



# Green Washed: Why We Can't Buy Our Way to a Green Planet

*Kendra Pierre-Louis*

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## **Green Washed: Why We Can't Buy Our Way to a Green Planet** Kendra Pierre-Louis

The message that our environment is in peril has filtered from environmental groups to the American consciousness to our shopping carts. Every day, millions of Americans dutifully replace conventional produce with organic, swap Mr. Clean for Seventh Generation, and replace their bottled water with water bottles. Many of us have come to believe that the path to environmental sustainability is paved by shopping green. Although this green consumer movement certainly has many Americans consuming differently, it raises an important and rarely asked question—"is this consumption really any better for the planet?"

By examining the major economic sectors of our society, including infrastructure (green housing), consumer goods (green clothing and jewelry), food (the rise of organic), and energy (including solar power and the popularity of the hybrid car), *Green Washed: Why We Can't Buy Our Way to a Green Planet* explains that, though greener alternatives are important, we cannot simply buy our way to sustainability. Rather, if it is the volume of our consumption that matters, can we as a society dependent on constantly consuming ever be content with buying less?

A new and unique take on green consumption, *Green Washed* shows how buying better is only the first step toward true sustainability.

**Kendra Pierre-Louis** is the sustainable development editor for Justmeans.com. She holds a master's degree in sustainable development from the SIT Graduate Institute in Vermont. She has created outreach material for the United Nations Environment Programme's Convention on Biological Diversity and worked as a researcher for Terrapin Bright Green, an environmental consulting and strategic planning firm.

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