle Audobon Society's *Frequently Asked Questions*.

11 - *50 Reasons to Buy Fair Trade*, by Miles Litvinoff and John Madeley and the Fairtrade Foundation website: www.fairtrade.org.uk

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13 - *50 Reasons to Buy Fair Trade* (see source 11)

14 - *Unpeeling the Banana Trade*, published by the Fairtrade Foundation (2000).

15 - Fairtrade Foundation website: www.fairtrade.org.uk

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17 - See *Fair Trade: A Beginners Guide* by Jacqueline DeCarlo

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