



Citizen-Consumers and Evolution: Reducing Environmental Harm through Our Social Motivation (Palgrave Pivot)

Mikael Klintman

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This book reflects upon and critiques the potential of citizen-consumer's to alter their natural consuming habits and to 'shop ethically', 'care for the environment' and 'think globally' so as to reduce environmental harm. The author argues that our present conceptual understanding of what drives peoples' environmental behaviour (that environmental remedies can be realized by determining fixed ends which citizen-consumers could strive for) is inadequate and that environmental policies based on these perspectives of human behaviour yield poor results and will not change citizen-consumer behaviour.

Developing a substantial challenge to the existing accepted theories, this book sets out a groundbreaking approach to understanding citizen-consumer behaviour from the perspective of evolutionary theory. The evolutionary theory of human nature shows that firstly, environmental concern is not a universal element across different cultures and secondly, that neglecting one's environmental harm through striving for individual accumulation of wealth is not a characteristic of human nature. Instead, it is social motivation, rather than rational choice that is the driving force behind human agency and recognizing the importance of social motivation is essential as a basis for the advancement of sustainable development and adaptation of the norms and practices of citizen-consumers, markets and politics. The book concludes by discussing how the evolutionary perspective on human behaviour can constitute the basis for the development of practical environmental projects and policies.

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