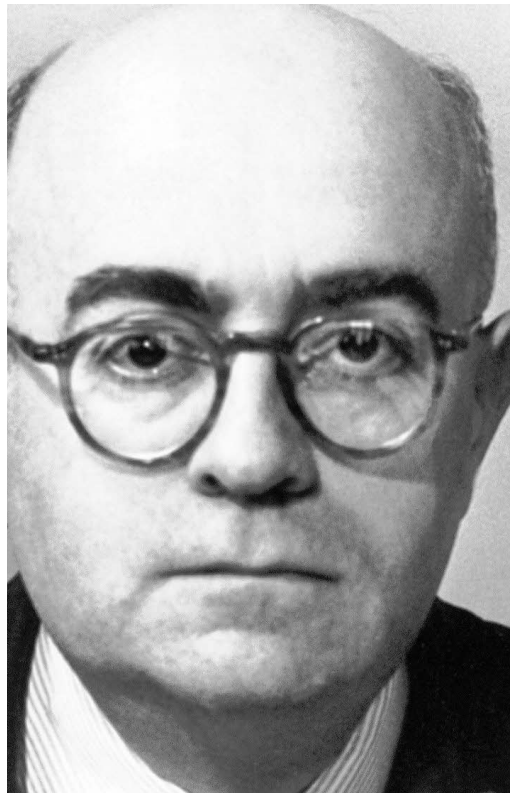


# OPPOSING PARTICULAR CONSUMPTION

## THEODORE W. ADORNO

- German thinker who fled to USA during WW II.
- In 1947 did a provocative radio talk with Max Horkheimer about the “culture industry” which had become possible due to the new technologies that allowed mass production of content.



# WHY IS CULTURE INDUSTRY BAD?

- The product of culture industry is “an entertainment aimed at masses consisting of old content put together by the standardising machine.”
- The culture industry makes consumers passive because:
  - Consumer is seen only as a target for production, and only as a particle in a mass.
  - Content is without any contradictions. If problem is presented, it is always followed with a comforting solution to it.
  - Culture industry is inherently conservative. In the products of culture industry resistance is towards change and never towards present reality.
  - Consumer’s consciousness starts to fade. Consumer has “false ironic relationship with the products of culture industry.”

# WHAT'S THE OPPOSITE?

- The opposite is modern art because modern art activates individuals.
  - It is only the individual subject that can experience sublime and shock, to be active and present.
  - Critical thinking. Modern art acts as a mirror for the problems in the world.
  - Modern art stands contradiction. You don’t seek comfort in it.
  - Opposing status quo. But the price is weakness because if anything happens, it happens in the life of an individual, not as a mass movement.
    - (Here Adorno and the Frankfurt school disagrees with Karl Marx.)



## OPPOSING PARTICULAR CONSUMPTION

- In the background is often a worry about national identity. Opposition towards foreign invasion to the home made culture. Worry about what kinds of people we are and how things “here” should, could or would look like.
- In a more narrow sense, worry about the citizens’ ability to work and pay taxes. All kinds of real and imagined consequences of consumption to the lives, health and morals of the workers, tax payers and dependants.
- Worry about nature and environment.
- Design, as an intermediate between consumption and production often aims at dispelling these worries by means of product design, marketing, branding etc..

# OPPOSING ALL CONSUMPTION

## DEMANDING THE IMPOSSIBLE A HISTORY OF ANARCHISM PETER MARSHALL

*"Demanding The Impossible is the book I always recommend when asked—as I often am—for something on the history and ideas of anarchism."*  
—NOAM CHOMSKY

Emma Goldman  
**ANARCHISM AND  
OTHER ESSAYS**



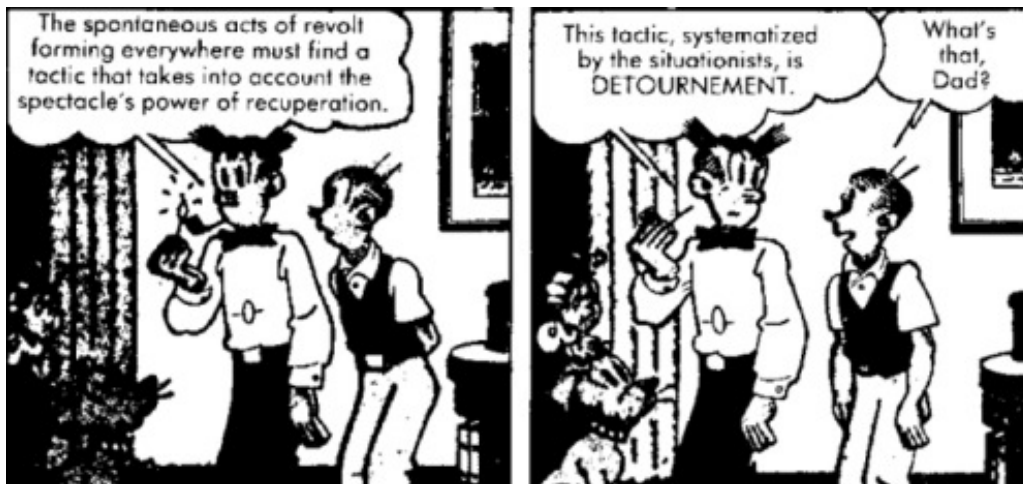
# LA POLICE

## SITUATIONIST INTERNATIONAL

- “Radical laboratory that studied the possibilities of free living.”
- In the background invasion of consumer culture in France.
- Situationists were opposing “entertainment industry that aims at dumping down proletariat by spreading bourgeois taste to the everyday of working class people.”
- Active 1957-1972



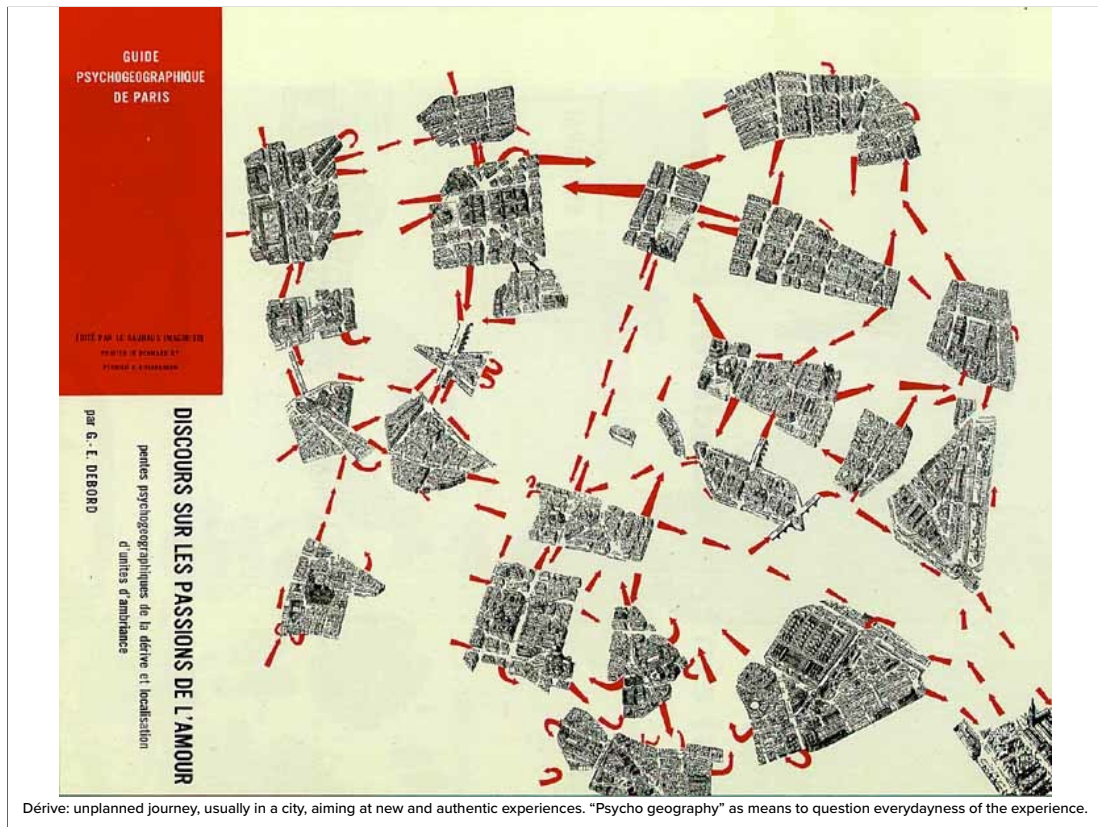
Pyhtilä, Marko (2005) Kansainväliset situationistit. Speaktaakkelin kritiikki. Helsinki: Like, Vantaa.



Détournement: Turning capitalist system and its media culture towards itself.

Vs

Recuperation: Commercialisation of radical idea



Dérive: unplanned journey, usually in a city, aiming at new and authentic experiences. "Psycho geography" as means to question everydayness of the experience.

## SOCIETY OF THE SPECTACLE

- Guy Debord (1967) *Society of the spectacle* argues that division of labour is the reason for everyday misery. Majority or all of the products we use are always made by someone else.
- When people no longer comprehend the entirety of the production, the resulting product becomes a spectacle to which people are only an audience. As a consequence, people become alienated and objectified.
- Spectacle means a picture, a vision, that has awesome set up but not really any content.
- "Products are without content, because they cannot refer anywhere else besides each other because in spectacle there's nothing but products. Spectacle is the moment when product occupies social life entirely and there's nothing but products."

# EVOLUTION OF THE SPECTACLE

- Spectacle evolves in phases. None of the phases is good for people.
1. Centralised spectacle. Production and development are centralised and people have no choice. This is the form of socialist countries, and ideology is the most important product of the spectacle. It is a world where everyone listens and no-one is really saying anything.
  2. Distributed spectacle. This is a world where everyone's talking even though no-one is listening. Western consumption society of conspicuous consumption. It is distributed because it is based on uncontrolled and constant innovation.
  3. Integrated spectacle. Spectacle is integrated when all of this becomes consumer's internalised reality and there's nothing else left.

Pyhtilä, Marko. Kansainväliset situationistit. Speaktaakelin kritiikki. Helsinki: Like.



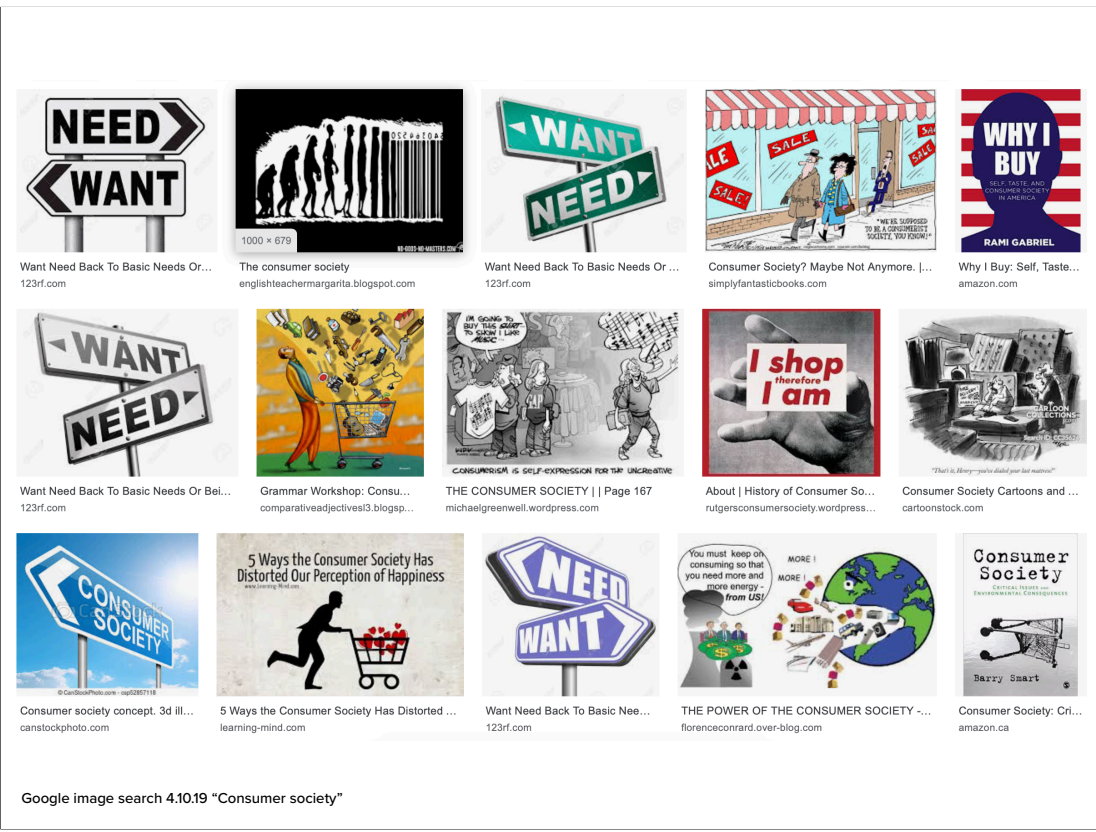


Google image search 29.9.2015 "Consumer society"

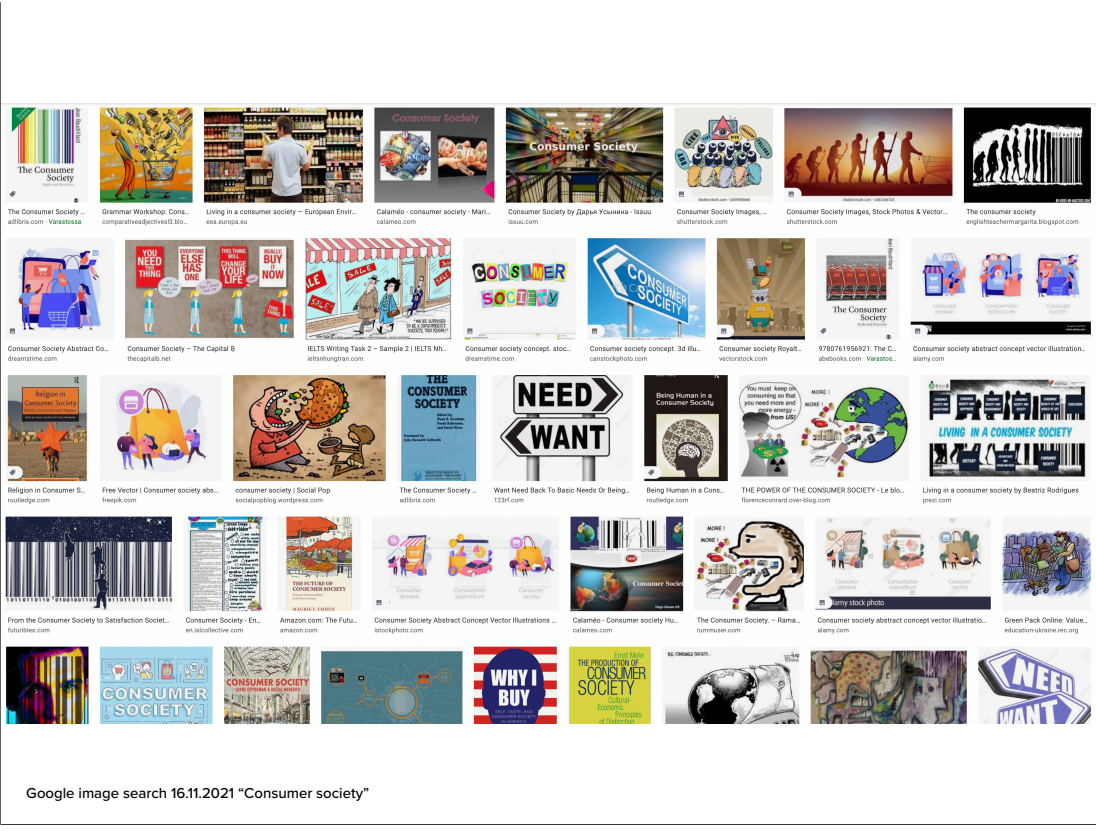


Google kuvahaku 22.9.2017 "Consumer society"





Google image search 4.10.19 "Consumer society"



Google image search 16.11.2021 "Consumer society"

# OPPOSING ALL CONSUMPTION

- To not consume at all is difficult, but occasionally possible, especially if consumption is defined as shopping. Buy nothing day-kinds of campaigns.
- In practices nowadays always critique towards capitalistic system. Either consumption needs to stop (variety of communist and anarchistic ideas) or consumptions needs to become so hysteric that it becomes intolerable (Deleuze & Guattar: Anti Oedipus and Schizophrenia)
- Design's role is to make products exclusive by preventing consumer's access to the product by means of designing the product to be available or culturally proper based on certain race, age, gender, place, wealth etc.



By the end of 1960s consumption critique had turned to mass movement.



Martin Luther King Jr \* Tommy Smith ja John Carlos in Mexico Olympic games\* Woodstock

## 1968:

### TAMMIKUU:

"Prahan kevät" alkaa **Tsekkoslovakiassa**: pyrkimyksenä irtautuminen degeneroituneesta USSR-kommunismista. Vietnamin sodassa **USA:n** häviö alkaa ja yleinen mielipide kääntyy sotaa (ja USA:ta) vastaan.

Francon hallitsemassa **Espanjassa** hallitus perustaa yliopistopoliisin rauhoittamaan väkivaltaisia opiskelijamellakoita, jotka pahenevat ja jatkuvat koko lukuvuoden: poliisi pidättää, kiduttaa ja murhaa sekä opiskelijoita että yliopisto-opettajia. Seurauksena 1969 hallitus julistaa maahan hätätilan.

### HELMIKUU:

**USA:ssa** kuolonuhreja rotumellakassa "whites-only"-tilaisuutta vastaan.

**Berliinissä** ensin 20 000 ja sitten 80 000 osallistujaa Vietnamin vastaisessa mielenosoituksessa joka päättyy mellakkaan.

### MAALISKUU:

**Lontoossa** suurmielenosoitus Vietnamin sotaa vastaan. 91 poliisia loukkaantuu, 200 ihmistä pidätetään.

### HUHTIKUU:

**Saksassa** ensimmäinen Baader-Meinhof terroristi-isku.

**USA:ssa** Martin Luther King Jr.:n salamurha.

**Berliinissä** vasemmisto-opiskelijat saartavat lehtikustantajan pääkonttorin.

**Saksassa** pääasiainen opiskelijoiden mellakkoita 27:ssä kaupungissa. 2 kuollutta, satoja loukkaantuneita, 575 pidätettyä. Järjestyksen palauttamiseen tarvitaan 21 000 poliisia.

**New Yorkissa** opiskelijat valtaavat ja sulkevat Columbian yliopiston protestina Vietnamin sodalle. Takaisinvaltaus on verinen.

### TOUKOKUU:

**Parisissa** opiskelijoiden ja työläisten kapina onnistuu lähes kaatamaan hallituksen.

### KESÄKUU:

**USA:ssa** Robert F. Kennedy Jr. salamurhataan.

**Irlannissa** parlamentin jäsenet valtaavat talon protestina syrjinnälle asuntojapolitiikassa.

### ELOKUU:

**Tsekkoslovakiassa** 200 000 Varsovan liiton sotilasta ja 500 tankkia lopettaa "Prahan kevään" kansannousun.

**Chicagossa** poliisin ja Vietnamin sodan vastustajien yhteenottoja puoluekokouksella.

### LOKAKUU:

**Mexico Cityssä** poliisi ja armeija tappaa useita satoja mielenosoituksessa yliopiston kampuksella. Mielenosoitukseen osallistuu 15 000 opiskelijaa ja 5000 työläistä.

Poliisi estää ihmisoikeus-mielenosoituksen **Irlannissa**.

**Mexicon** olympialaisissa Tommie Smith ja John Carlos tekevät USA:n kansallislaulun aikana "Black Power"-merkin.

# 1968

**January:** Prague Spring begins in **Czechoslovakia**, aiming at getting away from degenerated USSR communism. In **Vietnam War USA** starts to lose out and common opinion turns against the war and USA. In Franco's **Spain** the government creates university police to quiet violent student demonstrations, which get worse and continue entire year. Police arrests, tortures and murders students and faculty.

**February:** In **USA** casualties in a racial demonstration towards "whites-only" event. In **Berlin** at first 20 000 and then 80 000 participate in demonstration against Vietnam War, ends in riot.

**March:** In **London** major demonstration against Vietnam War. 91 officers get hurt, 200 demonstrators arrested.

**April:** In **Germany** the first Baader-Meinhof terror attack. In **USA** the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. In **Berlin** left-wing students block up newspaper publishers headquarters. In **Germany** 27 cities have student riots. 2 dead, hundreds injured, 575 arrested. 21 000 officers. In **New York** students occupy and close Columbia University as a protest against Vietnam War. Removal of protesters is violent.

**May:** in **Paris** the uprising of students and workers nearly overthrows the French government.

**June:** Assassination of Robert F Kennedy Jr in **USA**. In **Ireland** members of the parliament occupy a house to protest segregation in the housing policy.

**August:** 200 000 Warsaw Pact soldiers finish Prague Spring uprising in **Czechoslovakia**. In Chicago police and Vietnam War protesters fight several times.

**October:** In the university campus 15 000 students and 5000 workers take part in the demonstration in **Mexico City**. Police and army murder several hundreds protesters. In Ireland police prevents human rights demonstration. In **Mexico** Olympic games Tommie Smith and John Carlos make Black Power sign during national anthem of **USA**.

## REASONS FOR DEMONSTRATIONS AND RIOTS

- **USA:** human rights (apartheid, freedom of speech), peace movement (Vietnam war), consumption
- **Western Europe:** consumption (esp. USA import), democracy, freedom of speech, peace movement (Vietnam war and nuclear war)
- **Eastern Europe:** state of socialism, democracy, freedom of speech
- **Asia:** USA imperialism, consumption. In China: Culture revolution displace f.e. educated classes.
- **Developing countries, South-America:** USA imperialism, democracy, freedom of speech.



Paris 1968

### World Trade Organization meeting sparks peaceful protest

MONDAY, JULY 28, 2003 • TORONTO STAR • A7



IAN BARRETT

**Peaceful march** A protester holds his opinions aloft yesterday during a peaceful demonstration through downtown Montré against today's meeting of the World Trade Organization. More than 1,000 attended the march. The informal three-day gathering about 25 trade ministers, representing a cross-section of WTO members, will assess progress made to date with a trade treaty known as the Doha Development Agenda, and will discuss the negotiations for a full-scale WTO meeting in September in Cancun, Mexico.



Occupy Wall Street, New York, 2011



Climate change, Helsinki, 2019



Photo: Samuel Gorum for Getty Images

Black Lives Matter, Washington, 2020

<https://edition.cnn.com/2020/06/23/politics/black-lives-matter-support-impact/index.html>