

# GOOD WORK NEWS

The Working Centre, 58 Queen St. S. Kitchener, ON N2G 1V6

Issue 146

September 2021

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## Changing the Rules of Consumption

By Joe Mancini

Windstorms follow any discussion about how the Western world can generate economic growth. Possibly this is because of the omnipresence of climate change's unmistakable toll in the form of wildfires, forest fires, hurricanes, heat waves, floods, and mud slides. Mother Earth is clearly rebelling and it is easy to see that excessive use of resources, excessive burning of fossil fuels, excessive dumping of chemicals is at its limit. A system devoted to economic growth continues to make the problem worse and change is desperately needed.

Increasingly the growth model is not adding up. Often economists recommend efficiencies to exploit opportunities to generate growth and jobs, all of which seems necessary to pay for increased government services. Yet, this very activity will increase the use of resources, carbon, and chemicals. The dilemma of this score card is real. How can we make different choices.

*In contrast these books from the summer of 2021 have a message of simple living focused on how our society can restructure the core of the economy, to change the way we consume by changing the rules of consumption*

### Resource Constraints

Resource and supply constraints have some economists making direct connections between the present situation and the 1970's. Nouriel Roubini is forecasting that the 2020s will see the kind of stagflation that plagued economies in the 1970s, when oil boycotts resulted in higher government spending, while growth faltered and inflation grew.

The 1980s response to stagflation was high interest rates and a prolonged embrace of globalization that exported jobs, deregulated substantial parts of the economy and consistently chipped away at the safety net for low-income workers.

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## Thousands Walk for National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

This walk is so important. Kelly Curley said, "We carry the bones of those children who were found with us today." We want to honour those children, they are our ancestors, they are our aunts, uncles, grandmothers, grandfathers. They would have been our knowledge keepers of today, they would have had many things to share with everybody who is here and for the rest of the world

It is important for everybody here, to use your voice, to let those in power know that this is a sacred day for our people. Do everything you can, to let them know that they need to recognize the original people of Turtle Island and allow us this day off so that we may do our ceremonies for those who have journeyed on. Let them know, don't be shy, use your voice.

We can see by the number of people here today, we all have a voice, we can stand together, walk together as one, as one within the community. This is very important.

The word needs to get out there. For this to never happen again. To our children who are yet to come, for our children who are here now, for our little babies, for them to not have to suffer through a residential school, again, ever.

I want to say to all the people that are here, it is very important to start your healing, put the anger, the sadness, the resentments aside, have love in your hearts, have love all around you. When you have that pure love, there is no other room for anything else.

When you think of that word love, there is not anything hateful attached to that - no hateful touch, no hateful words, no hateful actions. When you love somebody, you love them with the purist of your heart. And that is all that we need to start doing, as a community, around the world as human beings."

– Donna Dubie (welcoming walkers at the Clocktower)  
Executive Director, Healing of the Seven Generations



The Working Centre Market Garden celebrates 10 years of sustainable urban agriculture and community development

Read more on pages 4 and 5



### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

See page 3 for more details about joining The Working Centre community

## Thirty Seventh Year

Issue 146

September 2021

# Good Work News

Good Work News was first produced in September 1984. It is published four times a year by The Working Centre and St. John's Kitchen as a forum of opinions and ideas on work and unemployment. Four issues of Good Work News constitutes our annual report. There is a circulation of 12,000 copies. Subscription: a donation towards our work.

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## Community Engagement Option: 8<sup>th</sup> Year of Partnership with Laurier

By Heather Montgomery

Students participating in the Community Engagement Option are once again being welcomed into Downtown Kitchener. This immersive and cross-disciplinary educational journey is delivered jointly by The Working Centre and Laurier, and brings a diverse range of community voices into the classroom. The option, now in its 8th year, continues to offer students insights into key community concepts like social inclusion, local democracy, and community enterprise.

Like all other facets of our lives, COVID-19 has significantly impacted students' experiences of the Community Engagement option. Last year students engaged in Zoom supported classes, listened to virtual speakers and panelists, and reflected on the readings and their experiences in a completely remote learning environment. Story maps took the place of walking tours that explored the sidewalks of downtown Kitchener, and Zoom breakout rooms and virtual whiteboards substituted for group conversations normally hosted in various nooks and crannies of Working Centre buildings.

We were exploring new ways of immersing students in community work. We weren't sure how these adaptations would impact how students engaged with and absorbed the ideas and concepts that previous students had explored through immersive experiences in community projects. But, it worked. Students from as far away as Dubai engaged deeply in explorations of what it means to create radically inclusive spaces of hospitality and support, foster local decision making

*This immersive and cross-disciplinary educational journey is delivered jointly by The Working Centre and Laurier, and brings a diverse range of community voices into the classroom*

and grassroots action, and create open access to tools and resources through community enterprise projects.

This autumn we are implementing a hybrid learning model, retaining those virtual elements that worked well while reintroducing in-person elements that can be done safely outdoors. Students will continue to connect remotely for lectures and guest speakers, but come together in person for the guided walks around downtown Kitchener that have been a hallmark of the option since its inception. One idea is to involve students in a project to participate in launching a community enterprise using reclaimed wood to create structures like community fridges, chicken coops, and garden beds.

This winter we hope that students will once again participate in community project placements helping people repair bikes, connecting people with financial literacy resources and supports, and preparing and serving meals.

By spring 2022 we anticipate student projects that explore small creative responses to major social issues like climate change, affordable housing, and food security in ways that foster individual action and strengthen relationships.

Adaptability has become an integral skill, one we'll continue to hone.

# Remembering Michelle Snyder (1978 – 2021)

By Joe Mancini

It was a sad day at The Working Centre when we learned that Michelle Snyder had died of COVID at home in mid-June 2021. Michelle was a dedicated worker whose contribution was legendary. Her ability to work cheerfully by finding jobs within Working Centre projects that needed her energy was a constant gift.

Michelle's ability to work long hours and her thoroughness on every job was a rare quality. In the last 10 years we have called on Michelle for hundreds of cleaning jobs. The hardest jobs were apartment clean ups, made necessary when someone was moving, a death or a change in units. Michelle could wade through sometimes very chaotic situations, but she had a calming, supportive presence as she worked her way through messes. When Michelle took on a cleaning job, you knew everything would look amazing when she was finished. Michelle was also a champion dishwasher



garden (among many other Working Centre projects), and it was a regular occurrence that we'd return to the garden on a Monday morning only to find that she'd spent the weekend weeding and mowing!

"What a godsend! On hot days she'd show up with freezies for everyone and we'd share a laugh as we cooled down in the shade together. Another co-worker described her as a beautiful soul – open, caring and resilient, determined, spirited, humble, kind, giving, beautiful all the way through. She taught us the power the garden holds for healing and friendship, for hard-work and intangible rewards. It's hard to convey what she's meant to the garden and to the people that she encountered there. We desperately miss her already and are deeply grieving the loss of our friend."

When we were starting up the Discovery Team in downtown Kitchener, Michelle agreed to help out, as we needed experienced people to build and develop the program. The photos that accompany this article speak for themselves by capturing Michelle's joy at work.

Michelle's impish smile we will be missed by all. Michelle had many challenges navigating the world. She gave of her spirit and energy to keep things friendly, clean and orderly. We are grateful that she found both a place of work and a place of peace in The Working Centre community.



and stove cleaner. She was a regular worker at Maurita's Kitchen, and was always available between 3:00 – 5:00 to do final clean up. Her drive to clean up at the end of the day was always appreciated.

Michelle found the garden almost 10 years ago and it became her refuge. She had her own schedule. When Michelle showed up at the garden, it was not long before there were fewer weeds and the grass was cut. Ron Doyle adored Michelle, he would always talk about how much she cared for the garden.

Adam Kramer, Rachael Chong and Vanessa Ong, co-workers at the Market Garden shared some memories of Michelle. Here is what they wrote:

"We would like to share that the garden community is grieving an immense loss. Our dear friend and co-worker, Michelle, passed away suddenly last week. Many of you would know Michelle - perhaps seeing her mowing the lawn during CSA pick-ups at the garden. She spent the last 10 years working in the



## We Remember

Aaron H	Crystal	James B	Laura A	Michael T (MK)	Rudi R
Allison D	Dale M	James D	Leanne J	Michael W	Sandy L
Amanda D	David H	James L	Lisa S	Michelle S	Selizabeth
Andrew R	David D	Jeff C	Margaret L	Mike D	Shawn K
Angelique M	David T	Jeffrey H	Mario M	Norman O	Steve P
Bernie P	Dayna Mc	Jeff Y	Mark H	Owen S	Steven D
Blaine L	Dennis B	Jimmy (Cowboy) E	Matthew A	Paul (Norm) F	Stevie W
Calvin S	Dustin S	John M	Melvin L	Pete L	Terry L
Chris H	Ed P	Josue S	Michael D	Pierre G	Terry N
Clayton D	Gregory K	Junuh D	Michael S	Randy H	Terry O
Cory P	Hawke M	Katie D	Michael E	Rena D	Thelma B
Cory Y	Hugh R	Kenneth M	Michael F	Richard C	Tyler D
	Isabel	Kornelia B	Michael N	Robert D	

## Memorial Remembers 76 People

By Stephanie Mancini

On September 20 we hosted a community barbecue and memorial at St. John's Kitchen. A time to bring the community together before we end up back indoors. A time to mourn the many people we have lost since the start of COVID. We have been careful about these moments, not wanting them to be an event that spreads COVID. Only this fall have we started to believe that we could gather again somewhat safely, even as we know that the fourth wave is before us.

What a delight the day was – so feeding of the human spirit. We filled the Worth a Second Look parking lot, with people gathered in clusters across the large space, music playing, barbecue fired up, with the food line all socially distanced as people gathered for their lunch. Public Health supported a vaccination clinic, Sanguen hosted the harm reduction van, KPL Heffner Studios hosted the music and sound system, the Region supported the event as a Point in Time Count event (documenting the number of people without housing).

Rev. Jenn Hind and Fr. Toby Collins hosted the memorial. People came forward to read the names of 76 people who have died, holding them in our memories, marking the importance of them as part of our community, collectively feeling and sharing the loss of each person, of all of these people, and the grief we have held during the double pandemic of a poison drug supply and COVID. One death to COVID – most of the others lost to the impact of overdose – people taken too soon, too suddenly, grief after grief that has threatened to overwhelm us.

But what we had at our celebration was a feeling of release, of shared loss, of the reminder of how we need to experience these things in shared community. It doesn't hurt less, but it takes it out of our bodies and reminds us of the importance of each person in our midst, of the body of who we are together as we create community together in difficult times. As Jenn Hind reflected, "We are a community, and coming together to grieve as a community shoulders the burden that no one person can carry alone."

### Remarks by Rev. Jenn Hind

Today we come together, to be with one another, to support one another, but also to grieve with one another.

Grief is a natural part of the human condition. Grief is a form of Love, we grieve because we love and I would rather love and grieve than to never know what love is.

It is love that breaks us open, it is love that binds us together and it is love that heals us up, we can be assured by the virtue of the law of Love that we can never be forgotten, we can never be alone and we can truly be absent from those who live within us.

We are a community, and coming together to grieve as a community shoulders the burden that no one person can carry alone.

The losses we've suffered are far too great to carry as individuals, so no matter what our differences we come together today for the same reason, we unite, as comrades-in-arms to grieve, but also to declare something.

No matter how much we're ignored, no matter how much we're pushed to the side, no matter how much our losses are neglected - we are not going anywhere, we will fight until they hear us, we will love until they listen to us.

In keeping up the good fight we will pay tribute to each and every person we've lost along the way – our fallen.

We have 60 names (which grew to 76 and more during the event) of people we've loved – let us lift them up together – let us hold our grief, our sadness and our anger together, and recall...

Names are powerful – they are containers for people's energy – when we speak a name aloud we summon the energy and the essence of them and bring them here into our space – so let us call forth our fallen.

Our Fallen will guide us now as we walk in their stead.

## Volunteer and Work Opportunities at The Working Centre

**As we open up we are able to offer many interesting volunteer and work opportunities:**



**St. John's Kitchen** volunteer hours Monday to Friday 10am-3pm. Opportunities for food distribution and support for the daily drop-in which has a limit of 30 people at a time.

[sjk@theworkingcentre.org](mailto:sjk@theworkingcentre.org)



**Maurita's Kitchen** on Queen Street. Volunteer hours Monday to Friday 8am-4pm. Kitchen cooks for 600 people each day. Meals are prepared into hotel pans then distributed to different projects. A specific job is on Friday mornings between 9:30am - 11:30am when we receive a large delivery from the Waterloo Region FoodBank. The food needs to be moved and packed to be used over the week.



**Recycle Cycles Community Bike Shop** is now open. Volunteer hours Tues - Sat 10am-4pm. Help repair and refurbish bikes!  
[recyclecycles@theworkingcentre.org](mailto:recyclecycles@theworkingcentre.org)



**Worth A Second Look Furniture and Housewares** volunteer hours Tues to Sat 10am-4pm. Help with sorting, pricing and helping customers in our busy thrift store.  
[wasl@theworkingcentre.org](mailto:wasl@theworkingcentre.org)



This winter we are offering a part-time role for a **skidsteer bobcat operator** who can clear snow from our 5 different properties in downtown Kitchener. This is an ideal part-time job for the right person.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact [volunteering@theworkingcentre.org](mailto:volunteering@theworkingcentre.org) or call **519.743.1151**

# 10 Years at the Market Garden



Kim Knowles starts to lay out our first garden plots in spring of 2012. Over the winter of 2011-12 we had studied the SPIN (Small Plot Intensive) model of market gardening. It gave us a perfect start to understand the scale of the project.



Ron Doyle installed an old water tank along with statues created by Sandra Dunns of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza. The containers that Ron installed are used for washrooms, garden storage, washing station and a cooler.



In May 2012, Fr. Toby Collins CR helped us install 6000 sq. ft. of interlocking brick pathways. These pathways define the garden sections and add visual appeal.



One of the interlocking brick pathways gleaming after installation with first crops starting to grow.

# A Place Where Plants and Community Thrive

By Adam Kramer, Rachael Chong & Vanessa Ong



The Working Centre Market Garden

The road to the Working Centre Market Garden is not through country fields of corn or soy, barley or hay, rather it runs through city streets and neighbourhoods. You can arrive on the Number 6 bus, or by bike or foot, if not by car. And when you arrive, you are met with sun shining through the fruit trees, or raindrops on puddled paths, and the call of a robin or a wren as the osprey circle overhead. You are met by gardeners, eager to tell you stories if you'd like to listen. Eager to have your help with some weeding, or eager to get in a harvest and share it with you.

The multitudes of volunteer gardeners that have worked the land are, after 10 years, far beyond count. Eight cohorts of community-based market gardening interns have spent a season at the garden – gaining the practical skills, knowledge, and the confidence to grow food for themselves and their communities. The garden has also been a place of employment – not only for year-round staff, but also for seasonal workers and casual labourers from our community. Together, we have grown the Working Centre's "CommunitySupportedAgriculture" share program from 40 members to over 160! Together, we have worked with nature to transform the garden's initially poor soil it into a thriving ecosystem, teeming with beneficial flora and fauna, feasting

on each year's accumulation of organic matter. Together, we have found common purpose, created an open and welcoming community, and nourished the land as it has nourished us.

After 10 seasons, the garden at 1254 Union Street in Kitchener is in its maturity. While it will always be a place for learning and continuing the work of seasons past, the garden's steadiness in the face of challenges, whether expected or unforeseen, belies a resiliency in the land and in the community that stewards it. Many of them are here with their hands in the dirt, but multitudes more are in the office or gardening their own plots or sitting down to a meal featuring the fruits of the work that they got from a share or the community fridge. This garden turns community spirit into food!



# A Productive Urban Garden

By Joe Mancini

The Working Centre's Market Garden is now in its 10th year. It is an excellent example of converting 1.5 acres of privately owned vacant land in the heart of the city into a community-based market garden.

A key factor for success was the vision of Ron Doyle, the owner of the property, to integrate a garden into his development plans that recreated a run-down 100-year-old factory into a stunning version of something you might find if you walked the Camino de Santiago.

A second factor was that The Working Centre had determined it was important to establish a larger scale teaching garden in a location in the city as opposed to a rural property.

The third factor was the commitment from Ron and The Working Centre to invest in the necessary tools for the market garden to flourish. These amenities included



a fully functioning water system, washrooms, interlocking brick pathways, a cooler, tool storage, an office space, and a washing station. We also committed to learning about organic soil amendments like good quality compost, greensand, and cover crops. We invested in a heavy duty tiller, row covers and other seeding tools.

A fourth factor is that every year there have been efforts to add to the garden, such as expanding into new garden plots, developing tiered raised beds on the slopes, adding fruit crops, berry plants, and native perennial flowers, and building a greenhouse.

While our future on this property may not be clear, the success and hard work to create and maintain this market garden oasis can only be celebrated.



The aerial photo on the left is the Hacienda land in September 2011 before Ron Doyle started bringing in top soil and a landscaping pattern was designed. The photo on the right is the Hacienda Sarría and the Market Garden lands in 2020.

*Aerial images courtesy of the City of Kitchener*



Since it started, the market garden has offered 42 internship opportunities



Overhead views of the garden  
*Images courtesy of Larry Bond*

Ecological food production is centered on striving to **protect, restore, and support** the natural processes that enable us to grow nourishing food.



We are a thriving 1.5 acre garden that grows **over 30,000 pounds** of food each season!



In addition to growing an abundance of vegetables, the garden also includes cut flowers, native plants and pollinator strips, and a wide array of fruit-bearing trees and shrubs.



The Working Centre aimed to demonstrate how to take vacant urban land and turn it into a sustainable and successful market garden.

Seasonal change at the The Working Centre Market Garden



The Working Centre Market Garden is a **volunteer-driven community enterprise** engaged in ecological food production, hands-on cooperative work, and knowledge sharing. The garden is a space for cultivating relationships among gardeners through the work of growing food and building a more sustainable community-based food system.

Different than community gardens where gardeners have their own plots, at The Working Centre Market Garden everyone works collaboratively to produce food for a **160+ member CSA share program, local retailers, and to share with the community.** Through hands-on, satisfying work done in community, the garden welcomes many to belong, enjoy the outdoors, and learn about growing food.



Visit [garden.theworkingcentre.org](http://garden.theworkingcentre.org) to see more photos of the Market Garden, and for information about CSA Shares, internships, and volunteer opportunities

## Changing the Rules of Consumption

continued from page 1

This continued for forty years and these policy responses are now exhausted. Large parts of the labour force need increased supports as precarious work barely pays for rent and food. High interest rates on top of a debt-fueled economy will stop growth in its tracks.

### Beyond Globalization

Three books have been published this summer that catch a new spirit – a new direction that attempts to jolt us out of old habits and rethink how to live well within the abundance that we have. *When More is Not Better*, *Post Growth*, and *The Day The World Stopped Shopping* hint at new thinking to challenge assumptions that have been taken for granted since the 1980s.

In the early 1990s, a series of books like *Your Money or Your Life*, and *Voluntary Simplicity* were published to help families make decisions to live simply. In contrast these books from the summer of 2021 have a message of simple living focused on how our society can restructure the core of the economy, to change the way we consume by changing the rules of consumption.

### When More Is Not Better

Roger Martin, a world-renowned business strategist, who grew up in Elmira, wrote *When More is Not Better: Overcoming America's Obsession with Economic Efficiency* to demonstrate how the economy is better described as a complex adaptive system rather than as a machine. The narrative of a machine works well for justifying efficiency, profit maximizing, and a winner-take-all mentality.

Martin points to the machine image of seeking efficiency over sufficiency as the main culprit behind the stalled growth and the malaise of our economy. He proposes that seeking a fair distribution of benefits will strengthen our resilience and dynamism. He documents a wide array of alternatives that recognize the non-linear nature of complex systems where the main drivers of the economy – businesses, government, and educators bias their decision-making toward undoing the concentration of benefits that accrue to the winners.

Redistribution, in Martin's way

of thinking, is multileveled and creative, rewarding initiatives and ventures that practice fair distribution. *Less is More* is a strategy to use the resources we have while fairly redistributing the benefits in ways that build our communities and create opportunities for all.

### Post Growth

Tim Jackson in *Post Growth: Life After Capitalism*, imagines a world beyond capitalism where "relationships and meaning take precedence over profits and power." Jackson, who is both an economist and a playwright, seeks to integrate a wider understanding of the role of the economy. Using insights from 200 years of thinking on the meaning of work, entropy, limits, and economics as storytelling, Jackson reminds us of the basic social necessities that humans need to thrive in community. He has deep concerns for the damage caused by relentless growth, inequality, and financial instability. He offers this book as a counter-narrative reminding the reader of the nature of the human condition.

Jackson is deeply concerned for the process of allowing most jobs in the labour market to become a meaningless artifact of our efforts. Work is now a secondary concept, where the efficiency of production is primary. Craft, relationship, dedication, and community have been thrown to the edges of output. The focus of work is no longer the work but the "accelerated process of wasteful consumption." You can see and feel this process in the way clothing, shoes, furniture, and housewares are produced and distributed. As the work content gets smaller, the marketing content grows. It is well known that consumer products are now mainly throw-away, cheaply made goods that spend the majority of their time being shipped and languishing in warehouses. Not only is the human content lost, so is the meaning of the product and so goes the meaning of work.

What Jackson finds surprising, is how the COVID-19 shutdown has made it crystal clear that our understanding of the meaning of work is backwards. The tragic lesson is that those precarious workers who for decades have seen their hours reduced while living on temporary contracts and minimum wages – all of a sudden became valued workers. These workers used their hands to care, to process, to clean – to essentially keep large sections of our

economy operating. For Jackson, these are the very jobs and workers that have been seen as expedient, the target of productivity drives. A changed economy means those who offer care, craft, and service are seen in a new light. An economy for all means the true meaning of work needs to be nurtured and sustained.

### The Day the World Stopped Shopping

In March 2020, while J.B. MacKinnon was writing about growing consumerism, the consumer economy briefly collapsed. *The Day The World Stops Shopping* started as a project to untangle the contradiction that governments need increased consumerism to help pay for rising deficits. The problem is that through an ecological lens, western countries already consume resources five times faster than they can generate. MacKinnon set out to answer the question, how is it possible to reduce consumerism by 25% and not create high unemployment and runaway deficits?

The pandemic gave MacKinnon a front row seat as his experiment went live. The economy survived and people adjusted to working less through income provided by government cheques. Many people were relieved by the reduced pace and the different priorities that emerged. In this experiment government income tanked, but the learning and the experience give us a model for the challenges ahead.

MacKinnon comes up with multiple examples of how to reduce the intensity of consumerism. One idea is going back to a work week where the seventh day is completely shut down, returning to a true restful day off for 90% of the population. Another is to model our level of consumption after countries like Ecuador whose economy is designed to consume resources at a sustainable rate. It is well documented that countries with a mid-range GDP have high levels of quality of living because there is more room for sharing and community building, when the pace is not frantic. A third idea is the

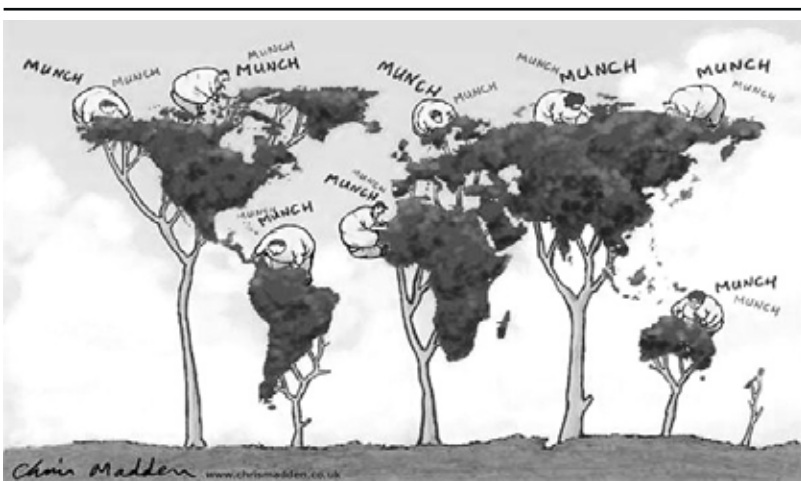
development of a circular economy where goods cost more but are 100 percent recyclable. This would slow down the velocity of consuming as there would be incentives to produce goods that are long lasting and then recirculated/recreated through local factories. Just creating systems of local, circular packaging would create jobs and eliminate enormous waste.

MacKinnon fully explores many more ideas that would result in reduced consumption. He is convinced that a lifestyle of lower consumption means less time worrying about status and more time to build relationships and connect with others. MacKinnon demonstrates for the reader that achieving a reduction in consumer society is not only possible, it is desirable.

So how can change happen? Tim Jackson provides insight into this as he summarizes the effects of the COVID-19 shutdown in March 2020:

*"With an alacrity that was almost shocking, the coronavirus revealed what capitalism has long denied: that it is possible for government to intervene in the health of society. Dramatically if necessary. To 'furlough' workers. To protect livelihoods. To invest in care. To use the sovereign power over money itself – a power denied for ideological reasons by those who would profit from tragedy – as a legitimate vehicle for change."* (p.165)

All three books advocate for dramatic changes in the way society fundamentally operates, while pleading for a wiser use of resources. Governments and businesses can take a stronger lead to generate structures of fairness. Both can double down on rethinking how goods and resources are circulated and how work and income is distributed fairly and sustainably. The years ahead will demand new thinking to navigate the ecological and social challenges ahead. The three books reviewed here give us a glimpse into the road map that can lead us to change.



## Recycle Cycles is Open!

### Recycle Cycles re-opened on Tuesday, July 20th

We have been busy welcoming back volunteers, helping community members repair their bikes and preparing bikes for sale.

We are doing this by making a few changes, mindful of COVID realities. We are grateful for your understanding as we adapt and respond.

**We are open Tuesday to Saturday 10am - 4pm**

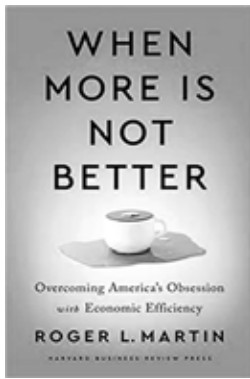
Please email to book a time to volunteer, to set a time to repair your bike, or to purchase a bike.

[recyclecycles@theworkingcentre.org](mailto:recyclecycles@theworkingcentre.org)

Entrance is next to 256 King St. East in Kitchener

# BOOKS FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVING

You can place orders by phone (519-743-1151 x111), or by visiting [catalogue.theworkingcentre.org](http://catalogue.theworkingcentre.org)



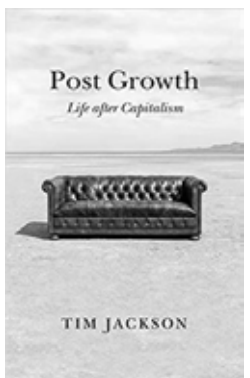
## When More is Not Better Overcoming America's Obsession with Economic Efficiency

Roger L. Martin

Growth in the economic prosperity of the average American family has slowed to a crawl, while the wealth of the richest Americans has skyrocketed. This imbalance threatens the American democratic capitalist system and our way of life. In this bracing yet constructive book, world-renowned business thinker Roger Martin starkly outlines the fundamental problem: We have treated the economy as a machine, pursuing ever-greater efficiency as an inherent good. But efficiency has become too much of a good thing. Our obsession with it has inadvertently shifted the shape of our economy, from a large middle class and smaller numbers of rich and poor to a greater share of benefits

accruing to a thin tail of already-rich Americans. Martin argues that we must stop treating the economy as a perfectible machine and shift toward viewing it as a complex adaptive system in which we seek a fundamental balance of efficiency with resilience. To achieve this, we need to keep in mind the whole while working on the component parts; pursue improvement, not perfection; and relentlessly tweak instead of attempting to find permanent solutions. Filled with keen economic insight and advice for citizens, executives, policy makers, and educators, *When More Is Not Better* is the must-read guide for saving democratic capitalism.

256 pages | \$32.95 hardcover



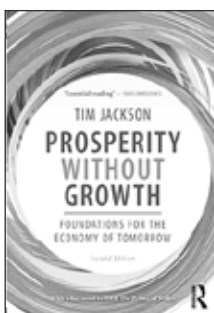
## Post Growth Life after Capitalism

Tim Jackson

Capitalism is broken. The relentless pursuit of more has delivered climate catastrophe, social inequality and financial instability – and left us ill-prepared for life in a global pandemic. Tim Jackson's passionate and provocative book dares us to imagine a world beyond capitalism – a place where relationship and meaning take precedence over profits and power. *Post Growth* is both a manifesto for system change and an invitation to rekindle a deeper conversation about the nature of the human condition.

Tim Jackson is Director of the Centre for the Understanding of Sustainable Prosperity (CUSP) and Professor of Sustainable Development at the University of Surrey in the UK. For over three decades, he has pioneered research on the moral, economic and social dimensions of prosperity on a finite planet.

256 pages | \$23.95 softcover



## Prosperity without Growth Foundations for the Economy of Tomorrow

Tim Jackson

What can prosperity possibly mean in a world of environmental and social limits? *Prosperity without Growth* was a landmark in the sustainability debate, challenging conventional economic goals: the continued pursuit of exponential economic growth. Its findings provoked controversy, inspired debate and led to a new wave of research building on its arguments and conclusions. In this updated and revised edition, Jackson demonstrates that building a 'post-growth' economy is a precise, definable and meaningful task. He sets out the dimensions of that task: the nature of enterprise; the quality of our working lives; investment and money supply. Can the

economy of tomorrow protect employment, facilitate social investment, reduce inequality and deliver both ecological and financial stability?

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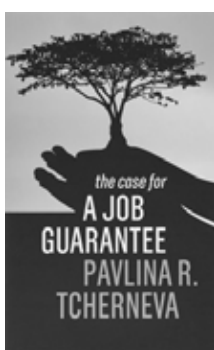


## A Good War Mobilizing Canada for the Climate Emergency

Seth Klein

Canada is not on track to meet our climate targets. To do so, we'll need radical systemic change to how we live and work and fast. Policy analyst and author Seth Klein demonstrates how wartime thinking and community efforts can be repurposed today for Canada's own Green New Deal. He shares how we can create jobs and reduce inequality while tackling our climate obligations for a climate neutral or climate zero future. From enlisting broad public support for new economic models, to job creation through investment in green infrastructure, Klein shows us a bold, practical policy plan for Canada's sustainable future. Moreover, *A Good War* offers a remarkably hopeful message for how we can meet the defining challenge of our lives.

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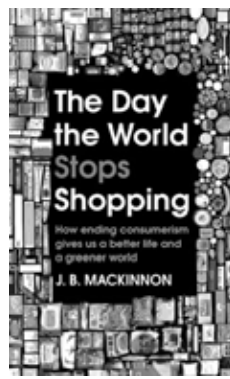


## The Case For A Job Guarantee

Pavlina Tcherneva

One of the most enduring ideas in economics is that unemployment is both unavoidable and necessary for the smooth functioning of the economy. This assumption has provided cover for the devastating social and economic costs of job insecurity. It is also false. In this book, leading expert Pavlina R. Tcherneva challenges us to imagine a world where the phantom of unemployment is banished and anyone who seeks decent, living-wage work can find it - guaranteed. This is the aim of the Job Guarantee proposal: to provide a voluntary employment opportunity in public service to anyone who needs it. Tcherneva enumerates the many advantages of the Job Guarantee over the status quo and proposes a blueprint for its implementation within the wider context of the need for a Green New Deal.

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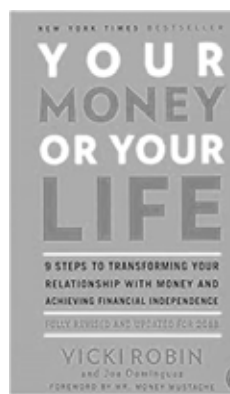


## The Day the World Stops Shopping

J.B. MacKinnon

The planet says we consume too much: in North America, we burn the earth's resources at a rate five times faster than they can regenerate. And despite our efforts to "green" our consumption - by recycling, increasing energy efficiency, or using solar power - we have yet to see a decline in global carbon emissions. The economy says we must always consume more, because, as we've seen in the pandemic, even the slightest drop in spending leads to widespread unemployment, bankruptcy and home foreclosures. Addressing this paradox head-on, J.B. MacKinnon asks, What would really happen if we simply stop shopping? Is there a way to reduce our consumption to earth-saving levels without triggering an economic collapse? Drawing on experts ranging from economists to climate scientists to corporate CEOs, MacKinnon investigates how living with less would change our planet, our society and ourselves. Along the way, he reveals just how much we stand to gain.

352 pages | \$30.95 hardcover



## Your Money or Your Life

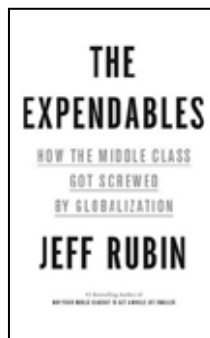
9 Steps to Transforming Your Relationship with Money and Achieving Financial Independence

Vicki Robin

For more than twenty-five years, *Your Money or Your Life* has been considered the go-to book for taking back your life by changing your relationship with money. Hundreds of thousands of people have followed this nine-step program, learning to live more deliberately and meaningfully with Vicki Robin's guidance. This fully revised and updated edition with a foreword by "the Frugal Guru" (New Yorker) Mr. Money Mustache is the ultimate makeover of this bestselling classic, ensuring that its time-tested wisdom applies to people of all ages and covers modern topics like investing in index funds, managing revenue streams like side hustles and freelancing, tracking your finances online, and having difficult conversations about money.

Whether you're just beginning your financial life or heading towards retirement, this book will show you how to: get out of debt and develop savings; save money through mindfulness and good habits, rather than strict budgeting; declutter your life and live well for less; invest your savings and begin creating wealth; save the planet while saving money; and so much more!

368 pages | \$21.00 softcover



## The Expendables

How the Middle Class Got Screwed by Globalization

Jeff Rubin

Former CIBC World Markets Chief Economist Jeff Rubin argues that all this was foreseeable back when Canada, the United States and Mexico first started talking free trade. Labour argued then that manufacturing jobs would move to Mexico. Free-trade advocates disagreed. Today, Canadian and American factories sit idle. More steel is used to make bottlecaps than cars. Meanwhile, Mexico has become one of the world's biggest automotive exporters. And it's not just NAFTA. Cheap oil, low interest rates, global deregulation and tax policies that benefit the rich all have the same effect: the erosion of the middle class.

368 pages | \$32.95 hardcover



## Doughnut Economics

Seven Ways to Think like a 21st Century Economist

Kate Raworth

Kate Raworth sets out seven key ways to reframe our understanding of what economics is and does. How we can break our addiction to growth; redesign money, finance, and business to be in service to people; and create economies that are regenerative and distributive by design. Raworth handpicks the best emergent ideas—from ecological, behavioral, feminist, and institutional economics to complexity thinking and Earth-systems science—to address this question: How can we turn economies that need to grow, whether or not they make us thrive, into economies that make us thrive, whether or not they grow?

384 pages | \$24.95 softcover



## Less Is More

How Degrowth Will Save the World

Jason Hickel

The world has finally awoken to the reality of climate breakdown and ecological collapse. Now we must face up to its primary cause. Capitalism demands perpetual expansion, which is devastating the living world. There is only one solution that will lead to meaningful and immediate change: DEGROWTH. If we want to have a shot at halting the crisis, we need to restore the balance. We need to change how we see nature and our place in it, shifting from a philosophy of domination and extraction to one that's rooted in reciprocity and regeneration. We need to evolve beyond the dogmas of capitalism to a new system that is fit for the twenty-first century. But what does such a society look like? What about jobs?

What about health? What about progress? This book tackles these questions and traces a clear pathway to a post-capitalist economy. An economy that's more just, more caring, and more fun. An economy that enables human flourishing while reversing ecological breakdown. An economy that will not only lift us out of our current crisis, but restore our sense of connection to a world that's brimming with life. By taking less, we can become more.

320 pages | \$19.99 softcover



# Regenerating Our Soils

## A Choice We Can Make

By Isaiah Ritzmann

We can regenerate our soils. If we want healthier soils - and therefore healthier food, healthier bodies, healthier minds, healthier waters, and a healthier climate - then we can have them. Choices abound for us to do right by that which sustains us. In our backyards, on our farms, and within our whole food system options are available that protect and nurture the soil. In this final article of our three part series we explore just some of these methods and systems. While the threats to soil health are great, the opportunities for regenerative practices are equally so. The choice is ours.

We begin quite literally closest to home - in our backyard and community gardens. Seasoned gardeners will give you a standard set of simple rules for good soil-keeping: compost, mulch, rotate, diversify, cover crop, leave put, and keep to paths. Here are a few notes on each of these practices:

### Compost

As plants grow they take up nutrients from the soil, depleting its fertility. Compost and manure help return said nutrients to the soil while building soil organic matter. Compost can be homemade or purchased from your local municipality.

### Mulching

Mulching is when you cover the bare soil with woodchips, grass clippings, or hay. Mulching feeds soil microbiology as the organic material decomposes, maintains soil structure, and protects against both wind and water erosion. It also helps suppress weed growth and keeps your top soil from drying up.

### Crop Rotation

Crop rotation means planting your vegetables in a different spot each year over the course of years. This helps protect plants against diseases since planting them in the same place each year gives more opportunity for pest populations to stabilize and grow. Crop rotation also helps conserve soil fertility.

*In this final article of our three part series we explore options that are available in our backyards, on our farms, and within our whole food system that protect and nurture soil.*

Each plant likes to feast on certain nutrients. Too many years in a row of the same plant can leave that part of the soil stripped bare of that particular good. Rotation gives the soil a chance to rest and recover.

### Plant Diversity

Plant diversity is good for soil biology. Different plants exude different enzymes and substances from their roots, which feed different types of soil bacteria and fungi. A diversity of plants means diversity of life in the soil.

### Cover Crops

Cover crops are planted in the late fall and often plowed under as green manure in the early spring. These crops first of all keep plants in the ground, which protects against erosion. They also help protect soil fertility. Nitrogen-fixing cover crops like clover take nitrogen from the air and put it into the soil. Other crops will take up nitrogen from the soil as they grow thereby keeping it safe from being washed away and ready to be returned to the soil in the spring.

### Leave Plants in the Ground

As much as possible leave plants in the ground after harvest. These bodies continue to provide food for the microbiology, help protect against erosion, and are generally good for long-term soil structure. It's simply another way of composting.

### Keep to Your Paths

Finally, keep to your paths. Depending on the size of your garden you will create paths to walk through it. These paths in turn, under the weight of your body, will compact the soil. Compaction is a harm multiplier - for biology, erosion, structure, and more. If you keep your paths this means you are

protecting the other soil - the food-growing soil - from such disruption.

### Consumer & Voting Choices

Perhaps for city dwellers the greatest tool we have to protect soil is neither shovel nor trowel but wallets and ballots. Even the most avid gardeners still buy a good proportion of their food. The rest of us even more so. And all of us can vote. But do we, as American food activist Michael Pollan once said, vote with our forks? Do we buy and eat food that was grown in a way that conserves and restores the soil? While not wanting to put all responsibility on the shoulders of consumers - deeper systemic realities exist - it is nevertheless true that the food choices we make do have an effect. Given this reality it is important to consider what can be done at the farm level to protect and conserve the soil.

Farmers and gardeners care for the soil in different ways sometimes. Composting, for example, is not feasible at the farm scale. To source fertility, farmers in the last century have in large measure turned to synthetic fertilizers. While supplying adequate amounts of nitrogen these fertilizers are created using natural gas, a non-renewable resource. Many realize that depending on a limited resource to grow food is not sustainable. These farmers are turning to traditional methods of maintaining soil fertility - animal manures, crop rotations, and cover crops.

### Mixed Farming Practices

Folks like Wendell Berry advocate mixed farming systems, where farmers raise animals and grow crops on the same farm. In such systems reciprocities abound that ultimately benefit the soil. Animal dung from pasturing becomes future fertility for crops, pasture grass restores and regenerates the soil, etc. Such mixed systems are not the norm. For the sake of the land this traditional way of farming may be our future.

### Signs of Hope

Other methods for caring for soil are growing more popular. And contentious. For over fifty years organic farmers have abstained from pesticides, instead relying on crop diversity and crop rotations to keep pests and diseases in check. Many

farmers, conventional and organic, are moving away from tillage practices. By not disturbing the soil farmers maintain the structure, preserve the soil's invisible life, and ultimately reduce erosion.

Agriculture Canada estimates that over 70% of Canada's soil is at very low risk of erosion, mainly because of the adoption of low-till practices. Meanwhile *Our World in Data* highlights the consequences of different farming methods on soil erosion. 39% of conservation-managed soils have a lifespan of over 10,000 years compared to only 18% of conventionally-managed soils. Amazingly 1/5th of conservation-managed are actually thickening - rather than eroding. Altogether such methods add up to more than the sum of their parts. For example, a review of 56 studies published in the journal *PLoS* found that compared to their more conventional neighbours, farms that abstained from synthetic chemicals, used cover crops, and crop rotation had 32-84% more microbial mass. All around us are signs of hope for the future of soil.

Of course a few exemplary farms are not enough. At the food systems level there are economic structures, government policies, and cultural norms that need to change if we are truly serious about soil. For example in the U.S. and E.U. politicians are talking about concrete policy proposals to pay farmers to protect the soil. Already the State of Maryland pays farmers \$45 an acre to plant cover crops. Others argue we need to pay twice as much for food if we want to support sustainable farming.

### Soil Regeneration and Wider Change

In our present economy this would make food too expensive for many - a clear inequity. Preserving the soil also means that housing must be affordable. When many people are spending more than half of their income on housing they can't afford to pay a just price for good food. Of course these are only a few, preliminary ideas. The list of systems change proposals could go on and on. It could be its own article. Even its own book. Regardless of the inevitable complexity and detail, choices exist. If we want to regenerate our soils we can.

