

## VIDEO: The Story of Stuff: The Real Costs of our Consumer Driven Culture

By [Annie Leonard](#)

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[The Story of Stuff Project](#) 11 December 2009

Theme: [Environment](#), [Global Economy](#), [History](#)

The Story of Stuff is a 20-minute film that takes viewers on a provocative and eye-opening tour of the real costs of our consumer driven culture—from resource extraction to iPod incineration.

Annie Leonard, an activist who has spent the past 10 years traveling the globe fighting environmental threats, narrates the Story of Stuff, delivering a rapid-fire, often humorous and always engaging story about “all our stuff—where it comes from and where it goes when we throw it away.”

Leonard examines the real costs of extraction, production, distribution, consumption and disposal, and she isolates the moment in history where she says the trend of consumption mania began. The Story of Stuff examines how economic policies of the post-World War II era ushered in notions of “planned obsolescence” and “perceived obsolescence” —and how these notions are still driving much of the U.S. and global economies today. Leonard’s inspiration for the film began as a personal musing over the question, “Where does all the stuff we buy come from, and where does it go when we throw it out?” She traveled the world in pursuit of the answer to this seemingly innocent question, and what she found along the way were some very guilty participants and their unfortunate victims.

Written by Leonard, the film was produced by Free Range Studios, the makers of other highly popular web-based films such as “The Meatrix” and “Grocery Store Wars.” Funding for the project came from The Funders Workgroup for Sustainable Production and Consumption and Tides Foundation.

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