

## **Anti-Consumption: concept clarification and changing consumption behaviour.**

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The concept of anti-consumption has a long history, for example the the18th Century Boston Anti-Consumption League formed in retaliation to the Boston Port Bill, the 1906 anti-consumption crusade of Greenwood and Hornbrook in New Zealand through to today's organizations. Though the action demanded by the concept is consistent, the motivation for the action has varied; at times motivated by profit, by politics, at times motivated by morals, by environment sustainability. The action required by the concept is usually a form of non-consumption behaviour. Often, the action is directed at specific product categories and/or producers of these products and can take the form of targeted boycott behaviour. More recently it has taken the form of a general 'not to consume' directive. Such a directive is too vague and non-consumption is patently impossible. Moreover, it provides ample fuel for critics. This suggests that we need to clearly state what the current anti-consumption concept represents, and we need to identify desired actions. As a term, anti- consumption has a clear meaning – *against consumption* but as a purposeful social movement and as an idea it needs to have parameters. For example is the concept against consumption per se or against certain forms of consumption. If the latter, these need to be identified. Among the proponents of the movement there appears to be some consensus that environmental sustainability and equity underpin the current concept and the issue is sustainable consumption. This suggests that some form of consumption behaviour is acceptable. Accordingly, this paper argues, first, that what is needed is perhaps not an anti-consumption perspective- but *alternate* consumption perspective. To this end we need to clarify the form of *alternate* consumption would support the current perspective and so a key task is the identification of what is and what is not acceptable consumption behaviour. Second, if the goal is to alter behaviour then we need to move away from the focus on the marketing four 'Ps' endemic in social marketing to a focus on utilizing and perhaps adapting behaviour change theories and the marketing literature on buyer resistance such the guidelines set out by Ram and Sheth.