



# The Vice of Luxury: Economic Excess in a Consumer Age (Moral Traditions)

*David Cloutier*

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Luxury. The word alone conjures up visions of attractive, desirable lifestyle choices, yet luxury also faces criticism as a moral vice harmful to both the self and society. Engaging ideas from business, marketing, and economics, *The Vice of Luxury* takes on the challenging task of naming how much is too much in today's consumer-oriented society.

David Cloutier's critique goes to the heart of a fundamental contradiction. Though overconsumption and materialism make us uneasy, they also seem inevitable in advanced economies. Current studies of economic ethics focus on the structural problems of poverty, of international trade, of workers' rights?but rarely, if ever, do such studies speak directly to the excesses of the wealthy, including the middle classes of advanced economies. Cloutier proposes a new approach to economic ethics that focuses attention on our everyday economic choices. He shows why luxury is a problem, explains how to identify what counts as the vice of luxury today, and develops an ethic of consumption that is grounded in Christian moral convictions.



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