



Fjell & vidde, 4. September 2021—Forest exploitation

In this flyer I will attempt to gather some points that emerged during our discussion of the collaborative venture with the Consumers' Council, on *greenwashing* with a focus on advertisement critique. I think that there are two main issues emerging from the exchange: 1) delimitation; 2) design critique.

1) Delimitation: a) if our objective is to determine the 'greenwasher of the year', what is the relevance of larger *media-context* [beyond ads]? b) which are the greenwashing entities, beyond commercial enterprises? Can political entities—Norway, the EU etc.—be greenwashers? What about *designers*?

2) Design critique: a) how does a critique of greenwashing bring us to the broader topic of developing a *post-pandemic* design critique? b) what is the relation between critiquing a *targeted* area—such as advertisement—and hatching a *repertoire* of new design practices, responding to our present?



Fjell & vidde, 4. September 2021, Artist Note book, My secret loading station.

I want to start with a puzzle. Consider that, in our time, we are living in an era where *connectivity*—non-same things that connect—is not only caused by intelligent *algorithms* that monitor our *tastes*, as we are trolling the internet, and a metadata-trail of *position*, *movement*, *environment*, *pictures* and *audio*.

This, we already know. But, in *addition*, there are the connections between things that happen at the *same time*: the pandemic drew attention to our past and current *life-styles*, during the pandemic the thundering [UN-reports](#) on *climate change* were published. And then the climbing *electricity* prices.

Apparently, a viral *pandemic*, the state of *climate* emissions and *electricity* prices appear to be unrelated: that is, if we think in terms of simple *cause* and *effect*. But then we think that changes in the *ecosystem* could come out in a variety of different ways, at the same time, it could be a *trick* of our minds.

Our *brain* does occasionally operate in a viral mode. When we learn a new word and we suddenly hear it everywhere. When we are engaged by something contributions to the subject matter appear to come from all sides. Evidently, the mentioned algorithms *extend* this operating mode of the brain.

So, when we discover an instance of greenwashing in an issue of [Fjell & vidde](#)—the trekking-magazine with the ironic [Klättermusen](#) clothing advertisement—in the same issue of the magazine as previously unseen articles on deforestation and artistic notebooks appear [*recto*], this is all new (04.09).

It is happening in the wake of an explosion of trekking, buying cabins in the countryside, and acquiring outdoors equipment. With the behavioural change that came in the wake of the *restrictions*, coincided with the UN setting a *new pace* for environmental politics and the emergence of *business* opportunities.

My question is *not* whether these events are planned or spontaneous—and even less with conspiracies behind them—but *whether we as designers can afford not to be on board* and attentive to these developments, as professionally aware members of the contemporary society. *That's it!*

Then the questions is: *where do we start?* Where is it most efficient to intervene? Who are the most “guilty” greenwashers (private, public sectors, or NGOs)? A number of people are pointing to designers as the gardeners of future life ways for everyday humans? So we ask: where are the designers?

Øyvind Rogstad may have put his finger on an important issue: do we need to develop our knowledge base to do a class project on “greenwashing” based on advertisement critique? We are presently good at developing designers who take a position on what they want to do. But what about our fact base?

It is great to be able to articulate a design position. But it may presuppose a market of opportunities for design that belongs to the past. Maybe it is an important move—*right now*—to take a stock of the situation, and determine the kind of *fact-finding* that is needed to hatch the *new* opportunities, the tasks and the social responsibilities of the *designer*. How long can we wait?

