Kaza, Stephanie. 2000. **Overcoming the Grip of Consumerism**, *Buddhist-Christian Studies,* 20:23-42.

Overcoming the Grip of Consumerism

Stephanie Kaza
University of Vermont

For fifteen years the Worldwatch Institute of Washington, D. C. has been publishing a review of the declining condition of the global environment (Brown et al. 1998). For the most part, the picture is not good. Much of the deterioration can be traced directly to human activities—urban expansion equates to species loss, industrial manufacturing to air pollution, factory farming to water pollution, chemical agriculture to poisoned soil. Accelerating these environmental impacts are rapidly rising population numbers, increasingly efficient technologies, and consumption rates beyond the planet's capacity. These three have been linked by the equation I=PAT, or environmental impact=population size multiplied by affluence (or degree of consumption) multiplied by technology. Reduce any one of these and the impact drops; increase one or all three, and the impact rises, in some cases dramatically.

Much of the conversation among scientists and technologists has focused on the P (population) and T (technology) parts of the equation, with grave concerns that rising population numbers are swamping earth systems, yet often with buoyant optimism that technological breakthroughs will solve everything. These two perspectives dominated political discussion for much of the 1960s and 1970s (Ehrlich et al. 1977 and Lovins 1977, among others). But by the 1980s the facts were incontrovertible: high rates of consumption were driving environmental destruction just as fast if not faster than rising population. At the 1992 Rio Summit in Brazil, representatives of southern countries demanded that high-consuming northern countries examine their own contribution to the environmental crisis rather than placing blame elsewhere. It is our obligation in the North to respond to these serious requests.

How much do people in northern industrialized countries consume? Here are some indicator figures: Americans consume their average body weight (120 pounds) *every day* in materials extracted and processed from farms, mines, range lands, and forests (Ryan and Durning 1997, 5). In the United States, the number of shopping malls (close to 35,000) eclipsed the number of high schools in 1987 (Dunning 1992, 130). Since 1950 the per capita consumption of energy, meat, and lumber has doubled, use of plastic has increased five times, use of aluminum seven times, and average airplane miles per person has soared 33-fold (Durning 1992, 29). As products have proliferated, we see the swelling ecological footprint behind each new thing: clear-cut forests replacing paper plantations in Thailand, toxic oil polluting native lands of Ecuador, women earning poverty wages assembling computer chips in

 © by University of Hawai'i Press. All rights reserved.

Malaysia—the stories are not as pretty as the products. Materials extraction, production, distribution, use, and waste disposal—all of these have ecological costs, many of which are life threatening.

Why should Buddhists and Christians address consumption? For starters, it is a nonsectarian issue; responsibility cuts across denominations and religious belief systems. Collaboration of all kinds is needed to take apart this juggernaut of complex causes and conditions. I believe the Buddhist tradition has powerful analytical tools and spiritual practices which may be helpful in this undertaking. These may aid or inspire similar efforts explored through the Christian heritage. A survey of the landscape and the literature shows it is shockingly clear: the challenge here is enormous. It will require all the spiritual insight, dedication, and sheer stamina we can bring to it. This work cannot be done alone; we need each other's help to keep going through the many obstacles.

To date, Buddhist initiatives in this conversation have been modest. Several popular books have brought Buddhist perspectives to bear on consumption issues, most notably E. F. Schumacher's *Small is Beautiful* (1975) and Gary Snyder's *The Practice of the Wild* (1990). Both works popularize practices of simplicity and restraint, flavored by the exotic Western fascination with Eastern thought. Several Buddhist teachers in the U.S. have taken up particular sub-themes addressing over-consumption. Philip Kapleau has sounded an ethical call for vegetarianism based on the first precept, "no killing" (1982). Robert Aitken has taken a stand for reducing wants and needs to simplify the material life of the Western student (1994). Thich Nhat Hanh is very firm on the fifth precept, "no abuse of delusion-producing substances," including exposure to junk television, advertising, magazines, and candy (1993). As for Buddhist analysis of consumption, the field of literature is very small. Rita Gross has written provocative articles developing Buddhist positions on population, consumption, and the environment (1997a, 1997b). From Thailand, Sulak Sivaraksa has campaigned tirelessly for economic development linked to spiritual development, based in Buddhist principles of compassion and skillful means (1992).

In this essay I will look first at the nature of global consumption, providing an overview of environmental impacts, consumer class responsibility, consumer self-identity, colluding systems pressures, and the ideology of consumerism. Given this foundation, I will explore Buddhist analytical tools and practices that can assist in liberation from the environmentally and socially oppressive nature of over-consumption. Last, I will propose constructive alternatives focusing on education, resistance, structural change, and building community. May these efforts help to relieve the suffering of all beings.

THE NATURE OF CONSUMPTION

Environmental degradation across the globe has been well documented by countless government reports and scientific studies. The production, use, and disposal of products for human use is responsible for much of this decline. Here I will briefly review four major areas of impact: habitat destruction, species loss, soil and water depletion, and global climate change.

Environmental Impacts. If you fly over the United States today, the landscape you see is a checkerboard pattern of plowed fields, drained wetlands, clear-cut forests, and channeled rivers. Perhaps the hardest hit right now are the forests. The 1998 Worldwatch report shows loss of forests directly linked to explosive growth in global consumption of paper and wood products. With almost half the earth's forest cover gone and mechanical harvesters speeding up the harvest rates, pressures on the remaining forests are only increasing. Each year over 16 million hectares are cleared for wood products or agriculture (Brown et al. 1998, 25). More than half the world's trade timber and over 70% of the paper is consumed by the 20% of the earth's population who live in the United States, western Europe, and Japan. If everyone on earth used as much paper as the average American (320 kg per year), the forests would have to produce seven times as much paper, clearly more than they can handle at a sustainable rate (ibid., 36).

Habitat loss means loss of species. Without adequate sources of food, water, shelter, and reproductive sites, many animals are suffering serious decline (Brown et al. 1998). In a systematic review of current biological estimates, the Worldwatch report tallies the losses. Three quarters of bird species are threatened because of intensive agriculture, livestock grazing, logging, and urban sprawl. In North America, the filling of half the original wetlands for crop-land and homes has dropped the population of the ten most abundant duck species by 30% (ibid., 46). Mammals, reptiles, and amphibians are even more threatened than birds—not only by modification of their habitats for human activities, but through direct hunting for food, predator control, or medicinal products. Fish are the worst off, with one in three species threatened by extinction due to hydroelectric dams, irrigation channels, siltation, sewage, and industrial waste.

Raising food for human consumption carries a large share of ecological costs. Soils around the world have been systematically exterminated of threatening insects, bacteria, and fungi so that in many places the soil is virtually sterile. As crop irrigation draws down the major river systems and aquifers, competition for water between human use and industrial production increases. Cash crop growers are using genetically engineered varieties to increase yields. The result is a loss of genetic diversity in native seed stocks with a correlating increase in corporate profits from engineered crops. One of the most glaring environmental impacts of food production is the toxic effects of pesticides. Following Rachel Carson's groundbreaking work in 1962, Sandra Steingraber (1997) documents the links between certain cancers and pesticide accumulation in human tissues. California, for example, is both the number one state for breast cancer and the number one user of pesticides. Golden State grapes, strawberries, lettuce, wheat, and tomatoes are shipped across the continent to consumers nationwide, spreading pesticide traces nationwide through the soil and groundwater (Liebman 1997).

What about global climate change? In 1995, scientists of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change confirmed "a discernible human influence on global climate" (Brown et al. 1998, 113). Global carbon emissions in the form of CO^2 have quadrupled since 1950, raising CO^2 concentrations to 29% above pre-industrial levels. Industrial countries are responsible for three quarters of these emissions, though

developing countries are quickly catching up. The chief consumer habit in this case is automobile use. The total number of CO^2 producing cars has gone from 50 million in 1950 to 500 million in 1990, and is projected to double again by 2015 (ibid., 115). Consumption of fossil fuels links directly to atmospheric destabilization, causing large-scale swings in global climate patterns.

Consumer Class Responsibility. But let's look closely here: whose consumption is having what kind of impact? In order to pursue the karmic links of responsibility in this complex global scenario and thereby consider some ethical accountability, we need to identify the agents and their actions. The United Nations Human Development Program, in a 1991 report, divided world economic activity into five income sectors. The top or richest fifth accounts for 85% of global income, trade exchange, and savings. After that it drops dramatically, forming the so-called "champagne glass" figure. Members of the top fifth are mostly from the northern and western industrialized nations, where comfort and choice are everyday privileges. The expanding second fifth—parts of Brazil and Costa Rica, much of Eastern Europe, and East Asian nations such as Thailand and Malaysia—is approaching consumption levels of the top fifth, due to international development investments. The remaining three fifths contribute much to the global population but relatively little to the global economy.

Alan Durning (1992) characterizes these groups into three broad *socioecological* classes based on degree of environmental impact: he calls these the *consumers* (top fifth), the *middle income,* and the *poor* (bottom fifth) (see Table 1). In Durning's assessment, the top and bottom fifths create the greatest ecological footprint—the top for its extravagant use of resources (luxury, foods, expensive cars, throwaway materials, comfort-controlled shelters), the bottom for its desperate poverty and overuse of limited local resources.

The consumer class is clearly responsible for most of the environmental impacts described in the previous section. Compare the rates of carbon dioxide emissions, for

Table 1. Consumption and Consumer Classes (Durning, 1992, 27)

Type of Consumption	Consumers (1.1 billion)	Middle (3.3 billion)	Poor (1.1 billion)
Diet	meat, packaged food, soft drinks	grain, clean water	insufficient grain, unsafe water
Transport	private cars	bicycles, buses	walking
Materials	throwaways	durables	local biomass
Lodging	climate-controlled electrified buildings	some electricity	huts and shanties
Income/year	above $7500	$700–7500	below $700
% World income	64%	33%	2%

example: the poor release .1 ton/person/year, the middle income group .5 ton/person/year, but the consumer class releases seven times this or 3.5 tons, 11 tons among the richest tenth of Americans. The consumer class is responsible for 90% of the chlorofluorocarbons destroying the ozone layer, and 96% of the world's radioactive waste (Durning 1992, 51). Fossil fuel use for energy is conspicuously highest for the United States. Often going far beyond their basic needs for food, shelter, and transportation, the consumer class indulges in personal pleasure and self-soothing products from designer clothes to specialty wines.

Each product sold to the consumer class creates a significant wake, casting an ecological shadow on the middle income and poor classes who are often involved in the production of these items. Very few items in the West have not drawn on labor or natural resources from the global reaches of the world. Who lies in these wakes? Women going blind over microscopes to make computer chips in Malaysia, boys crippled in carpet factories in Pakistan, banana workers sterilized by pesticide exposure in Costa Rica—the web is thick with suffering. Almost no act of consumption today does not involve some measure of human or environmental abuse. To act ethically within this web is a great challenge for both individuals and institutions. But the incentive is far greater to act *economically,* i.e., for a profit. This is the point where religious traditions can make a critical contribution, perhaps the very effort needed to turn the tide.

Consumer Self-Identity. Having looked closely at the environmental impacts of consumption and the distribution of responsibility for that consumption, we can now look at how over-consumption affects the consumer. Most religious traditions, Buddhism included, apply their medicine to *people.* So what is the sickness of consumption? of over-consumption? of waste, pollution, poisoning, and denial? Here I will look primarily at the psychological and spiritual disease that comes with being a member of the consumer society. A "consumer society" is characterized by its use of leisure time for spending money (shopping, travel, entertainment) and for its belief that owning things is the primary means to happiness, the assumed primary goal in life. Individual lifestyles and identity become linked to consumption activities; "consumerism" is then based on accepting consumption "as the way to self-development, self-realization, and self-fulfillment" (Benton 1997, 3).

David Loy, Buddhist philosopher, considers whether consumption, or in its big form, the Market, has actually become the new world religion (1997). He describes two unshakable and unchallengeable statements of faith in this religion: (1) growth and enhanced world trade will benefit everyone, and (2) growth will not be constrained by the inherent limits of a finite planet. Science provides the worldview, consumerism provides the value system, and economics serves as theology. From a religious perspective, the power of this new religion lies in its extremely effective conversion techniques. The seductive product messages capture the masses, replacing other religious approaches to the pursuit of meaning in life. For Loy, one basic flaw of economic religion is that it *depletes* rather than builds "moral capital" (283). The rule of profit maximization allows producers to evade personal responsibility for peo-

ple exploited both as laborers and consumers, as well as evasion of moral responsibility for market-ravaged plants and animals, rivers, soils. The intoxication of overconsumption not only does not provide any true internal peace, it actually feeds anxiety tied to self-identity. A Buddhist alternative, he suggests, are the teachings on renunciation and generosity in which one's sense of self is tied to nothing, since all things are impermanent.

Self-identity for consumers is tied strongly with possessions; consumer goods are symbols of status, political or religious views, social group, sexuality. In the consumer society, "I am what I have" is the operative definition of self, or to paraphrase Descartes, "I shop, therefore I am" (Dittmar 1992, 3). Nothing could be farther from the Buddhist sense of self as dependent on multiple relations and as fundamentally empty of autonomous existence. Advertising deliberately fosters a climate of self-involvement, playing on people's needs for security, acceptance, and happiness. By setting up idealized stereotypes, advertisements foster greed, status envy, anxiety, health fears, and at root, a sense of dissatisfaction and inadequacy. Where self-identity merges with product dependency, addictions arise—to brand names, styles, tastes—and certainly to shopping itself. Kanner and Gomes (1995) are convinced that "shopaholism" is a national disease, allowing people to escape from suffering in the same way people use drugs and alcohol. Thus consumerism can have quite a negative effect on self-identity, eroding social, psychological, and spiritual capacities that could be engaged in more life-affirming activity.

On a purely physical level, consumerism dulls the senses through overstimulation, causing a cumulative psychic numbing. On average each American is exposed to 3000 ads per day (Kanner and Gomes 1995). Under such a flood of messages, it is easy to lose a sense of oneself as an effective agent in the world. Deliberation over which product to buy replaces deliberation over the ethics involved in making the product. Ethical agency takes a back seat to the powerful, if temporary, satisfaction of consumer agency. This generates a kind of emptiness, a dull depression, a political paralysis—can life be reduced to buying? The net result is loss of psychological and spiritual stability or groundedness, the very foundation for effective Buddhist practice.

The impact of consumerism on the psyche and spirit of the consumer runs counter to environmental sustainability—much because of the crucial loss of grounded awareness of other worlds outside the realm of manufactured products. While consumerism promises material freedom, offering liberation through comfort, it falls far short of actualizing that freedom, for the alluring packages come at the expense of too many enslaved. This false rhetoric of freedom displaces any true religious inquiry into the source of freedom, distracting people to serve profit motives instead. With moral capital depleted, sensory awareness numbed, sense of self limited to possessions, and all of this protected by aggressive defensiveness, the neurosis has progressed to an advanced stage. Buddhist mindfulness practice and precepts of restraint may provide some helpful medicine here.

Systems Players. This exploration of the terrain of consumption would be incomplete without acknowledging the powerful colluding forces pressing forward with a

profit-making agenda. Religions will not make a dent in the consumer ethos if they focus only on "poor misguided individuals." Consumerism is now deeply embedded in world political and economic structures. Buddhism will need to offer structural analysis as part of spiritual support to challenge the economic definition of the world as trade market only. The emerging literature on consumerism and globalization points to five major groups who cooperate to promote ever-increasing profits based on consumption.

The role of the *producers* is often camouflaged by neoclassical economics rhetoric about "the sovereign consumer" assumed to make rational choices. Schaiberg (1997) says this cannot be true since consumers know so little about the manufacturing processes behind the production they buy. For example, if producers don't offer cars which run on alternative fuels, how can consumers "choose" them? Producers know that mass-produced items generate the greatest profits so they deliberately create consumer interest in these items through focused advertising. Information about the production process, especially if it is resource and labor abusive, is kept hidden from consumers.

Advertisers promote the products designed to generate profit for industry. It is well documented that advertisers have been extremely successful at swamping and confusing buyers with product hype. Consider the sheer volume of ads: in 1994, businesses in the United States spent $147 billion for advertising—more than the country spends on all of higher education. Advertisers will go everywhere and anywhere to sell their products; soaring beyond radio, television, and billboards, they have now virtually occupied an increasing number of commercial Internet sites.

Advertisers and producers benefit tremendously from *the media.* Commercial television actively reinforces consumer values, promoting consumer-class lifestyles with its programming. Many people watch four or more hours of television per day, and many households leave the TV on night and day. As lines blur between news, ads, opinion pieces, and entertainment, advertising and lifestyle propaganda creep into more and more hours of airtime.

As each of these three has gained in corporate and financial strength, they have used their political clout to influence government policy to support the consumption agenda. *National governments* provide the political structure for negotiating inter-governmental agreements such as NAFTA and GATT which expedite trade flows. Opening up new global markets can be seen as yet another wave of conquest colonialism, benefiting the economically powerful to their advantage. Structural adjustment loans to poor countries require trade enticements such as reduced tariffs, renovated banking systems, or specific production guarantees that benefit the more powerful trade partner. Government policies contribute to the system of consumption through tax regulation, loans, and subsidies. The net effect not only masks the serious environmental costs but rationalizes them in the name of consumption (re: trade).

Completing this condensed systems view of consumption are the *transnational corporations* (TNCs). David Kortens (1995) describes in detail how TNCs have come to form global for-profit superstructures, carrying more political and economic power than many individual nation-states. His in-depth analysis shows how the new corporate colonialism is built on aggressive empire building and transnational legal rights.

Leslie Sklair (1997) documents the recent rapid growth of a transnational capitalist class consisting of TNC corporate executives and those who support their interests—high-ranking brokers for consumption among national government and media institutions. The top executive class of the TNCs now forms a kind of First World within Third World countries as well, consuming at the highest levels and making it their business to promote environmentally high-impact lifestyles for the masses.

The global system of producers, advertisers, media, governments, and TNCs have colluded to bring global trade and the cultural ideology of high consumption to the top of the world agenda. To keep trade and economics a top priority, the environmental costs of production and consumption are kept hidden from public view. Players in the consumption system have a great deal staked on globalization of consumer values. Their success utterly depends on the systematic destruction of the earth's natural systems.

THE IDEOLOGY OF CONSUMERISM

Given the nature of global consumption today, how might or should Buddhists respond? Is there a Buddhist "position" on consumption? Should Buddhists take up environmental causes or work for consumer change based on Buddhist ethics? What is an appropriate response? One of the most powerful aspects of the Buddhist spiritual method is the central emphasis on awakening as the path to freedom from suffering. It would seem that the consumer society is deeply asleep at the wheel and unaware of the consequences of their collective actions. Liberation on many levels is crucial if we are to have much of a planet left to live on. The Buddha always urged his students to look for root causes and apply the liberative method at the source. A central root cause of over-consumption is the ideology of consumerism, promulgated by those who stand to benefit the most from it.

An ideology is a particular representation of the world, a point of view supported by values and assumptions which collectively generate social norms. These norms and values are internally consistent and together serve to legitimate and reinforce social actions. In a society based on capitalist ideology, such as the United States, consumerist values serve those in power by generating wealth to those who promulgate the values. For those in power it is a lucrative equation; for those at the bottom of the economic ladder, it means poverty and debt.

Consumerism rests on the assumption that human desires are infinitely expandable; if there are an infinite number of ways to be dissatisfied, there are boundless opportunities to create new products to meet those desires. Desire or craving, in a Buddhist definition, is particularly apt here, for the one filled with desire can never be satisfied with what already exists. By deluging consumers with an overwhelming selection of choices, advertisers confuse consumers' sense of wants and needs. How can they know which product will satisfy them when there are so many to try?

Values associated with consumerism are clustered around the human need for security, belonging, status, and happiness. Marketers want you to think that buying products means buying happiness; advertising slogans repeat this theme over and over. A country getaway cabin, a slick new car, the right brand of beer—each will

give the buyer a sense of relief from the anxiety of not being accepted, from loneliness, from a feeling of inadequacy. Other products assert their worth through associating with values that emphasize freedom and individuality—clothing ads which reify personal style, fast cars for quick escape, perfumes and alcohol to enhance sexual attractiveness. Sometimes consumerism is linked with patriotism: "to buy American" is seen as demonstrating loyalty to fellow workers, even if the same logic is debated when expressed by other cultures (i.e., Japan). Perhaps strongest of all are the values associated with affluence: having enough to be able to throw away what others could use, having so much that others can't threaten you, having enough to generate and guarantee certain privileges (premier status travel clubs, for example). As one Wall Street banker put it, in a consumer society, "net worth equals self worth."

An ideology becomes part of everyday life when members of society internalize it so thoroughly they no longer question or notice it. This internalization process has been well described for racism and sexism; I propose that the same thing is going on with consumerism. It is now so effectively ingrained that it has become part of the internalized social order in the United States. During the holiday season, for example, special ads and pressure for year-end sales reinforce the expectations of obligatory gift giving. If you do not buy enough gifts or spend enough money, you feel guilty, as if you are betraying some critical life-support system based on products. Guilt is an alarm signal warning that internalized norms have been breached, sending the message "you've done wrong" or "you're not good enough." To compensate for devaluing the person in favor of the product, advertisers must reassure consumers "how much they value their customers."

Challenging this potent ideology of consumerism and the suffering in its wake will require many creative efforts from Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike. It will not be enough to focus on individual lifestyle changes; only with serious structural change can the rapacious tide of environment-gobbling consumerism be restrained. That means considering the Buddhist teachings and practices not only as they suggest guidelines for individual ethics, but taking the teachings a step farther and developing structural ethics to address the systems-wide nature of consumerism.

APPLYING THE LIBERATIVE METHOD

Consumerism is centered around the *cultivation* of desire. The liberative method in Buddhism points specifically to the *extinguishing* of desire as a path to enlightenment. The method consists both of insight into the nature of suffering and desire, and of practices which embody this insight in action. The Twelve Limbs of Dependent Origination and the Four Noble Truths offer arenas for fruitful development of individual and structural ethics regarding consumerism and over-consumption.

Dependent Origination. In the canonical story of the Buddha's enlightenment, the culminating insight comes in the last hours of his long night of concentrated meditation. He perceived his previous lives in a continuous cycle of birth and death, then saw the vast universe of birth and death for all beings, gaining insight into the workings of karma. Finally he realized the driving force behind birth and death, and the

path to release from it. Each piece of his experience added to a progressive unfolding of the law of dependent origination (in Sanskrit *pratity asamupada,* in Pali *paticeasamuppeda*). This law has been the subject of much attention in the Buddhism and Ecology literature because of its natural overlaps with ecological principles (Cook 1988, Devall 1990, Eckel 1997, Gross 1997, Ingram 1997, Macy 1991, Snyder 1995). The Twelve Limbs of Dependent Origination form a dynamic whole, sometimes portrayed as a wheel of becoming. This cycle has been used to describe the process of reincarnation, but here I look at it as a common pattern which arises over and over again in every moment of grasping. Because consumerism depends on this process, a review of the linked factors of desire can yield points for mindful ethical action, choosing liberation over unconscious enslavement.

The twelve limbs follow each other in order: ignorance, karmic formations, consciousness, name and form, six sense fields, contact, feelings, craving, grasping, becoming, birth, death, ignorance, and so on. The pull of each of these, based on the strong experience of the one that precedes it, is so powerful that people (and other beings as well in their own way) are continually in the grip of this metapattern. Because each of the twelve limbs are conditions upon which the others depend, if any of the conditions cease to exist, the entire cycle ceases to function. Release from this cycle of grasping and suffering is what the Buddha called Nirvāna.

When a person enters a shopping mall glitzy with bright lights, shiny objects, beckoning messages, and welcoming music, what is happening in the twelve-limb cycle? The most obvious aspect may be the craving for one pleasurable experience after another trying on a new dress, listening to CDs, sampling the foodcourt delectables, and so on. But upon what does this craving depend? Upon feelings which arise following contact with objects in the sense fields. *Feeling states* in Buddhist psychology are usually categorized as pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral/indifferent. It doesn't matter so much whether one is happy, afraid, tender, or irritated; for each feeling, one either wants to perpetuate it (usually the pleasant feelings) or get rid of it (usually the unpleasant feelings). The three feeling states can be further enumerated as being physical or mental, or can be specific to each sense organ, for example, "feelings which occur in the rapport established by the ear." (Guenther and Kawamura 1975, 22). Since feelings are impermanent, advertisers or sales agents need to continuously stimulate potential buyers to keep the pleasant feelings going.

This is done by generating a barrage of *contact points* for the sense organs—many colorful objects on display, racks in the walkways, demonstration items to try out for yourself. The point of contact is where the object of perception, sense organ, and its sense consciousness come together. The purveyor of goods provides the object; the consumer provides the already conditioned sense organ and consciousness. One can, of course, reduce the impacts of consumerism by reducing the degree of contact with sale items and their associated ads, that is, by not watching television, avoiding shopping malls, and eschewing commercial radio and news media. Where consumers have become resistant to excess contact, advertisers are forced to try harder to get their attention, using shock images outside the morally acceptable realm, what *Advertising Age* columnist Bob Garfield calls "ad-vertrocities" (Grierson 1998).

The six *sense fields* of the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind are the gateways

for consciousness. They themselves are conditioned by "name and form" or the actual material and immaterial aspects of a specific being. This can be seen in comparing the sensory world of a dog or bee with that of a human: the dog's physical ear receives contact and sensory information across a much higher decibel range; a bee's physical eye receives ultraviolet light and a wider ranger of color. What one perceives in the sense field is completely conditioned by one's experience. A young child has not yet learned to differentiate sound or shapes and has not yet developed a coded sense consciousness to explain what she perceives through a specific cultural lens. Thus the young toddler watching hours of TV can develop a consciousness dominated by products rather than trees, dirt, birds, i.e., living beings. With such an avalanche of products and sales pitches entering a child 's sense fields today, parents must take very seriously their role in influencing what a child comes to recognize as home.

Name and form are conditioned by previous experiences which mold consciousness and the material form it comes to take. Such conditioning is well documented for alcoholism and other addictive abuse patterns. Repeated use of alcohol changes a person physiologically so they are more attracted to the states induced by alcohol. Apply this conditioning to other forms of excess consumption, and the addictive cycle extends to luxury foods, brandname clothing, and TV soap operas. Advertisers do their best to capture teenage consumer consciousness by imprinting brandname loyalties for cigarettes, beer, and hygiene products, among others. Never before in history have so many people been so massively inundated by the messages and products of consumerism. The conditioning for college students in their twenties is so thorough they can hardly imagine a personal world without television, CDs, stereo, car, and ski equipment. We can only wonder at the karmic formations at play here upon which such consciousness depends.

Craving depends on feeling states, feelings depend on points of contact, contact depends on sense fields, sense depends on name and form which depends on consciousness. Turning back to the eighth limb, craving, we can see how craving perpetuates the other limbs. In craving pleasant experiences, one grasps after their continuation, and in craving the absence of unpleasant experiences, one grasps after their cessation. These forms of grasping are especially strong where the ego or sense of "I" attaches to what is craved or avoided (e.g., "I avoid meat, I'm a vegetarian"; or "I love downhill skiing, I'm a funhog"). Marketers know how to manipulate this part of the cycle to profit-making ends by creating market niches for specialty enthusiasts; even green consumers are a target for "green products" (Elkington, Hailes, and Makower 1988).

Grasping generates *becoming;* the more one grasps after consumer goods or values, the more one becomes a consumer, leading to *"birth"* of the self-identified ego form that defines life primarily as consumption. Eventually, of course, even the consumer must face *death,* with or without the comfort of familiar possessions. But *ignorance* about the nature of dependent origination is so deep, and now compounded and intensified by the denial in consumer culture, that the karmic traces still remain from the previous lifetime (or even within a lifetime). Thus consumer consciousness stays alive and well, taking new and diverse forms day after day.

Seeing into the nature of craving and all it depends on and all it generates provides

a succinct analytical tool for understanding the penetrating nature of consumerism. It also offers specific points for applying awareness in the service of ethical choices which enable one to at least momentarily step back from perpetuating the craving. One can choose to avoid materialist overstimulation or to reduce self-identification with products or market niches. One can break the cycle of becoming by studying closely the process that leads one to crave products at all. One can organize to resist the invasion of consumer values into schools, workplace, and the natural world. Thus, each aspect of the self-perpetuating cycle is also an opportunity for liberation.

The Four Noble Truths. The Buddhist teaching of the Four Noble Truths is phrased literally in terms of a medical diagnosis: suffering is the disease, craving is the cause of the disease, there is a cure for the disease, and that cure is the eight-fold path to enlightenment. How can we apply that diagnosis to consumerism? We have looked closely at the disease of consumerism—the widespread environmental suffering, the degree of affliction in various sociological classes, the psycho-spiritual aspects, and the systemic propagators of the disease. The epidemic is rapidly spreading to those not yet affected. The ideology of consumerism serves perhaps as the carrier virus, attaching to hosts whose immune resistance is weakened by colonialism, bankruptcy, malnutrition, or war, for example.

The cause of this disease is craving or desire which broadly falls into three types, otherwise known as the three poisons. The first, desire "for sense pleasure," or greed, is the cornerstone of marketing psychology. Advertisements urge consumers to increase their greed in as many arenas as possible; international trade negotiators do their best to open up markets overseas to further spread the competitive craving of greed. The second poison, the desire "to get rid of" or aversion/hatred, is equally central to marketing strategy. Pest control products get rid of hated insects, deodorants get rid of hated body odors, laundry soaps get rid of unwanted stains—consumers readily believe they will be happy if they can just get rid of the things they don't want. The third type is the desire "to become," or ignorance/delusion. This refers to the deluded thinking that existence can somehow become other than what it actually is. Again, sales agents are happy to convince consumers that they will feel better if they try a new diet or change their hairstyle. All three poisons drive the consumer to endless suffering, all to the profitable well-being of those who can take advantage of this.

I have examined at length the dependent limbs which perpetuate craving. We have seen that the way out of this suffering lies in cutting through the root causes. This is the Third Noble Truth—that liberation from ceaseless suffering is possible. For the oppressed and deluded consumer, this is the critical truth. And it is the shining jewel in what Buddhism has to offer as a cure for the disease of consumerism: one has choice in the matter. One can choose to remain sick with the disease or one can choose liberation and healing. It is at this choice point where Buddhist ethics can be applied. Choices for liberation from consumerism that bring both personal and environmental healing could be defined as ethically acceptable. Actions which perpetuate the environmentally destructive activities of consumerism could be considered

ethically unacceptable. The practice of making conscious choices could be defined as the cure of the eight-fold path, the Fourth Noble Truth.

Practices for Liberation from Consumerism. The eight-fold path describes eight arenas of wisdom, morality, and meditation which offer the seeker liberation from the sufferings of consumerism. Right Understanding and Right Thought constitute *panna* or wisdom; Right Speech, Right Conduct, and Right Livelihood constitute *sila* or morality; and Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration form the practice of *samadhi,* or meditation. Right Understanding is an appropriate place to begin the hard work of taking apart the destructive links of consumerism. Fundamental to this practice are clear understanding of the Twelve Limbs of Dependent Origination and the Four Noble Truths, which I have already discussed. Despite the flurry of attraction to interdependence, it seems to me that following this part of the path will require some very difficult and disturbing research. For each product on the market, there is a mostly invisible chain of suffering which needs to be exposed. Without this information, it is impossible to make grounded ethical choices. Sometimes when people have taken on this challenge they have been suppressed, as were Rachel Carson and the current scientists reporting on global climate change. Clothing manufacturers, for example, know they risk losing customers if their production process includes sweatshop labor. This aspect of the path means asking hard questions about production, transportation, source materials, and packaging that manufacturers would rather you not ask. Right Thought would suggest the practice of carrying out these investigations free of ill-will, blame, rage or other self-cherishing states of mind—a challenge! This kind of investigation need not fall only on the shoulders of the morally concerned. It could be expected legally of those responsible for making the products. Food labeling laws are a start in this direction, but much more could be done to expose product-processing links and their environmental impacts.

Right Speech practice, like Right Understanding, carries suggestions for both individual and structural level ethics. Agents of speech are responsible for the words they speak; their choices follow the law of karma, namely, that actions have consequences. These consequences are not some mysterious fate, but rather the structural repercussions built into the social physical context of the agent. Thus, socially agreed upon laws that ban lying in advertising generate the karmic repercussions of regulatory fines. If the fueling of greed and desire were considered out of place in schools, advertising would not be allowed on classroom televisions or at school sports events. If people valued conversation with each other over the speech of the television, the social courtesy would be to turn the TV off when eating together.

Right Conduct refers to upholding the Five Precepts: not killing, not stealing, not abusing sexuality, not lying, and not using or selling intoxicants. This topic alone could merit an essay of its own (see Aitken 1984, Nhat Hanh 1993, Sivaraksa 1992 for commentaries). The precepts represent practices of restraint, calling for personal and institutional responsibility for reducing environmental suffering. The precepts are oriented towards individual conduct; there is no counterpart set of moral guidelines for institutions. This presents a challenge: how can the precepts provide direc-

tion at the structural level? Because social structures (governments, schools, churches, etc.) shape individual options, ethics need to guide social structures, too. Usually these are codified in the form of laws or customs. Medical ethics and legal ethics reflect just such a development. But so far environmental laws deal more with wildlife and clear air protection than with the spread of consumerism. And very little seems to limit the dominion of advertising. Actions which help curb the invasive presence of consumer messages would be consistent with the precepts. Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike could work to restrain advertisers from targeting teens for sales of addictive cigarettes and alcohol.

Consistency and accountability are the operational terms here. Individual and structural or systemic behaviors influence each other. Higher standards of restraint in public arenas will help encourage higher personal standards, and the reverse should also be true. But to even approach such consistency means holding social agents accountable for the impact of their acts. By taking the initiative on this, consumers could reclaim personal moral authority that has been usurped by consumerist agents. Dairy farmers in Vermont, for example, are having to fight for the right to label their milk BGH-free so customers will know their cows have not been genetically treated! It is not necessary for one to have perfected moral practice before asking others to consider their own actions. The point of the precepts is to reduce suffering, to act out of compassionate understanding of interrelationship. We need to ask seriously: is consumerism killing people? Is it stealing human capacity for compassion? Is it replacing relationships between living beings with relationships with things? Is it replacing moral agency with consumer agency?

Right Livelihood raises many ethical issues about work, job, career. The original texts are quite clear that one should not pursue a vocation that causes harm or injustice to other beings. Traditional trades barred from the path include: dealing in arms, selling living beings, selling flesh (i.e., animal meat), selling intoxicants, and dealing with poison. In modern terms, a Buddhist following the liberative path could not be a pest exterminator, chemical farmer, genetic engineer, or exotic pet collector. If we consider ads as intoxicants for products, advertising would also be wrong livelihood. Anyone involved in a consumption-related livelihood that relies on the slaughter of animals (research medicine, for example), destructive extraction of resources (mining, logging, oil development), or deliberate poisoning of air, earth, or water (manufacturing, agriculture) would be involved in harming other beings. Yet these livelihoods make it possible for the rest of us to live comfortably. Thus all of us bear the collective consequences of this work. It is our collective challenge to convert these toxic livelihoods to others more benign.

The last three spokes of the wheel—Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration—develop a depth of stability in practice that can sustain the liberative method over time. Here I will concentrate on Right Effort, for it reinforces the three pure precepts and can be practiced in structural context. The four aspects of Right Effort described by Saddhatissa (1987, 61) are: (1) to prevent the arising of evil, (2) to expel evil that is already present, (3) to induce or encourage good which has not yet come, and (4) to cultivate good which is already present. Santikaro

Bhikkhu of Thailand has recently published an indepth review of evil hindrances to forming a dhammic society (1997). Evil could be defined as actions that contribute to personal and social selfishness, the antithesis of interdependence. He suggests the *kilesas* or defilements manifest in today's social structures in destructive ways that lead away from a dhammic society based on the eight-fold path. He maps these out in cause and effect relationships, showing the exaggerated impacts of each *kilesa* when reinforced by specific structural agencies such as the government, private business, the media, etc.:

Kilesa	Social Structure
(1) Greed	Capitalism / Consumerism
(2) Anger	Militarism and Injustice
(3) Hatred	Racism, Classicism, and Exclusivism
(4) Lust	Prostitution, Entertainment, Tourism, and Business
(5) Delusion	Education and the Media
(6) Fear	Medicine and Religion

Santikaro suggests we can work towards social generosity in each of these six arenas, developing spiritual stability through turning away from what perpetuates social selfishness. Ethical choices here offer a direction, an orientation, some fundamental criteria for rooting out the runaway afflictions of consumerism.

The cure for consumerism can only come in "real world" practice: taking apart the habits of desire and the consciousness and corporate structures which perpetuate them, one at a time. Buddhist practice presents opportunities for doing this hard work in a conscious way, before we are forced into it by food scarcity or economic breakdown. It is hard to say whether this epidemic can be contained or stabilized before *all* the forests and fisheries are decimated. The fortunate blessing may be the spiritual strength that develops in community if people choose to undertake this work together.

CONSTRUCTING ANOTHER VISION

Scanning the chapters again, I see the news in the *1998 State of the World Report* is not all bad. Some people are setting standards for sustainable forestry and protecting threatened marine areas from over-fishing. Some cities like my home in Vermont are recycling urban compost. Each chapter in the report outlines specific policies that could reorient human actions toward a livable future. There are alternatives to runaway consumerism, but they will take consistent dedicated effort to make them manifest. Is there a role for Buddhists here? Certainly everyone, Buddhist and non-Buddhist, can examine the implications of his or her own consumer choices. Individuals play crucial roles in structural change by serving as examples, by doing pioneering groundwork, by teaching others new approaches, by advocating for consumerist accountability. The sum of these individual efforts, however, will not add up to systems-level change; to accomplish this, structural agents must change their operational protocols and expectations. In this concluding section, I suggest four arenas

in which Buddhists and non-Buddhists can play important roles. With each arena, they may encourage structural change within Buddhist institutions, or take social/political initiatives based on Buddhist principles, or they may serve in more invisible collaborative roles with non-Buddhists, practicing Buddhism with a small "b" (Sivaraksa 1992).

Education. Because so much lies hidden behind the glamour of consumerism, exposure through education is critical. Peer-led workshops or classes in "unlearning consumerism" can help lay bare the values of consumerist ideology. The Northwest Environment Watch has researched and published short handbooks on cars, energy, and toxics in their bioregion. *Stuff* (Ryan and Durning 1997) is one of their triumphs, telling the true stories of computers, bicycles, French fries, and hamburgers, including all the invisible links, from cradle to grave.

Buddhist centers could serve as alternative models of consumption, demonstrating a lifestyle based on simplicity and restraint. In California, Green Gulch Zen Center and Spirit Rock Meditation Center already have strong commitments to vegetarianism, waste recycling, and land stewardship (Kaza 1997). As visitors come to these centers of learning, they pick up the culture of the practice; even more could be done to help make such practices obvious. Buddhist journals such as *Turning Wheel* and *Seeds of Peace* help to publicize stories of individuals or organizations who have taken on consumer education projects. The Boston Research Center for the Twenty-first Century recently produced a booklet of Buddhist perspectives on the Earth Charter as a tool to educate others about the peoples' Earth Charter initiative. It seems critical that more Buddhist analyses like this be done, to deepen our understanding of the ramifications of rampant over-consumption.

Active resistance. Across the United States, voluntary simplicity groups and others have organized "Buy Nothing Day" events for the day after Thanksgiving; challenging shoppers' habits on the highest sales-volume day of the year. Vermont has banned billboards (as has Hawai'i) from the state, keeping the highways free of advertising pollution and filled with scenic beauty. The Center for a New American Dream has challenged Toys 'R' Us to abandon their gift registry which encourages children to scan their toy desires into a computer list, supposedly for relatives buying birthday and Christmas presents. Active resistance means holding firm on what is unacceptable and being a witness for another possibility. Doing this from a Buddhist frame means taking on the added challenge of resisting nonviolently, keeping a nondual relationship with those one resists. Buddhist centers or organizations such as Buddhist Peace Fellowship and the International Network of Engaged Buddhists can help provide training in this Gandhian form of activism directed at consumerism.

Two bright examples of active resistance shine through for the forests of Thailand and northern California. In Thailand, the community of forest or development monks has grown steadily over the last ten years. These monks resist the logging of village forests and other national initiatives for trade and cash crops. Instead they promote small-scale rural development projects and tree protection through ordination

ceremonies, grounding both in Buddhist merit-making practices (Sivaraksa 1997). In northern California, a group of young people who call themselves "ecosattvas" have participated in direct actions against the Maxxam lumber company, standing in witness for the threatened trees, some of the last old-growth redwoods left on private lands. They draw their strength from meditation practice and ecological work at Green Gulch Zen Center. These efforts point attention to environmentally destructive corporate practices, revealing the dark side of consumption most are blind to.

Changing structural policies. The 1998 Worldwatch report calls for carbon taxes, gun buy-back programs, alternative energy subsidies, conservative quotas on fisheries —all of these are structural policies which affect large numbers of people. Change at this scale can make a much greater difference than individual change. Denmark, for example, successfully banned throwaway soft drink containers (Durning 1992, 93); German industries must now collect or recycle their packaging materials as well as parts from consumer goods such as cars and appliances. One of the most radical structural proposals is the replacement of GDP (Gross Domestic Product) with GPI (Genuine Progress Indicator). GDP measures the amount of money changing hands in the economy—whether that money goes for new goods, divorce mediation, medical care, or prison building (Cobb et al. 1995). Thus the GDP serves industries based on resource depletion by counting earnings as a gain, ignoring the loss of natural capital. GPI, in contrast, subtracts the negative costs of air and water pollution to human health and adds in the positive contribution of the household and volunteer economy.

Buddhist centers could take on structural policy change by developing green operations principles and green mission statements. These might establish protocols for recycling programs, investment accountability, and land stewardship efforts. Many Buddhist centers in America have barely gained maturity in self-governance and are still working out relations with teachers, abbots, boards, and staff to some reliability. Very few have taken on the responsibility of examining their consumption habits and structural guidelines for minimizing environmental impact. Buddhist centers could work with other openspace agencies, perhaps even with other religiously-based landowners, to protect corridors of greenways, connected through cooperative efforts. They could also work with each other to develop a peer alliance code of standards to raise the standards and expectations among centers, as modeled by some Christian groups.

Building community and culture. A fourth response to the many temptations of consumerism is to create more interesting alternatives that provide deeper sources of satisfaction. Northwest Earth Institute volunteers in Oregon participate in work exchange weekends to share large household projects and build friendships. A number of towns like Burlington, Vermont offer nonalcoholic First Night alternatives to traditional New Year's parties, sharing local talent with the community. Watershed restoration groups celebrate their local creeks, involving people of all ages in cleaning up their backyard lands.

The Buddhist Peace Fellowship has developed a program designed to build community among engaged Buddhist activists. Members in social action projects affiliated with the BASE program (Buddhist Alliance for Social Engagement) meet twice weekly for meditation, discussion, and community building. The program is organized somewhat to parallel the Catholic "base" community model; as interest has grown outside the San Francisco area, more BASE groups have started up elsewhere. Green ceremonies offer other ways to build community as an alternative to shopping or watching television. Green Gulch Zen Center regularly celebrates Earth Day, Arbor Day, and Thanksgiving as earth holidays, in addition to the regular Buddhist commemorations. They have held animal memorial services and tree ordination precept ceremonies as well, not so much as a direct confrontation with consumerism, but as an alternative that makes more sense (Johnson and Kaza 1990).

CONCLUSION

The State of the World Report doesn't have all the answers, but it does show that some people can think creatively about sustaining the planet. It is my hope that Buddhist and other religious groups will add their efforts to that creativity. As I have laid out in this discussion, consumerism is on a collision course with the limits of the planet, and the disease is spreading rapidly. If Buddhism and the planet are to flourish in the future, I believe we must take very seriously the impacts of over-consumption on the earth's myriad plant, animal, and human communities.

The liberative method of the Dharma provides powerful tools of analysis and practice which can help with this task. The Third Noble Truth can serve as a leverage point in this runaway consumer system (see Meadows 1997). We have *choice* in the matter—choice to act, choice to wake up in the midst of the suffering. This method of waking up is a path to freedom, from the grip of consumerist values, ideologies, and market strategies. Buddhist and other spiritual traditions can encourage and support alternative life-affirming values such as the precepts or *paramitas.* The beauty of this work is that it is so possible. Many people are already showing the way. The challenge of this work is that it is utterly everywhere; there are innumerable places to begin.

I have laid out the ecological, economic, psychological, and systems aspects of consumption and exposed the ideology driving environmental impacts. By looking closely at the twelve limbs of dependent origination, we can see how agents of consumerism inflate the cycle of craving. To do the opposite—cultivate nonmaterial values such as restraint—would not serve profit-making interest. By walking through the steps of healing in the Four Noble Truths, we can see the Dharma medicine of liberation from the suffering of consumerism. Certainly Buddhism does not have the only useful tools for this liberation, but I am urging that these be part of the revolution Lester Brown suggests. As he says, "If the Environmental Revolution is to succeed, it will need the support of far more people than it now has" (1992, 190).

The 1998 State of the World Report doesn't say too much about the role of religions in "saving the earth." That is our work. To begin, I offer some personal vows

—May we all save the many sentient beings from becoming products, and may we calm the global appetites of desire that feed this insatiable disease.

LITERATURE CITED

Aitken, Robert. *The Mind of Clover.* San Francisco: North Point Press, 1984.

Aitken, Robert. *The Practice of Perfection.* San Francisco: Pantheon Books, 1994.

Brown, Lester. "Launching the Environmental Revolution," in *The State of the World Report 1992,* ed. Lester Brown. New York: W. W. Norton, 1992, pp. 174–190.

Brown, Lester, Christopher Flavin, Hilary French, and Linda Starke, eds. *The State of the World Report 1998,* New York: W. W. Norton, 1998.

Carson, Rachel. *Silent Spring.* Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1962.

Cobb, Clifford, Ted Halstead, and Jonathan Rowe. "If the Economy is Up, Why is America Down?" *Atlantic Monthly,* October 1995.

Cook, Francis. "The Jewel Net of Indra," in *Nature in Asian Traditions of Thought,* eds. J. Baird Callicott and Roger T. Ames. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989, pp. 213–230.

Devall, Bill. "Ecocentric Sanghi," in *Dharma Gaia,* ed. Alan Hunt-Badiner. Berkeley: Parallax Press, 1990, pp. 155–164.

Duesenberry, James S. "A Reformulation of the Theory of Saving," summarized in *The Consumer Society,* eds. Neva R. Goodwin, Frank Ackerman, and David Kiron. Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 1997, pp. 176–179.

Durning, Alan. *How Much is Enough?* New York: W. W. Norton, 1992.

Eckel, Malcolm David. "Is There a Buddhist Philosophy of Nature?," in *Buddhism and Ecology: The Interconnectedness of Dharma and Deeds,* eds. Mary Evelyn Tucker and Duncan Ryuken Williams. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997, pp. 327–350.

Ecosattva, "Universal Chainsaw, Universal Forest," *Turning Wheel,* Winter 1998, pp. 31–33.

Ehrlich, Paul R., Anne H. Ehrlich, and John P. Holdren. *Ecoscience: Population, Resources, and Environment.* San Francisco: W. H. Freeman, 1977.

Elkington, John, Julia Hailes, and Joel Makower. *The Green Consumer.* New York: Penguin Books, 1988.

Gallagher, Kevin. "Overview Essay. Globalization and Consumer Culture," summarized in *The Consumer Society,* eds. Neva R. Goodwin, Frank Ackerman, and David Kiron. Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 1997, pp. 301–308.

Goodwin, Neva R., Frank Ackerman, and David Kiron, eds. *The Consumer Society.* Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 1997.

Grierson, Bruce. "Shock's Next Wave," *Adbusters,* January 1998.

Gross, Rita M. "Buddhist Resources for Issues of Population, Consumption, and the Environment," in *Buddhism and Ecology: The Interconnectedness of Dharma and Deeds,* eds. Mary Evelyn Tucker and Duncan Ryuken Williams. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997, pp. 291–312.

Gross, Rita M. "Toward A Buddhist Environmental Ethic," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 65 (2): 333–353, 1997b.

Guenther, Herbert V., and Leslie S. Kawamura. *Mind in Buddhist Psychology.* Berkeley: Dharma Publishing, 1975.

Ingram, Paul O. "The Jeweled Net of Indra," in *Buddhism and Ecology: The Interconnectedness of Dharma and Deeds,* eds. Mary Evelyn Tucker and Duncan Ryuken Williams. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997, pp. 71–88.

Johnson, Wendy, and Stephanie Kaza. "Earth Day at Green Gulch," *Turning Wheel,* Summer 1990, pp. 30–33.

Kanner, Alan D., and Mary E. Gomes. "The All-Consuming Self," in *Ecopsychology,* eds. Theo-

dore Roszak, Mary E. Gomes, and Allen D. Kanner. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1995, pp. 77–91.

Kapleau, Philip. *To Cherish All Life: A Buddhist Case for Becoming Vegetarian.* San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1982.

Kaza, Stephanie. "American Buddhist Response to the Land: Ecological Practice at Two West Coast Retreat Centers," in *Buddhism and Ecology: The Interconnectedness of Dharma and Deeds,* eds. Mary Evelyn Tucker and Duncan Ryuken Williams. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997, pp. 219–248.

Kortens, David. *When Corporations Rule the World.* West Hartford, Connecticut: Kurnarian Press, 1995.

Liebman, James. *Rising Toxic Tide: Pesticide Use in California,* 1991–1995. San Francisco: Californians for Pesticide Reform, 1997.

Lovins, Amory B. *Soft Energy Paths.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: Ballinger, 1977.

Loy, David. "The Religion of the Market," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 65 (2): 275–290, 1997.

Macy, Joanna. *Mutual Causality in Buddhism and General Systems Theory: The Dharma of Natural Systems.* Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1991.

Meadows, Donella. "How to Intervene in a System," *Whole Earth* 91: 78–84, Winter 1997.

Nhat Hanh, Thich. *For Future to be Possible: Commentaries on the Five Wonderful Precepts.* Berkeley: Parallax Press, 1993.

Pollay, Richard. "The Distorted Mirror. Reflections on the Unintended Consequences of Advertising," summarized in *The Consumer Society,* eds. Neva R. Goodwin, Frank Ackerman, and David Kiron. Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 1997, pp. 236–238.

Ryan, John C., and Alan Thein Durning. *Stuff: The Secret Lives of Everyday Things.* Seattle: Northwest Environment Watch, 1997.

Saddhatissa, Hammalawa. *Buddhist Ethics: The Path to Nirvana.* London: Wisdom Publications, 1987.

Santikaro Bhikkhu. "The Four Noble Truths of Dhammic Socialism," in *Entering the Realm of Reality: Towards Dhammic Societies,* eds. Jonathan Watts, Alan Senauke, and Santikaro Bikkhu. Bangkok: Suksit Siam, 1997, pp. 89–161.

Schnaiberg, Allan. "The Expansion of Consumption," summarized in *The Consumer Society,* eds. Neva R. Goodwin, Frank Ackerman, and David Kiron. Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 1997, pp. 27–31.

Schumacher, E. F. *Small is Beautiful: Economics as if People Mattered.* New York: Harper and Row, 1975.

Sivaraksa, Sulak. *Seeds of Peace.* Berkeley: Parallax Press, 1992.

Sivaraksa, Sulak. "Integrating Head and Heart: Indigenous Alternatives to Modernism," in *Entering the Realm of Reality: Towards Dhammic Societies,* eds. Jonathan Watts, Alan Senauke, and Sanikaro Bikkhu. Bangkok: Suksit Siam, 1997, pp. 52–87.

Sklair, Leslie. "The Culture-Ideology of Consumerism in the Third World," summarized in *The Consumer Society,* eds. Neva R. Goodwin, Frank Ackerman, and David Kiron. Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 1997, pp. 320–322.

Snyder, Gary. *The Practice of the Wild.* San Francisco: North Point Press, 1990.

Snyder, Gary. "Nets of Beads, Webs of Cells," in *A Place in Society.* Washington, D.C.: Counterpoint Press, 1995, pp. 65–73.

Steingraber, Sandra. *Living Downstream: An Ecologist Looks at Cancer and the Environment.* New York: Addison-Wesley, 1997.