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## INTRODUCTION

It is time to change the way we approach socializing people to their consumption role, changing our focus from individual consumer rights to collective, human responsibilities. We live in a capitalist, consumer society. Capitalism requires the continuous accumulation of capital, through continuous economic growth and consumption. Traditional consumer education curricula has its underpinnings in economic theory, a theory which places little to no emphasis on the human relationships in consumer transactions within a capitalist system and free market. Existing consumer education curricula often focuses, instead, on the one-way relationship between the consumer and the seller in the marketplace, training the consumer to make well informed, rationale decisions, to efficiently manage their resources and to be advocates for their individual rights relative to business. These curricula often are based on the premise that consumers have rights as actors in the marketplace that need to be protected. The focus also is on the imbalanced power relationship between the seller and the individual consumer, with the latter having little power. There is very little, if any, attention focused on: (a) the reciprocal relationships between consumers and *other* people, (b) on the consumers' responsibility to be conscious of and accountable for the repercussions and consequences of their economic decisions, and (c) on socializing the person to see themselves as a global citizen first, and a consumer second.

To that end, and building on earlier reflections (McGregor, 1998a,b, 1999), this paper is based on the premise that people are part of a global, human family which engages in a consuming role in a capitalist society. Since capitalism cannot survive without continuous consumption, consumption has been reified in our consumer society. If we accept that we live in a human family, we have to be concerned with the human relationships that emerge during family functions, especially the function of production and consumption. The basic argument of this discussion is that consumer educators have to change their approach to developing and delivering consumer education programs so that they put people, relationships and sustainability first, and profits, wealth, growth and progress second or, at the least, strike a better balance between the two polarities. When this change happens, the goals of social equity and ecological soundness will become integral with economic efficiency (Sylvan, 1997) and consumers will see themselves in relation to other people and the environment. Of particular interest to this paper are the unexplored links between (a) consumer rights and human rights and (b) consumer responsibilities and human responsibilities and how these impact the human relationships developed through consumption in the global economy. These links will be prefaced with a primer on the concepts of consumption, sustainable consumption and the notion of rights versus responsibilities.

## CONSUMPTION

McCracken (1988) defines consumption as the processes by which consumer *goods and services* are created, bought and used. Campbell (1987) defines consumption as the processes through which economic resources are used up in the satisfaction of human wants. Durning (1992) notes that consumption is almost universally seen as good in today's consumer society. Ekins (1998) explains that consumption is viewed as synonymous with human welfare and, hence, has become the prime objective of modern consumer societies; the goal of economics is to increase consumption leading to individual material happiness. As is evident, consumption is a concept which has many meanings. From the 1300's to the late 1800's, the word *consume* had negative connotations, meaning to destroy, to use up, to waste and to exhaust. When the meaning of consume shifted, in the early 1900's, to encompass pleasure, enjoyment and freedom, consumption moved from a means to an end in its own right. Living life to the fullest, more and more be damned the consequences, has become synonymous with consumption, with many of the negative consequences we see today (Bouchet, 1996; Goldsmith, 1996). Indeed, "in the late twentieth century, the word 'consumer' is regaining its older, destructive connotations" (Gabriel & Lang, 1995, 26).

Campbell (1987) observes that "it is not consumption in general which poses special problems of explanation, so much as that particular pattern [of consumption] which is characteristic of modern industrial [consumer] societies" (39). The movement against excessive consumerism or negative consumption has been labelled "anti-consumerism" (Collis et al 1994). This movement is gravely concerned with the sustainability of current levels and patterns of

consumption. They are concerned with the environmental, economic, political, labour, personal, societal and spiritual impact of excessive, run-away consumption. They define consumerism as a social and economic creed that encourages people to aspire to consume more than their share of the world's resources, regardless of the consequences. In a consumer society, one can never have enough and this mindset is not sustainable; as a caveat, not all consumption is bad; the goal is balanced, sustainable consumption.

The unsustainability of global consumption is stark. More than a billion people are living at a material standard of living that is supposed to be able to support only 400-800 million people and another 5 billion people aspire to this standard of living, maintained through unsustainable consumption patterns (Jernelöv and Jernelöv, 1993). The richest 20% of the world's people account for 80% of the world's total consumption; conversely, the other 80% of the world account for only 20% of total world consumption. A thousand Germans consume about 10 times as much as 1000 Egyptians and produce that much more waste ("Red and green", 1998). Global consumption of goods and services has topped \$24 trillion dollars, annually. Yet, a child born in North America or England will consume, waste and pollute more in a lifetime than as many as 50 children in a developing country (Commission on Development of the World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP) no date). The WCRP admonish citizens to avoid consumption that is destructive to the well-being of others and to be socially responsible and sustainable to future generations and the environment that supports the world; that is, they are calling for fair and sustainable consumption in the global village. Sustainability is an economic state where the demands placed upon the environment by people and commerce can be met without reducing the capacity of the environment to provide for future generations (Hawken, 1993). This discussion paper extends the idea of sustainability to be a moral and ethical state, as well as an economic and environmental state, wherein sustainable consumption patterns respect the universal values of peace, security, justice and equity within the human relationships that exist in the global village. Put more simply, not only should consumers be concerned with the impact of their decisions on the environment but also on the lives and well-being of other people.

## **SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION**

Although individual citizens have been writing about the implications of unsustainable consumption patterns for almost 30 years (e.g., Dammann, 1972 cited by Lafferty, 1994), the term sustainable consumption was not popularized until the last decade. Like the concept of consumption, sustainable consumption has multiple definitions, so much so that the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) (1999) is compiling a range of definitions associated with sustainable development and consumption. One such definition is that sustainable consumption addresses the demand side (versus sustainable development which addressed the supply side) and looks at how the goods and services required to meet basic needs and improve quality of life can be delivered in such a way that reduce the burden on the Earth's carrying capacity and do not impact negatively on intra and inter-generational equity. As an aside, Consumers International (CI) also supports a shift from the supply side (production) to the demand side (consumption) as a way to ensure sustainability. The demand side focuses on consumers' choice of goods and services to fulfil basic needs and improve quality of life while the supply side focuses on the economic, social, and environmental impact of production processes (Hurtado, 1997; United Nations, 1998). IISD clarifies that inter-generational equity is the principle of equity between people alive today and future generations; that is, consumption in one generation should not undermine the basis for future generations to maintain or improve their quality of life. Intra-generational equity is the principle of equity between different groups of people alive today; that is, consumption in one community should not undermine the basis for other communities to maintain or improve their quality of life.

CI (1997) explains sustainable consumption as the fulfilment of basic human needs without undermining the capacity of the environment to fulfil the needs of present and future generations. Lafferty (1994) suggests that sustainable consumption encompasses sustainable management of resources, considerations for the natural environment and societal processes of change, the promotion of human dignity, quality of life and the perspective of interdependence referring to the interplay between people and environments and the relationships between economies, nationally and internationally. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) published a report of sustainable consumption and production in 1997 that strongly urges that the links between consumerism, economic growth and individual welfare receive deeper and more synergetic analysis if OECD countries want to curb the current unsustainable consumption patterns of member countries. What is disappointing about the OECD report is that it recommends that changing consumption patterns "start with practical measures without aiming to influence deeply-held values" (web site citation).

The global movement for sustainable consumption was formalized in 1992 at the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED Earth Summit) in Rio de Janeiro. Participants at this United Nations conference developed Agenda 21, the Summit's action plan and major policy document. These participants included over 175 governments, many transnational corporations, and over 30,000 delegates representing the disenfranchised and the environment. Hawken (1993, 216) convincingly argues that the official Earth Summit was less than a success because the UNCED was: (a) unwilling to question the desirability of economic growth, assuming that it is an admirable goal; (b) unwilling to question the market economy versus a moral economy; and, (c) unwilling to question the development process itself in relation to the desirability of economic growth and technological progress at any expense. His critique is central to the premise of this paper - not challenging capitalism leads to the sanction of relentless consumption, a practice that is not sustainable.

To address the threat of unsustainable consumption and its impact on the integrity of the global environment and ecosystem, the delegates at the 1992 Earth Summit approved Chapter 4 of Agenda 21, titled Changing Consumption Patterns. In this chapter, governments at the conference pledged to improve their understanding of the role of consumption in sustainable development and how consumption patterns could be changed. The UN Commission on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) is responsible for implementing Chapter 4 (United Nations 1999). There are 27 principles in the Rio Declaration (based on the 1987 Brundtland Commission report), principles that are designed to guide the actions of States in regards to sustainable development. Principle 8 states, "to achieve sustainable development [assuming that development can be sustained indefinitely] and a higher quality of life for all people, States should reduce and eliminate unsustainable patterns of development and *consumption* [emphasis added] and promote appropriate demographic policies [referring to population growth control]" (Collis et al 1994). In 1995, UNCSD developed an International Work Programme on Changing Consumption and Production Patterns which includes CI's involvement in revising the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection, a document based on the principles of consumer rights, to be discussed shortly (United Nations, 1999).

## **RIGHTS VERSUS RESPONSIBILITIES**

This section of the paper will explain the differences between rights versus responsibilities followed by an exploration of the links between consumer rights and human rights and between consumer responsibilities and human responsibilities.

The human spirit is restless for progress and security, but also for justice and equitable improvement (Costa, 1998). To that end, volumes have been written about rights, especially human rights and consumer rights. But, little has been written about responsibilities, especially human responsibilities and consumer responsibilities, until very recently. This section will examine the meaning of rights versus responsibilities. The following sections will begin to explore the links between the rights of a consumer relative to the human rights of citizens and the responsibilities of consumers relative to their responsibilities as humans living in a global family. Indeed, consumers are being asked to link their rights to a renewed reconsideration of their responsibilities (CI, 1999b). But people are not being asked to link their *consumer* rights and responsibilities to their *human* rights and responsibilities, except from an environmental/ecological imperative. This discussion is concerned with the human family imperative. Human relations are universally based on the existence of both rights and responsibilities (Arias, 1997). Consumer relations with sellers in the marketplace is too narrow a perspective to appreciate the impact of consumption decisions on the entire global family. Globalization of the economy is now the impetus for defining the obligations that go with the rights (Costa).

A right is something to which an individual has a just claim. A "just claim" refers to a morally correct demand for something that is due or believed to be due (Gove, 1969). Human rights are those that individuals have by virtue of their very existence as human beings (to live, eat, breath, have shelter). Civil, or legal, rights are those granted by government (e.g., the right to vote at age 18). Rights are often associated with freedom. Bannister and Monsma (1982) define a right as powers, privileges or protections to which people are justly entitled or which have been established by law.

Just as human beings have fundamental rights by virtue of their personhood, they also have human, ethical responsibilities. Indeed, the concept of rights often implies related obligations, duties or responsibilities (Küng, 1998). Obligation refers to legally or morally binding oneself to a course of action in a situation that is bound with

constraints - binding in law or conscience. A duty suggests a more general but greater impulsion on moral or ethical grounds. Responsibility refers to moral, legal or mental accountability for one's actions, conduct or obligations (Gove, 1969). Küng further distinguishes between narrower legal obligations and ethical responsibilities in the wider sense like those prompted by conscience, love and humanity. The latter is based on the insights of the individual and cannot be compelled by the government through law.

It is a sense of responsibility that makes people accountable for their actions (Arias, 1997). But the concept of responsibility is complex. Someone can be said to "bear" responsibility for something meaning they sustain without flinching or they can be said to "accept" responsibility meaning they receive it with consent. Also, responsibility can be perceived as a negative thing, as a weight or as a positive, enlightening, empowering thing. The former implies culpability and the latter implies recognition of successes and the "attempt". Also, three conditions have to be present for someone to be act responsibly: (a) there must be a condition to which one perceives the need to respond, (b) the belief that it is in one's power to respond, and (c) the belief that responding is not only in one's power but is to one's benefit. Conversely, a person's lack of "response" -- "ability" could be a breakdown in any one or all of these steps (Jones cited in "Thoughts on responsibility", 1998).

## **LINKS BETWEEN CONSUMER RIGHTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

When people think of human rights they often turn to the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (adopted in 1948) ([www.un.org/rights](http://www.un.org/rights)). When they think of consumer rights, they turn to the United Nation's Guidelines for Consumer Protection, adopted in 1985 (<http://www.un.org/esa/susdev/cpp13a.htm>) or CI's eight Consumer Rights ([www.consumersinternational.org](http://www.consumersinternational.org)). Space does not allow for a profile of the development of each of these documents but relevant sources are cited for those who want to follow up on their history and future. Instead, this discussion will focus on the current intent and content of these three codes, setting the stage for ensuing discussion of the links between consumer rights and human rights.

The UN Declaration of Human Rights is intended to protect humans against actions taken by their governments. It is comprised of 30 articles organized around six themes: (a) born free and equal (2 articles); (b) civil and political rights (next 19 articles); (c) economic, social and cultural rights (next 8 articles); (d) social and international context within to achieve rights - that is, peace and human security (1 article); (e) duties to protect rights and freedoms of others in the community (1 article); and, finally, (f) one last article says that no one can take any one of the rights out of context and use it as an excuse to violate other rights in the Declaration, and that every single person, group, organization and government is responsible for making the Declaration *work*. In more detail, civil and political rights refer to such things as: recognition under the law, rights to fair trials and freedom of movement in and out of a country, freedom from arbitrary arrest, detention or exile, and freedom from torture as well as the rights to privacy, to have a family, to own property, free conscious and thought, public assembly and participation in government. The economic, social and cultural rights pertain to: employment and working conditions, social security, leisure, standards of living, education, moral and material interests/authorship, and arts and cultural enjoyment (Canadian Human Rights Foundation, 1986).

The United Nations Consumer Protection Guidelines constitute a comprehensive policy framework outlining what governments can do to promote consumer protection in eight areas: basic needs, safety, choice, information, representation, redress, consumer education and a healthy environment. Any government that wants to develop or revise consumer protection policy frameworks can use these guidelines as a benchmark. These guidelines embrace the principles of the exact same eight consumer *rights* adopted by CI in 1982. It is noteworthy that CI was the driving force behind the development of the UN guidelines and is the driving force (by UN invitation) behind the current initiative to revise the UN Guidelines so they respect sustainable consumption. In brief, the right to basic needs refers to basic goods and services which guarantee basic human survival (food, clothing, shelter, health care, education and sanitation). Safety refers to being protected against the marketing of goods or the provision of services that are hazardous to health and life. Consumers also have the right to be protected from dishonest or misleading advertising or labelling and have the right to facts and information needed to make an informed choice. Choice refers to the right to competitive prices with an assurance of satisfactory quality while redress provides the right to be compensated for misrepresentation, shoddy goods or unsatisfactory services. The right to representation means being able to express the consumer's interest in the making and executing of government policy. The right to consumer education respects the need to acquire knowledge and skills necessary to be an informed consumer. Finally, consumers have the right to live and work in a non-threatening or dangerous, healthy environment that

permits a life of dignity and well-being (CI,1999a).

## Discussion

Even at first glance, there is potential tension between one's consumer rights and their human rights. Consumer rights *assume* the existence of human rights. How can one exercise the consumer right to have a voice in the policy process if they do not even have a vote or are not allowed to participate in government? How can they form consumer groups to voice their opinions collectively if they do not have the right to assemble in groups in public? How can they demand the right to consumer education when the education system is such that people cannot afford to attend, live too far away or there are no schools at all? This lack of access to education leads to illiteracy and ignorance in the general sense and, more specifically, lack of consumer education curricula leads to the inability to acquire knowledge and skills necessary to be an informed consumer. Also, how can people exercise their consumer right to information if they cannot read the information due to lack of the human right to education? How can consumers exercise their right to express the consumers' interest if they have been socialized in a planned economy wherein they do not see themselves in a consuming role? Exercising this right is exacerbated moreso when people who lived in a planned economy have been forced to convert to a market economy over night but have not been socialized to function in a market economy (e.g., Russia and many African countries). How can people exercise their consumer right to safety and health in the goods and services they acquire when they do not even have the human rights of proper sanitation, safe drinking water, or adequate shelter and clothing? How can people exercise their consumer right to make choices in the marketplace if they do not have adequate incomes or steady employment? More thought provoking, how can people exercise their consumer right to redress if they do not have the human rights of recognition as a person under the law or do not have access to justice? Indeed, all of the consumer rights assume that the human rights already exist. Both the civil and political and the economic, social, and to a lesser extend, cultural human rights have to be in place in order for people to exercise their consumer rights.

Second, and closer to home, there is real tension between consumers' rights and the rights of other humans; that is, sometimes one's rights as a consumer impinge on the rights of other humans living in the global family. Of all of the consumer rights, the right to choice seems to be the one that impinges the most on the human rights of other people. The right to choice refers to the right to have a range and variety of goods and services at competitive, fair prices and variable, satisfactory quality. In order to assure choice in the Northern markets, governments have implemented trade laws to facilitate cross border transactions and transnational corporations (TNCs) have set up business off shore so they can lessen the cost of the production process. Unfortunately, in too many cases, the goods that are available in the Northern markets were provided by slave labour, child labour, sweatshops or in countries that allow the TNCs to forego adhering to pollution or ecological concerns and human rights in pursuit of profit. Worse yet, elitist governments are often bribed to turn their eyes the other way leading to situations where labour rights are abused in efforts to earn more profits. This leads to abhorrent working conditions, job insecurity and low living standards (all human rights). Consumers in Northern countries have been socialized to want more and more things to consume but have not been socialized to appreciate the impact of their consumption choices on the human rights of other people; that is, they are NOT responsible for their decisions.

## **LINKS BETWEEN CONSUMER RESPONSIBILITIES AND HUMAN RESPONSIBILITIES**

When people think about consumer responsibilities they cannot turn to the United Nations for direction at all since the UN does not have a set of guidelines for ensuring that consumers be responsible only that they have the right to be protected. People *can* turn to CI for five consumer responsibilities, to be discussed shortly. Also, when people think about human responsibilities they cannot turn to the United Nations yet either because the UN does not have a declaration on human responsibilities. This gap may be redressed shortly given that an organization called the InterAction Council recently (September 1997) submitted to the UN a proposal for a Universal Declaration of Human Responsibilities (Küng, 1998). The InterAction Council hopes that a country will sponsor the Declaration so that it can be introduced to the United Nations for debate at the appropriate committee. As an aside, the InterAction Council, formed in 1983, is comprised of some 30 former heads of government or state from all continents and different political orientations. Their objective is to balance human rights with human responsibilities. Their work is relevant to this discussion since they have spent many years delineating the meaning of responsibilities relative to rights.

The Universal Declaration of Human Responsibilities developed by the InterAction Council (1997) is comprised of 19 articles, divided into six main topics: (a) fundamental principles of humanity (four articles); (b) non-violence and respect for life (three articles); (c) justice and solidarity (4 articles); truthfulness and tolerance (4 articles); mutual respect and partnership (3 articles), and, as with human rights, the final article says that no one can take any one of the responsibilities out of context and use it as an excuse to violate other responsibilities in the Declaration, and that every single person, group, organization and government is responsible for making the Declaration *work*. In more detail, the principles of humanity relate to treating everyone in a humane way and to the notions of self esteem, dignity, good over evil, and the Golden Rule (do unto others as you would have done to you). Non-violence and respect for life also encompass responsibilities related to acting in peaceful ways, and respecting intergenerational and ecological protection. Justice and solidarity encompass honesty, integrity, fairness, sustainability, meeting one's potential and not abusing wealth and power. Truthfulness and tolerance embrace the principles of privacy, confidentiality, honesty, and a respect for diversity and these apply to all people, politicians, business, scientists, professionals, media, and religions. Finally, the responsibility of mutual respect and partnerships includes caring for other's well-being, appreciation and concern for the welfare and safety of others especially when it comes to children and spouses but also to all men and women in partnerships.

In 1980, CI (1999a) identified five consumer responsibilities: (a) solidarity, (b) critical awareness, (c) action and involvement, (d) environmental awareness, and (e) social concern. In brief, consumers not only have the right to have their voice represented in the policy arena, they have a responsibility to organize together to develop strength and influence so as to promote and protect their interests. Second, not only do consumers have the right to safety and information, they have the responsibility to be critically aware and to question the price and quality of goods and services. One could assume that this critical awareness is gained through acting on the responsibility of accessing consumer education (another right). Third, not only do consumers have a right to choice, safety, redress and not be ripped off, they also have a responsibility to assert themselves and take action rather than be passive. Consumers have the responsibility to act confidently to make their voices heard. Fourth, matching the right to a healthy environment is the responsibility to understand the environmental consequences of their consumption patterns. They are obligated to recognize their individual and social responsibility to conserve resources and protect the earth for future generations. The final responsibility, social concern, does not have a corresponding right. Social concern refers to being aware of the impact of one's consumption on other citizens whether in the local, national or international community. This socially responsible perspective takes into account the individual concerns of consumers and the shared concerns of society at large (Hellman Tuitert, 1985).

## Discussion

Of all of the five consumer responsibilities, the obligation to respect social concern is most relevant to the argument being developed in this paper. Social concern refers to being aware of the impact of one's consumption on other citizens whether in the local, national or international community. Sustainable consumption is concerned with how the goods and services required to meet basic needs and improve quality of life can be delivered in such a way that there is no negative impact on intra and inter-generational equity. If a consumer assumes the consumer responsibility of being socially concerned and aware, they are inherently respecting all of the human responsibilities set out in the proposed declaration of human responsibility. They will temper their consumption decisions based on whether or not they feel that they are exercising their duty to respect justice, solidarity, peace, truthfulness, diversity, other's well-being and social welfare and other's working conditions and standard of living. They will moderate their consumption decisions if they are mindful of their human responsibility to be concerned with the Golden Rule - do not do to others what you would not want done to you. They could ask themselves. "Would I want someone to expect me to work in a sweatshop, earn nominal wages, live below the standard of living, and not have my labour rights honoured just so the other person could have more to consume? Would I want someone to expect me to be exposed to abuse, violence and no self esteem as a person just so I could keep a job to make more things for them to consume? Would I want someone to expect me to stay oppressed with no chance for me to reach my potential just so I could work to make more things for them to consume?" A consumer concerned with their human obligations would answer a resounding "no".

Consumers will make totally different consumption decisions based on different values and principles if they fulfil their human responsibility to ensure concerns for each of integrity, fairness and sustainability towards other members of the global family. Consumers will strive to hold politicians, businesses and other consumers accountable for the consumption and production decisions if they are discharging their human responsibility to

respect and expect truthfulness, tolerance and honesty in all human relations, especially in the consumer transaction. Finally, consumers acting as responsible humans will respect intra and intergenerational and ecological imperatives such that their consumption patterns are sustainable. The security of people living elsewhere, those not yet born and the environment would then be certain because today's consumers acted responsibly as humans.

## CONCLUSION

Consumerism has been imposed on our lives, society, economy and our environment layer by layer. It is now time to begin its removal one layer at a time (Verdant, 1997). One of the first layers to be removed and examined is the ideological premise (capitalism) upon which we base the socialization process of consumers, especially via formal consumer education curricula. Educationalists are challenged as they strive to unpeel these layers because many people do not see their own consumption as part of the problem, including the educationalist themselves. Citizens are not ready to be lectured on consumption but some are ready to be engaged in dialogue (Harwood Group, 1995). This readiness implies that consumer educators must consider ways to move past this recognized inertia by taking steps to ensure that consumer curricula prepares citizens to strive for and achieve sustainable consumption within the global human family.

A concern for, and study of, human rights illuminates the human condition and stresses the universality of the search for human dignity and a good quality of life. This, in turn, sensitizes people to their role as citizens and does much to dissipate egocentric and ethnocentric views of rights and of other cultures (Canadian Human Rights Foundation, 1988). A concern for and study of human responsibilities reveals the inherent link between rights and responsibilities. Rights cannot exist without responsibilities. "Recognition of the equal and inalienable rights of all the people requires a foundation of freedom, justice and peace - but this also demands that rights and responsibilities be given equal importance to establish an ethical base so that all men and women can live peacefully together and fulfil their potential" (InterAction Council, 1997, 1).

The intent of this paper was to sensitize consumer educators to the necessity of reexamining their approach to teaching consumer education such that consumers begin to see themselves as global citizens first, and consumers second. It is imperative that curricula be revamped so that it challenges capitalism which leads to unsustainable consumption patterns. We need to focus on human relations and human security and how they are affected by consumption decisions. For indeed, "the very process of competitive individualistic consumption [has been] corrosive of the values that sustain human relationships and the families, communities" (Ekins, 1998,18). This new perspective involves globalizing consumer education curricula by balancing the conventional focus on rights with a focus on responsibilities and by respecting the relationship between consumers' responsibilities as humans living in the global family. Shifting to a global perspective can be facilitated by following and influencing the progress of the revisions of the UN Consumer Protection Guidelines so that they respect sustainable consumption and the progress of the UN's reception to the proposed Declaration of Human Responsibilities. The ultimate objective is that consumers be socialized in such a way that social equity and ecological soundness become integral with a moral economy that puts people ahead of consumption and production.

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