

Depletism : Social Construction

The scope of this project was to promote the idea of sustainability in some way shape or form. Instead of approaching from more conventional angles such as the promotion of recycling and urban development, we decided to tackle the problem from a more abstract level. By analyzing the word environmental, we discovered there was no negative counterpart to environmentalism compared to words that we have been encultured as negative – sexist, racist. The project sought to phase out the word environmental in the english language by introducing a new word that would operate on the same level as sexist and racist.

Positive	Neutral	Negative
None	Normal	Sexist
None	Normal	Racist
Environmental	Normal	None

**Depletism: (di'pLEt'iz&m) n.**  
The apparent, negligent, or reckless disregard for the environmental consequences of one's actions.

**Depletist: (di'pLEt'ist) n., adj.**  
1) An individual or group demonstrating apparent, negligent, or reckless disregard for the environmental consequences of their actions.  
2) An individual or group that exhausts non-renewable resources and rejects positive environmental strategies.



social group, the most influential of which was a memo that was forwarded through all of Environmental Canada and eventually to a few members of the Canadian Parliamentary System. We developed uTube videos and tracked hits on google and uTube on depletism. Eventually depletism was introduced in a segment of a local television show.

Depletism had experienced setbacks though, we had contacted David Suzuki in hopes that he would use the word and his answer back was simply – “you’re joking right?”. The definition of the word was also expelled from Wikipedia on the grounds of neologism.

The promotion of the word is an on-going project with many individuals and graduates from the Ontario College of Art and Design supporting it, and continuously imagining new ways to promote the word.

Though consultation with University of Toronto Linguist Robert K. Logan, we decided that the word should be depletism. Upon immediate inspection, most individuals would relate this word to an environmental paradigm but remained unsure of it's exact meaning. We took advantage of this and choose this word to be The word.

The promotion of the word began with a grass-roots approach, we had printed the definition of a depletist on five dollar bills, the highest circulating bill in the Canadian monetary system and then held a conference named 'juice' inviting many

influential designers, artists, cultural producers, journalists and local city councilmen to introduce them to this word, we also provided each of them with the package seen above containing a stamped five dollar bill. It was our hope to place this word in the hands of the individuals who would spread it their production.

We next approached the U.N. and provided them with the word, as far we know, the word is currently in circulation in the U.N. Other individuals, enthusiasts of the term depletism also began spreading the use of the word among their own

For more information about Depletism, please visit our website at [www.depletism.com](http://www.depletism.com)