

---

# CONSUMER RESISTANCE: WHAT, HOW, WHY?

---

Dominique Roux, IUT de Sceaux  
Membre du PESOR



# As a consumer, what does resistance mean for you?

- Situations?
- Types of behaviors?
- Types of actions?
- Types of actors?
- Devices in particular?
- Ways of speaking, language?

# WHAT is Resistance?

- *To resist* comes from Latin *re*-“against” + *sistere* meaning “take a stand, stand firm”.
- Resistance is both a *physical property* and a *particular reaction in a specific situation*
- As a human act, it can be expressed :
  - passively (by not giving in, not changing, being unreceptive, enduring...)
  - actively through struggle, fight, rebellion, factious actions ...

# WHAT is Resistance?

- 1. Resistance varies among individuals:  
a *stable individual tendency* of the consumer to oppose perceived forms of influence (Consumer Propensity to Resist)

Anne-Laure (28, communication manager): “I couldn’t bear to feel I was caught up in a system where I was no longer in control of my own life and schedule. I would really fight against that. I resist any temptation to get sucked into the rat race; to be prisoner of a system.”

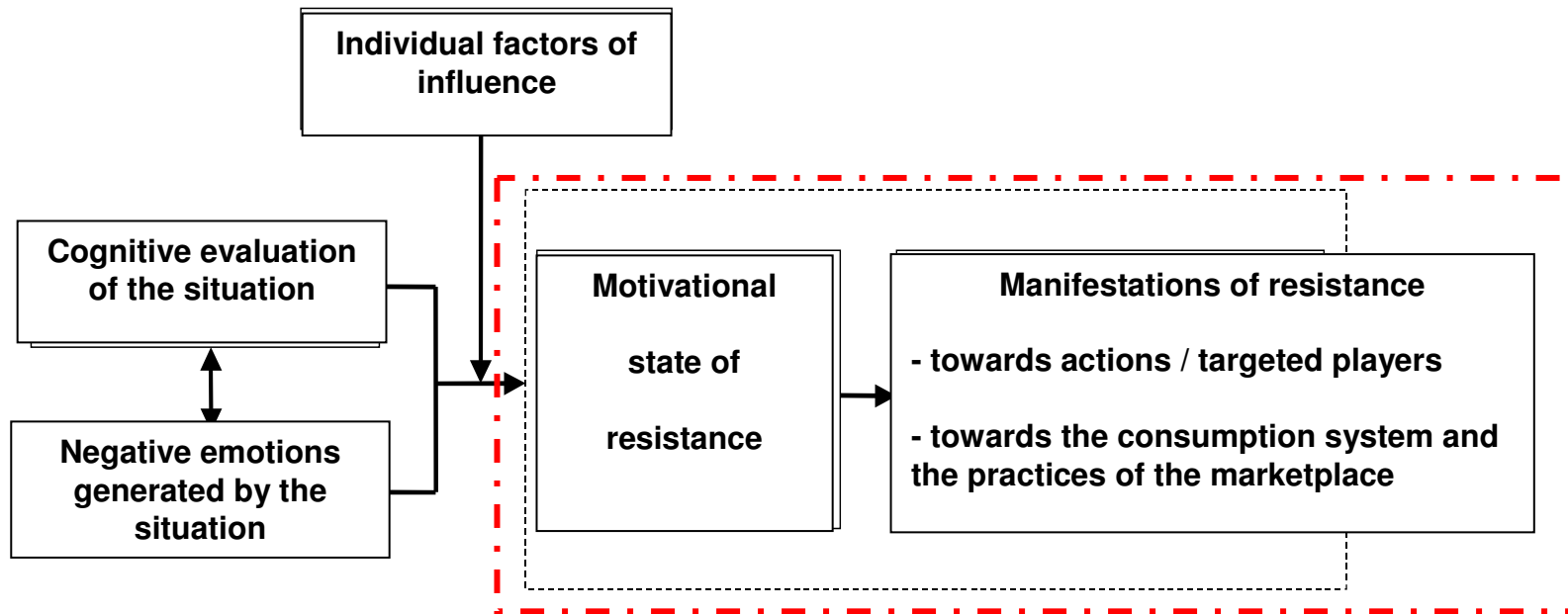
Fatma (22, student): “I don’t want to be like everyone else. I don’t want to be told how to think. I think it’s essential to know how to stand out from the crowd and be yourself. We’re all different, all unique, but we live in the same society, and I think that the consumer society pushes us into wanting to all be alike. But I don’t want to follow the crowd, and own this or that thing just because everyone else has it.”



Roux D. (2007), Consumer resistance: proposal of an integrative framework, *Recherche et Applications en Marketing*, 22, 4, 59-80.

# WHAT is Resistance?

- 2. Resistance is a fundamentally interactionist:  
*a reaction of opposition in a situation perceived as oppressive*



# WHAT is Resistance?

## Examples of consumers' reactions to telesales

- “at first, I let them speak...”
- “I listen out of politeness to the beginning of the explanations”
- “After a while, I asked him not to insist and to try someone else”
- “He insisted and I cut him off to make him stop”
- “When I tell them ‘no’, it’s as if they don’t hear me. They just go on. I find this aggressive attitude very disturbing. More than anything, it’s this insistence I can’t stand”



Roux D. (2008), "Consumers faced with telephone selling: Metacognition, Resistance and Strategies," in *Advances in Consumer Research*, vol. 35, eds. Angela Y. Lee and Dilip Soman, 35, 1, 467-474.

# WHAT is Resistance?

- 3. Resistance is cumulative:

*a global set of negative cognitions and emotions encoded over time* by the consumer concerning past episodes of resistance

Télès (28, journalist): “I’ve gotten into the habit of being cautious when someone tries to sell me something, and always try to find out more before deciding. It’s a reflex I acquired bit by bit as I formed my consumption habits. Each time someone tries to sell or push a product, I find out as much as I can first. I think it comes from the fact that these days we’re approached more and more frequently and if we are to be informed consumers, we have to be vigilant.”

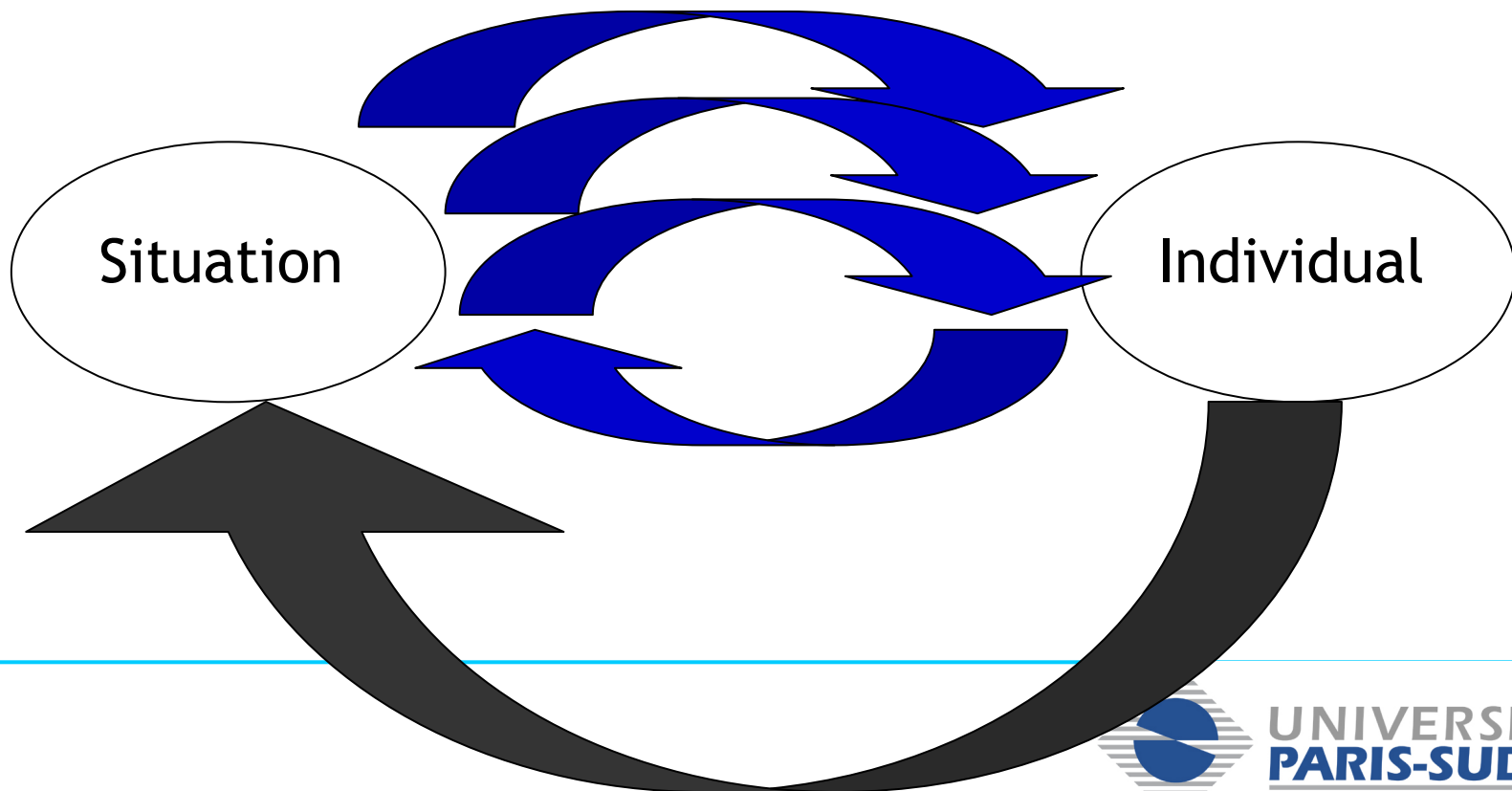
# WHAT is Resistance?

## Summary

*Resistance is an individual property*

*Résistance is a situated reaction (interactionist frame)*

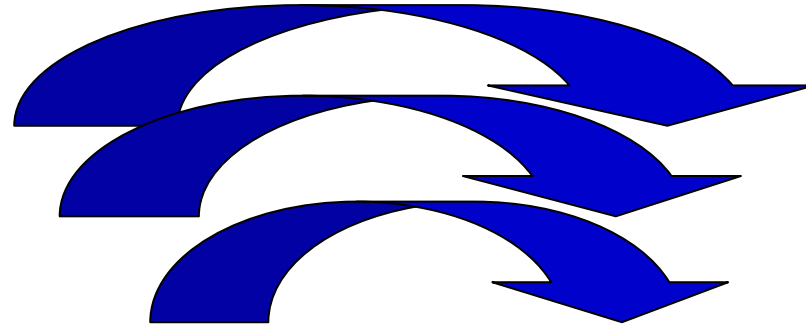
*Résistance is cumulative*



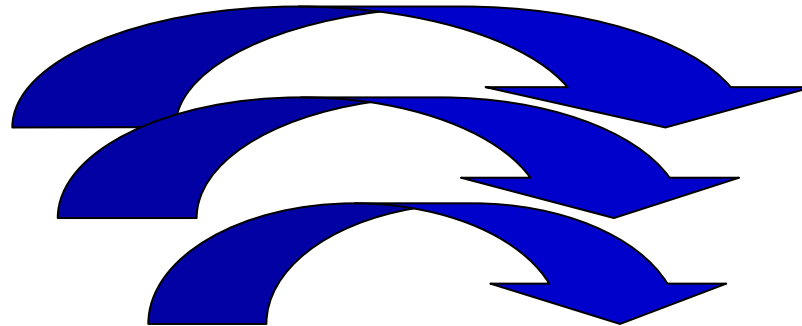


# HOW do consumers resist?

- 2 main types of manifestations:



- towards targeted players / actions / devices



- towards the consumption system as a whole

# 1. Fighting targeted players

## Boycotts/buycotts



# 1. Fighting targeted players

Boycotts/buycotts



# 1. Fighting targeted players

Culture jamming & protest



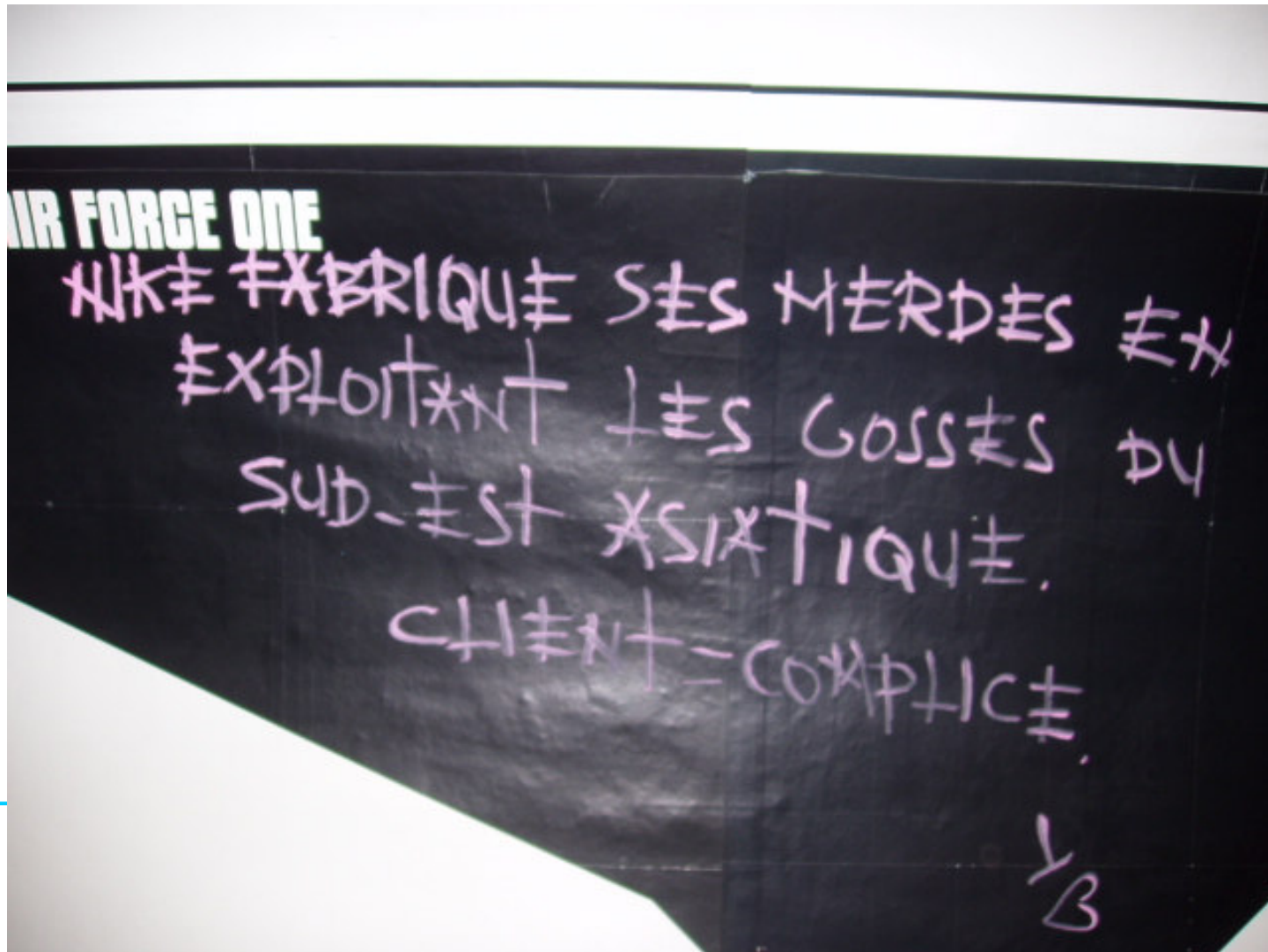
# 1. Fighting targeted players

Culture jamming & protest



# 1. Fighting targeted players

Culture jamming & protest



# 1. Fighting targeted players

Culture jamming & protest



# 1. Fighting targeted players



## Complaining behaviors

COMMUNIQUÉ

15/05/06

### **Exaspération des victimes de Free** Les associations locales de l'UFC-Que Choisir saisissent les tribunaux

Le 16 mai 2006, des centaines de consommateurs, adhérents de l'UFC Que Choisir (1) et victimes partout en France de l'opérateur Free, vont saisir la justice.

Il n'est plus acceptable qu'un opérateur provoque l'envahissement des permanences « litiges » des associations locales de l'UFC Que Choisir. Une grande partie des problèmes rencontrés dans le secteur des nouvelles technologies ont pour origine cette société.



# 1. Fighting targeted players

Complaining behaviors



# 1. Fighting targeted players

Le DIRECTEUR GÉNÉRAL  
Monsieur Philippe CHAUSSIGNON  
Directeur de la diffusion  
Avenue Jean Rostand  
10000 Toulouse Cedex 9

Monsieur,

Je vous accuse réception de votre lettre du 22 décembre 2003 qui nous adresse les vœux de [REDACTED] et qui nous informe que notre abonnement est prolongé de trois numéros supplémentaires. Je vous en remercie.

Je comprends très bien que le changement de format et de matériel ait pu nécessiter un délai d'adaptation. Par contre je ne comprends pas en quoi la prolongation de notre abonnement représente une compensation et un avantage puisque le montant de cet abonnement est prélevé tous les mois sur compte bancaire et que la date du prélèvement a plutôt tendance à être de plus en plus précoce; il faudrait, pour matérialiser ce bonus, résilier l'abonnement durant un certain délai.

Je reçois [REDACTED] par portage depuis de nombreuses années; compte tenu des jours de grève ou autres incidents survenus au cours de ces années, pour lesquels vous nous avez ou non attribué des numéros supplémentaires, le nombre de ces derniers doit maintenant approcher de trente. Il me paraîtrait donc logique que [REDACTED] nous soit servie gratuitement durant un mois en vous abstenant de prélever un mensualité; ou de nous faire connaître les dispositions concrètes que vous comptez prendre pour compenser la non livraison de numéros pour un coût proche d'une mensualité.

Je vous adresse également mes vœux de bonne année 2004 pour vous même et pour [REDACTED], et en espérant obtenir une réponse satisfaisante, je vous prie d'agréer, Monsieur, l'expression de mes sentiments distingués.

## Complaining behaviors

Baillergeau D., Benavent C. (2005),  
« La lettre de réclamation : une  
expérience de justice », 10èmes  
Journées de Recherche en Marketing  
de Bourgogne, Dijon, 9&10 novembre



UNIVERSITÉ  
PARIS-SUD 11

# 1. Fighting targeted players

## « Free-parties »



A 20 h un signal sonore a retenti et les participants se sont saisis d'un article dans les rayons et l'ont brandi. Des performeurs, des artistes et autres acteurs ont joué, occupé le supermarché. Le lieu est devenu une sorte de bordel euphorique...

# 1. Fighting targeted players

« Free-parties »

Pourquoi éprouvez-vous le besoin de "saturer l'espace commercial" ?

PT : Ce n'est pas un besoin, mais la volonté saturer l'espace commercial par des non-clients est une réponse à la saturation de notre espace de vie par la publicité et le commerce. C'est aussi l'exploration d'espaces de liberté et des marges législatives.

Quelle est la finalité de ce type d'intervention ?

NI : Donner le pouvoir à chacun de changer le décor, parce que l'union fait la force. Montrer qu'on peut être un créatif festif anarchique grâce au nombre lui aussi créatif festif anarchique. On recherche un phénomène de contagion à court et long terme.

Quelles structures / organisations auraient selon vous bien besoin d'une petite intervention de ce type selon vous ?

PT : celles qui ont un gros logo !



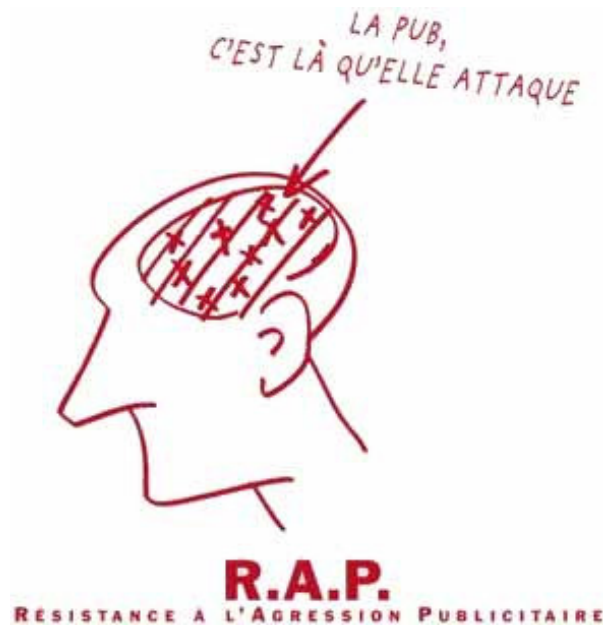
[http://www.cip-idf.org/article.php3?id\\_article=456](http://www.cip-idf.org/article.php3?id_article=456)



# 1. Fighting targeted devices



# 1. Fighting targeted devices



## 2. Escaping targeted players



## 2. Escaping targeted channels



Alternative retail channels





## 2. Escaping targeted channels



### Alternative retail channels

What are people looking for?

- Fair prices
- Bargains
- Justice
- Smart shopping
- Treasure hunt
- Originality
- Nostalgia
- Social contact
- Ecology
- Ethics



Roux D. et Guiot D. (2008), Why do People Shop Secondhand? A Secondhand Shoppers' Motivation Scale in a French Context, *Advances in Consumer Research*, 36, 1, eds. Ann L. McGill and Sharon Shavitt, Duluth, Association for Consumer Research

# Sample items

- **Fair price**  
*“By buying second-hand, I feel I’m paying a fair price for things”*
- **Treasure hunting**  
*« I like wandering around second-hand outlets because I always hope I’ll come across a real find”*
- **Originality**  
*« I hope to come across original articles that are not found in the shops”*
- **Nostalgia**  
*« I like buying second-hand objects because they evoke the past “*
- **Social contact**  
*« In certain second-hand outlets, I find it pleasant to enter into discussion with people even if I don’t buy anything «*
- **Distance from the consumption system**  
*«By buying second-hand, I feel like I’m escaping the (consumption) system ”*
- **Ethics and ecology**  
*« I appreciate buying second-hand because I don’t like objects being thrown away that can still be of use ”*



Roux D. et Guiot D. (2008), Why do People Shop Secondhand? A Secondhand Shoppers’ Motivation Scale in a French Context, *Advances in Consumer Research*, 36, 1, eds. Ann L. McGill and Sharon Shavitt, Duluth, Association for Consumer Research

# 2. Escaping targeted channels

Gift-giving economy

The screenshot shows the Napster website interface. At the top, there's a search bar with 'bell biv devoe' entered. The main content area displays the album 'The Breakthrough [International Version]' by Mary J. Blige, released in 2005. Below the album title is a list of 17 tracks with their durations and 'Download' buttons. On the right side, there's a 'Playlist / Radio' section showing a list of songs from the album. The interface is in German, with 'Suchen' for search and 'Musik entdecken' for music discovery.

Interpret	Titel Nr.	Titel	Album/Quelle	Zeit	Wied.	Download
Mary J. Blige	1	No One Will Do	The Breakthrough [Internationa...	4:47		Downloaden
Mary J. Blige	2	Enough Cryin	The Breakthrough [Internationa...	4:21		Downloaden
Mary J. Blige	3	About You	The Breakthrough [Internationa...	4:04		Downloaden
Mary J. Blige	4	Be Without You [Kendu Mix]	The Breakthrough [Internationa...	4:06		Downloaden
Mary J. Blige	5	Gonna Breakthrough	The Breakthrough [Internationa...	4:00		Downloaden
Mary J. Blige	6	Good Woman Down	The Breakthrough [Internationa...	4:08		Downloaden
Mary J. Blige	7	Take Me As I Am	The Breakthrough [Internationa...	3:57		Downloaden
Mary J. Blige	8	Baggage	The Breakthrough [Internationa...	3:36		Downloaden
Mary J. Blige	9	Can't Hide From Luv	The Breakthrough [Internationa...	3:53		Downloaden
Mary J. Blige	10	MJB Da MVP	The Breakthrough [Internationa...	3:21		Downloaden
Mary J. Blige	11	Can't Get Enough	The Breakthrough [Internationa...	3:40		Downloaden
Mary J. Blige	12	Ain't Really Love	The Breakthrough [Internationa...	4:40		Downloaden
Mary J. Blige	13	I Found My Everything	The Breakthrough [Internationa...	5:23		Downloaden
Mary J. Blige	14	Father In You	The Breakthrough [Internationa...	5:23		Downloaden
Mary J. Blige	15	Alone	The Breakthrough [Internationa...	4:29		Downloaden
Mary J. Blige	16	One	The Breakthrough [Internationa...	4:20		Downloaden
Mary J. Blige	17	So Lady [Non-LP Version]	The Breakthrough [Internationa...	4:17		Downloaden



Giesler M. (2006), Consumer gift system : netnographic insights from Napster, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 33, 2, 283-290.

### 3. Resisting towards consumption

# JOURNÉE SANS ACHAT

SAMEDI 29 NOVEMBRE 2008



casseursdepub.org

**REJOIGNEZ LA TRÊVE DE LA CONSOMMATION !**

DÈS 12H30 : STANDS ET ANIMATIONS DANS LES RUES BASSES (MOLARD)

17H00 : DÉBAT PUBLIC « DÉCROISSANCE ET SIMPLICITÉ VOLONTAIRE »  
à UNI-MAIL (S150) avec Josef Zisqadis (POP), Isabelle Chevalley (Ecologie Libérale),  
Hugo Zbinden (Les Verts), des témoignages de vie et vos questions...

Org : Collectif Journée Sans Achat avec le soutien de ChristNet, Parti Communiste GE, solidaritéS et les Jeunes Vert-e-s GE

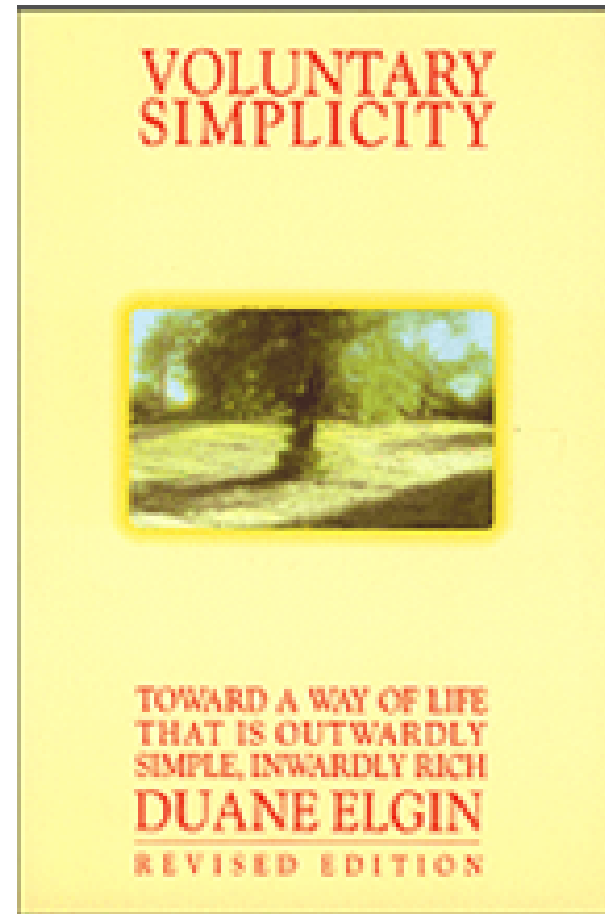
samedi 25  
novembre 2006



# JOURNÉE SANS ACHAT

CASSEURSDEPUB.ORG

# 3. Resisting towards consumption



Shaw D. et Newholm T. (2002), Voluntary simplicity and the ethics of consumption, *Psychology & Marketing*, 19, 2, 167-185.

### 3. Resisting towards consumption



Kozinets R.V.  
from Burning M

SCEAUX

### 3. Resisting towards consumption



[http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x4n4ci\\_le-freeganisme-face-a-la-societe-de\\_politics](http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x4n4ci_le-freeganisme-face-a-la-societe-de_politics)

UNIVERSITÉ  
TOULOUSE-SUD 11

# How do consumers resist?

## Summary

1. TARGETS : Anti-organisations (their actions and devices) and/or anti-consumption
2. TACTICS OF RESISTANCE :
  - INDIVIDUAL and/or COLLECTIVE/COMMUNAL
  - VOICE (audible) versus EXIT (silent)
  - LEVEL OF VIOLENCE : aggressive versus defensive
  - FIGHTING versus ESCAPING
  - CONSUMING DIFFERENTLY and/or DECONSUMING