



September 2010 Newsletter

Dear SCORAI,

As another summer draws to a close, we are reminded of new beginnings and of the new beginnings we are trying to achieve through SCORAI. In this fifth installment of the SCORAI eNewsletter, we are pleased to announce the details of the 2011 SCORAI workshop, share some updates and achievements of the SCORAI network, and welcome new SCORAI affiliates.

On the top right of the eNewsletter, you will find a menu, "In This Issue", that serves as a Table of Contents to help you navigate through the eNewsletter. If you have newsworthy items that you would like to appear in the September issue, please send them to me no later than September 25 ([LStanik@rutgers.edu](mailto:LStanik@rutgers.edu)). Please note that the deadline to submit items is the 25th of each month.

Warmly,  
Laura Stanik  
SCORAI Communications Coordinator

## SCORAI Workshop April 2011

**Socio-technical Transitions, Social Practices, and the New Economics: Meeting the Challenges of a Constrained World**

**Mountain Lakes House, Princeton, New Jersey  
April 15-16, 2011**

See <http://www.scorai.org> for a more detailed version of this announcement.

### Overview

During the past year, debates about the desirability of economic growth have gained new visibility in countries of the global North and different approaches for pursuing personal and societal well-being have become part of research and policy agendas. The future vision that guides this work is grounded in three broad tenets: the search for alternatives to consumerism and individualism as societal organizing principles, the design of economic models that are less reliant on consumer spending and personal debt, and the pursuit of more equitable distributions of income and work (to enable tradeoffs of goods consumption for leisure time and community engagement). This view also recognizes that developing countries need economic and consumption growth, but these goals should be mediated by "green" technology and other sustainable practices.

The above ideas have begun to engage growing numbers of academics and activists and governments have started to consider new policy initiatives. For instance, in coming months global attention will increasingly be directed toward the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), and preparations for this event will focus on the problems inherent in the prevailing economic growth paradigm and the design of alternatives that are more consistent with conceptions of global equity and sustainability.

### Aims and Objectives

These developments prompt announcement of plans for a second SCORAI workshop on April 15-16, 2011 at the Mountain Lakes House in Princeton, New Jersey. The event aims to bridge three distinct approaches to research on sustainable consumption. In the first instance, work on socio-technical transitions emphasizes technological innovation and diffusion and the co-evolution of technologies, societal institutions, and culture, but is relatively silent on economic and political context and the nature of technology-human behavior interactions. In contrast, work on social practices centers on the mutual interactions between technology and ordinary daily human behavior and examines how more resource-intensive social practices emerge in response to

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### Executive Board



**Jeffrey Barber**  
Integrative Strategies Forum

**Halina Brown**  
Clark University

**Maurie Cohen**

New Jersey Institute of  
Technology

**Michael Maniates**  
Allegheny College

**John Stutz**  
Tellus Institute

**Philip Vergragt**  
Tellus Institute and Clark  
University

**Richard Wilk**  
Indiana University

technological innovations, but scholars pay less attention to the evolution of new technologies from a complex system perspective or issues pertaining to prevailing economic or political contexts. From yet another angle, studies in the political economy of consumption give prominence to the institutional factors that shape prevailing modes of consumption, but this work in the so-called "new economics" has to date devoted much less attention to the role of technology.

The workshop seeks to forge intellectual bridges among these three perspectives, with the goal of enriching each one through novel framings, new analytical lenses, and development of a shared language. The workshop will integrate perspectives from ongoing research in several fields including innovation studies, sociology of social practices, and ecological macroeconomics. The aim is to deepen the body of knowledge on how consumption patterns evolve in a technological society, and the role of policy interventions, grassroots initiatives, small-scale experiments, social movements, and market actors in affecting changes that are consistent with the requirements of the twenty-first century.

### **Logistics**

The Mountain Lakes House is situated in a woodlands setting just one mile from downtown Princeton (<http://www.mountainlakeshouse.org>) and accessible from area airports (Newark International Airport being the most convenient). Several hotels are within proximate distance and more detailed information on accommodation will be provided to the authors of accepted abstracts.

### **Abstract Submission and Review**

To facilitate close engagement and interaction, the workshop will be strictly limited to thirty people. Prospective participants should send an initial expression of interest to Maurie Cohen ([mcohen@adm.njit.edu](mailto:mcohen@adm.njit.edu)). A 300-word abstract is due by September 30. The SCORAI executive board will review the abstracts and communicate its decisions by November 15. Authors of accepted abstracts will be required to submit a full draft of their paper by February 15, 2011 to ensure sufficient time for circulation prior to the workshop.

## **Brief Report on the North American Roundtable on Sustainable Production and Consumption Inaugural Meeting**

The newly formed North American Roundtable on Sustainable Production and Consumption (NARSPAC) held its first meeting on August 19-20 at the Tellus Institute in Boston. SCORAI is one of the four founding partners of the Roundtable together with the North American Sustainable Consumption Alliance (NASCA), the Canadian Environmental Network (CEN), and the Citizens Network for Sustainable Development (CitNet). Twelve people participated in person and six more connected by telephone. The group included five members of the SCORAI executive committee (Halina Brown, Maurie Cohen, Jeffrey Barber, John Stutz, and Philip Vergragt). A full (draft) report of the meeting is available upon request from Philip. We agreed on the mission of NARSPAC as follows:

*The North American Roundtable on Sustainable Production and Consumption seeks to promote dialogue, understanding, and collaboration among different stakeholder groups within North America and with other regions, with the goal of catalyzing the transformation of society to sustainable production and consumption patterns.*

NARSPAC has been created partially as a follow-up to a meeting held at the end of 2008 in Washington, DC on sustainable consumption and production that was organized by the United States and Canadian governments, which thus far has not produced any other notable subsequent activity. Another important motivation is the upcoming Rio+20 conference that provides opportunities to infuse issues central to the new economics and steady-state economics into the dominant discussion on the "green economy." The new Roundtable will organize stakeholder dialogues and seek to influence United States and Canadian policies in connection with Rio+20. NARSPAC will also work on outreach especially toward youth. It was tentatively agreed that the Roundtable would organize a series of workshops around themes like "the green economy" and "a shorter working week." Consideration is also being given to convening a citizens' consultation. November 15 is the deadline for a first round of workshop proposals.

## **Australian Dick Smith's \$1 Million Wilberforce Award**

Dick Smith's Wilberforce Award provides \$1 million for a young person under 30 who becomes famous through his or her ability to show leadership in communicating an alternative to our population and consumption growth-obsessed economy. Candidates will need to have a firm belief that we can have a viable and strong world economy that is no longer obsessed with growth for its own sake, but instead encourages both a stable population and sustainable consumption of energy and resources. They must be able to communicate that we cannot



continue to squander the resources that will be needed by future generations, and they must also be able to communicate a plan that offers an alternative to our growth addiction.

Like the Nobel Prize, candidates will not apply for the Wilberforce Award. Over the next twelve months Dick Smith will be following the media throughout the world to see who is the most outstanding individual in not only making a significant contribution to this important issue, but who also becomes famous through his or her contribution to the debate.

The award takes its name from pioneering nineteenth century abolitionist William Wilberforce. Details about the award are at <http://dicksmithpopulation.com>.

## **New Work by SCORAI Members and Friends**

### **Reports**

Akenji, Lewis and Magnus Bengtsson. Is the Customer Really King: Stakeholder Analysis for Sustainable Consumption and Production Using the Example of the Packaging Value Chain. Kanagawa, Japan: Institute for Global Environmental Studies.  
[http://enviroscope.iges.or.jp/modules/envirolib/upload/2807/attach/iges\\_whitepaperiii\\_e\\_c02.pdf](http://enviroscope.iges.or.jp/modules/envirolib/upload/2807/attach/iges_whitepaperiii_e_c02.pdf)

### **Articles**

Hendrickson, D. and Wittman, H. 2010. Post-occupancy assessment: Building design, governance and household consumption. *Building Research & Information* 38(5).  
<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/content~db=all~content=a926027031~frm=titlelink>

### **Books**

Brij Maharaj, Ashwin Desai, and Patrick Bond. 2010. *Zuma's Own Goal: Losing South Africa's War on Poverty*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press.

### **Videos/Audios**

Nic Marks discusses the Happy Planet Index in a new TED talk.  
[http://www.ted.com/talks/nic\\_marks\\_the\\_happy\\_planet\\_index.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/nic_marks_the_happy_planet_index.html)

Juliet Schor discusses her new book *Plenitude* at Town Hall Seattle.  
<http://www.julietschor.org/the-book/videos>

Tim Jackson on Australian radio,  
[http://mpegmedia.abc.net.au/rn/podcast/2010/07/bia\\_20100704\\_1705.mp3](http://mpegmedia.abc.net.au/rn/podcast/2010/07/bia_20100704_1705.mp3)

## **Seeking Contributors for Encyclopedia of Consumption and Waste**

Sage Reference is inviting academic editorial contributors to a new reference work on consumption and waste, or the social science of garbage.

Archaeologists and anthropologists have long studied artifacts of refuse from the distant past as a portal into ancient civilizations, but examining what we throw away today tells a story in real time and becomes an important and useful tool for academic study. Trash is studied by behavioral scientists who use data compiled from the exploration of dumpsters to better understand our modern society and culture. Why does the average American household send 470 pounds of uneaten food to the garbage can on an annual basis? How do different societies around the world cope with their garbage in these troubled environmental times? How does our trash give insight into our attitudes about gender, class, religion, and art? The Encyclopedia of Consumption and Waste explores the topic across multiple disciplines within the social sciences and ranges further to include business, consumerism, environmentalism, and marketing. Each article ranges from 600 to 3,000 words. We are now making assignments due October 15, 2010.

This comprehensive project will be published by SAGE Reference and will be marketed to academic and public libraries as a print and digital product available to students via the library's electronic services. The General Editor, who will be reviewing each submission to the project, is Dr. William Rathje, Emeritus Professor, University of Arizona.

If you would like to contribute to building a truly outstanding reference with the Encyclopedia of Consumption and Waste: The Social Science of Garbage, please contact Joseph Golson at [consumption@golsonmedia.com](mailto:consumption@golsonmedia.com).

## Job Announcement

### University of Surrey

#### DEFRA / ESRC/ Scottish Government Funded Research on Sustainable Lifestyles & ESRC Research Group on Lifestyles, Values and the Environment (RESOLVE)

Research Co-ordinator (RAII)

Ref: 7650

Salary up to £37,839 per annum (subject to experience and qualifications)

We are seeking to recruit a highly-motivated and experienced post-doctoral researcher with substantial expertise in environmental sustainability and a strong track record of conducting social research. This post is a unique opportunity to take a leading role in a novel and exciting initiative on sustainable lifestyles reporting directly to UK policymakers.

The Research Co-ordinator will provide direct support to Professor Jackson, Director of the newly-formed Sustainable Lifestyles Research Group (SLRG). Combining day-to-day research coordination with internal and external liaison activities, s/he will also develop and conduct a key research project exploring how evidence is provided to and used by government. In addition, s/he will provide vital input to a major longitudinal qualitative household study. Funded by DEFRA, ESRC and the Scottish Government, the SLRG is an innovative 3 year project which aims to achieve new and relevant understandings of the processes which lead to changes in people's behaviours and practices and to provide advice on realistic strategies to encourage more sustainable lifestyles.

The post will be based in the Centre for Environmental Strategy, an internationally-acclaimed centre of excellence on sustainable development. It takes a multi-disciplinary approach to the analysis of sustainable systems, to develop action-oriented, policy-relevant responses to long-term environmental and social issues. (See <http://www.ces-surrey.org.uk>). The post will be appointed from 1st October 2010 or as soon as possible thereafter.

Informal enquiries can be made to Prof Tim Jackson ([t.jackson@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:t.jackson@surrey.ac.uk)).

For an application pack and to apply on-line please go to our website <http://www.surrey.ac.uk/vacancies>.

If you are unable to apply on-line, please contact Miss Karen Truss, HR Assistant, on tel: +44 (0)1483 686060 or by e-mail: [k.truss@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:k.truss@surrey.ac.uk).

Please quote Post Ref No: 7650

Further information about RESOLVE can be found at <http://www.surrey.ac.uk/resolve>.

Closing date for applications: 19th September 2010. For further information about the University of Surrey, please visit <http://www.surrey.ac.uk>.

We acknowledge, understand and embrace cultural diversity

## New SCORAI Affiliates

SCORAI welcomes the following new members to the network:

- Rena Shifren, University of Arizona
- Patrice Gruszkowski, European Commission
- Bonnie Simpson, University of Calgary
- Mark Mulder, Washington State University
- John Peloza, Simon Fraser University
- McKenna Morrigan
- Norah Chaloner
- Marlyne Sahakian, Graduate Institute (Switzerland)
- Pilar Rojas, Free University of Brussels
- Diane Martin, University of Portland
- Tom Hargreaves, University of East Anglia
- Michael Luchs, College of William and Mary
- Erik Assadourian, Worldwatch Institute
- Davina Bird, West Virginia University

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Sustainable Consumption Research and Action Initiative (SCORAI) | c/o Tellus Institute | 11 Arlington Street | Boston | NJ | 02116