

The Mass Observation Project

Summer 2007 Directive

Part 1: Shopping & making a difference

Today we are surrounded by various ways to 'make a difference' when we shop. Examples include ways to help the environment (e.g. Ecover, Body Shop); or protect the welfare of animals (free range eggs or dolphin friendly tuna). Ethical initiatives like Fair Trade make a difference by ensuring that the producer or farmer in poorer countries gets a fair wage. Even if you don't buy Fair Trade or similar products we would like to know what you think about their growing popularity.

Shopping memories

Over the years, there have been calls to boycott certain products, eg French Golden Delicious apples; Nestlé foods. Do you remember any boycotts? Please note whether you took part or not and why.

Can you remember specific shopping experiences, and any reactions of family and friends or the news coverage at the time?

Some ethical initiatives now rely more on *buying* certain things rather than boycotting them. Fair Trade is a good example of this.

When did you become aware of Fair Trade? Do Fair Trade and other similar initiatives make a difference to the way you think and feel about shopping?

Do you remember buying things to 'make a difference' before Fair Trade came along?

A Shopping Project

Next time you go on a fairly substantial shopping expedition, record your views and feelings on the following points:

- Why you make the choices you do (what thoughts and feelings are involved in making a choice).
- Any health, moral or political reasons for choosing certain products?
- Look in other people's baskets or trolleys! What do you think their choices say about them as a person?
- Are you fickle? Are there occasions when you know you could buy something for moral or political reasons but you don't? Say something about the feelings involved in your choices.

Wider issues

Do you think the things you buy reflect your own values? What other ways are there of being moral/ethical in your everyday life? Do you think these are more or less effective in 'making a difference'?

Imagine there was a campaign to 'make a difference' to the lives of poor people based in the UK or even in your local area. If you were the advertising manager for this campaign, what images do you think would or wouldn't work? Can you tell us about why you think this imagery would or wouldn't appeal to people?

As usual, please start each part of your directive reply on a new sheet of paper with your MO number, (NOT name), sex, age, marital status, the town or village where you live and your occupation or former occupation.

Remember not to identify yourself or other people inadvertently within your reply.

Please clearly state your age at the start of this section as well as your other biographical information.

Part 2: You and gardens

Not everyone has a garden and we apologise in advance to those of you who don't have anything to say in response to these questions. You may still be interested in gardening of course and may want to comment anyway. We'd like to hear about allotments and about growing things indoors. You may also have experiences from your younger days which are relevant - so please look at the questions just in case.

Your ideal garden

What would your ideal garden look like? Write as much as you can on this and explain *in detail* where your ideas and inspiration come from.

Gardening on TV and radio

Do you have a favourite television or radio programme on gardening? Tell us why you like it. Are there certain gardening programmes you don't like? Why not?

The "English" garden is often portrayed in the media: how do *you* picture it?

Growing things

Do you like growing things? If so, do you have a special flower, plant (including houseplants), fruit or vegetable that you like to grow? Tell us what it is and why it is so special. If you do not like to grow things, tell us why not.

Environmental issues

There is much concern nowadays about the environment. Have your gardening habits changed in response to environmental issues?

Is there a 'tip' you would like to pass onto other gardeners to help them garden in an environmentally friendly way?

A special place in your garden

Do you have a special place in your garden? If so, please send us a photograph* and say why it is so special?

If you were to no longer have a garden, how would you feel?

If you used to have a garden, but do not have one now, describe what you miss about it.

***Please make sure you send in a caption with the photo and also put your Mass Observation number on the back so we know who sent it in. Please remember the photos will become part of the Archive. We may use them in exhibitions so don't send us anything you would not want made public (anonymously)!**

Special Task - My Garden Diary

Please keep a diary describing your week in the garden. Please keep your diary for the full seven days (include the dates). Describe how you use your garden everyday, eg hanging out the washing, sitting, playing with pets or children or digging and planting.

Do you get pleasure and enjoyment from pottering about in the garden? Describe this experience in your diary. What did you do and what thoughts came to you?

Please post your response to:

**The Mass Observation Archive
FREEPOST BR 2112
The Library
University of Sussex
Brighton BN1 1ZX**

Or by email to: moa@sussex.ac.uk