

PRECIPITATED DEATHS

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Last week, and after the success achieved, re-broadcast on La 2 the documentary "[Buy, throw, buy](#)" that explains how the non-durability of things is not a random component or the result of our bad luck. Among other things, it reveals how electrical appliances, mobile phones, pantyhose, ipods, computers and other objects that surround us, have the years of life and number of uses well counted since their production, with the date and time of death.

Repair points have disappeared to make way for *drop and buy*. The main argument for this is that it is cheaper to buy something new than to repair it. In the documentary, the protagonist shows how when he takes his printer, which has stopped working, to the technical service, the response in all the places he visits is that there is no solution and that the cost of repair is higher than replacing the product. At this point, those of us who are not skilled with a screwdriver would already be running to Fnac or El Corte Inglés, but the protagonist, not convinced by the answer, searches the Internet and seeks opinions from other users with the same problem. Thus, he comes across a Russian computer scientist who has developed a program to *reset* the printer and deactivate the chip that prevents it from working beyond a certain number of prints. When it does, no top hat and no rabbit, the printer works perfectly again.

But planned obsolescence began in 1928, as a magazine of the time warned, "an article that does not wear out is a tragedy for business." Thus, in the 1930s, the main manufacturers of light bulbs joined forces to determine the maximum duration of light bulbs at 1,000 hours, when Edison's first light bulb already lasted 1,500 hours. In this way, everyone began to sell this new model of light bulbs, displacing the already invented eternal light bulbs that lasted up to 100 years. This treaty has crept up to the present day, silencing anyone who wanted to skip it. But this has only fueled the desire to innovate of the Spanish Benito Muros and his team [OEP Electrics](#) who have decided to stand up to the sector and return to the citizen that 100-year-old light bulb. For 30 euros, you can buy a bulb for life online. Sure, all this has caused quite a stir in the blogosphere where you can read all kinds of nonsense about the project on behalf of competing companies. Benito and his team is not the only case, there is a veritable tide of people all over the world with innovative initiatives, willing to introduce us to [cradle to cradle](#) and move from a green economy to a [blue economy](#). "It is not about introducing green products that pollute less, but that do not pollute" appeals the ideologue of the [blue economy](#), [Gunter Pauli](#). I recommend you read the interview that a few days ago the scientific journalist Alex Fernández Muerza published for [Eroski Consumer magazine](#).

I firmly believe that our economic and social development should be based on these new principles, the most advanced countries in Europe are already integrating them. These cases should be the ones that inspire us to put an end to the socio-political *planned obsolescence* into which we have plunged in Spain.

I often wonder how we got to this point. Without going any further, our grandparents already had these practices of saving, reusing resources, recycling, etc. introduced into their daily lives. These have been stealthily disappearing from us, making us think that they were things of the past and of past societies. We were born in a context in which the effort of our parents could buy everything, in an excessive *throw and buy*, a process of involution in which the display of ostentation is the watchword. My grandfather and surely yours, collected his glass bottles for which he received a few coins in exchange, when he bought his first TV it lasted longer than him and when something went wrong there was someone to provide spare parts. In the most advanced countries of Europe, citizens buy furniture in second-hand stores without shame, exchange things that they do not use with their neighbors, do not have two houses and a car per family member but when their children

turn 18 they will have the option to become independent. Now, I look at our Spanish reality and I only see that we are light years away from these advanced European societies, luckily the crisis has not displaced the nouveau riche from the armchair and is going to make us think more in these terms of development. Although, for this, we must invest in more education for the citizen and as much or more for our leaders.

There are no comments yet.