

Kate Soper, "Consumerism is the path to planetary ruin but there are other ways to live, *The Guardian*, 23 November 2023

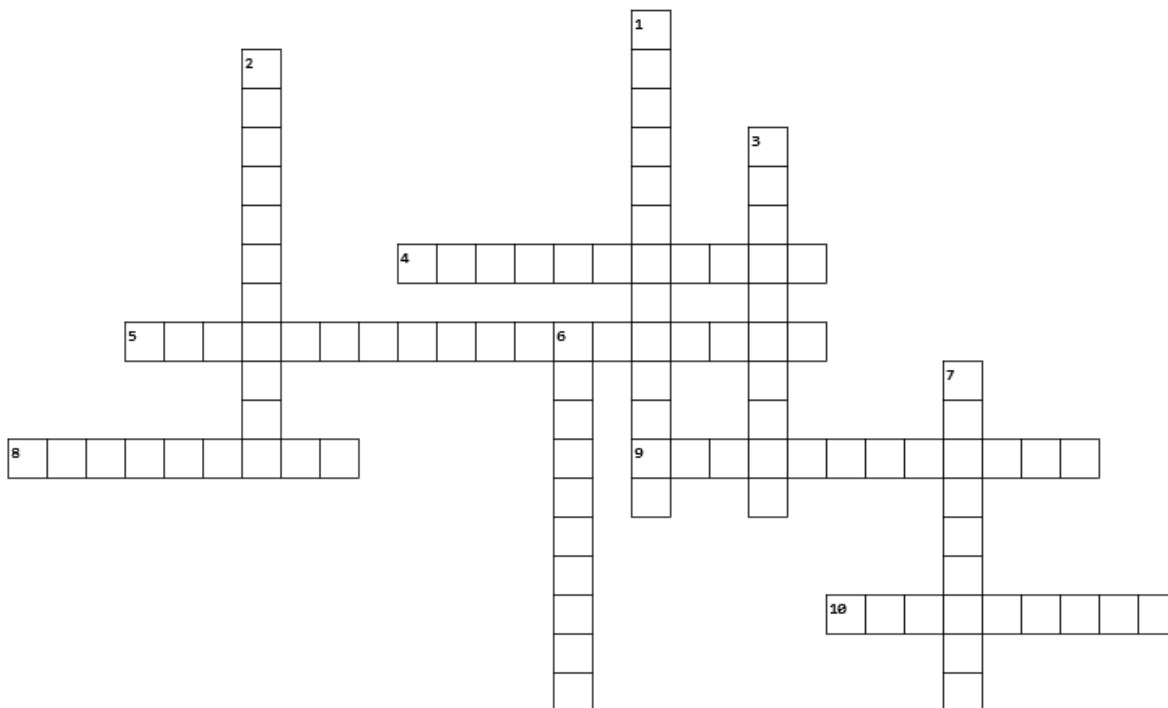
(<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/commentisfree/2023/nov/23/consumerism-planetary-ruin-life-community>)

Article summarised by GPT-4 (25/11/2023): This text discusses the challenges and potential alternatives to consumerism in the context of the climate crisis and the threat it poses to the planet. It criticizes the prevailing attitudes of political leaders in wealthier countries, who either procrastinate on environmental action or overly rely on green technologies while maintaining affluent lifestyles. The text argues against the notion that continuous economic growth is essential for a functioning economy, highlighting that sustainable production and consumption should be the goal, rather than undifferentiated growth.

The current consumerist lifestyle is seen as a major contributor to stress, ill health, and environmental degradation. The text advocates for a slower-paced, less work-centred, and more community-oriented way of living. This includes embracing ecologically benign production methods, reducing waste, and finding fulfilment in activities beyond consumerism. It suggests that less shopping and more community-based solutions could lead to more fulfilling lives and help address environmental challenges.

The text also emphasizes the need to reduce reliance on cars and planes, advocating for slower, more enjoyable forms of travel and the expansion of public transport. It recognizes the difficulty of transitioning to this new way of living due to the constraints it places on capitalist growth and profits, and the resistance from corporate powers. However, it argues that this change is necessary and could gain momentum if there is sufficient popular support. The text concludes by suggesting that a compelling vision of alternative ways of living, informed by diverse cultural and historical perspectives, is crucial for inspiring opposition to current economic orthodoxy and fostering a less unequal, more sustainable world.

Find words in the text to do the crossword below (words selected and synonyms generated by GPT-4).



Across

- 4. eco-friendly, renewable, green
- 5. communal, social, cooperative
- 8. supports, champions, endorses
- 9. options, substitutes, choices
- 10. viewpoints, perspectives, stances

Down

- 1. ecological, natural, green
- 2. satisfaction, contentment, gratification
- 3. obstacles, difficulties, hurdles
- 6. opposition, defiance, objection
- 7. censure, condemnation, disapproval